

Theatricals took a new position on the 4th of October, by the opening of the Jenny Lind Theater, now the City Hall. It was the fourth or fifth theater built on the same spot, all the others having been destroyed successively by fire. It was a beautiful temple for the dramatic muse, externally and internally. On the 20th of the same month the American Theater was opened. It was a large and commodious building, and was built on Sansome Street, at some distance beyond where had been the shore of the harbor a year or two previously. During this year the tide of human influx by sea fell considerably below that of the previous year, when it reached thirty-six thousand. Many of the arrivals were from China. But as yet few of that most degraded and beastly of all the human creatures yet located on the continent—the female Chinese—had come. That was an accursed nuisance left for a future judgment. The city was, nevertheless, progressing in population and improvements; hills were removed into the harbor, houses were erected forty feet below where the surface of the sand had been, and stores were built where ships had floated a year before. Comfort, and even luxury, were supplanting the exposure and hard fare of the previous years. The markets were abundantly supplied with meats wild and tame, game and vegetables. The place was fast becoming an American city, with phases, to some extent, unlike any other—the large foreign population having engrafted upon its character and appearance not a few of their own national characteristics. It had the shrewd business air of the Yankees; the French vivacity; the laborious, plodding and intelligent industry of the German; the dreamy and improvident idleness of the Mexican; the unique, pig-tailed, narrow-eyed Chinese, to make people wonder that nature and custom should so combine to manufacture so much individual ugliness.

On the 30th of January, 1852, the last great sale of city property, under the Peter Smith judgments, took place. During the previous year Dr. Peter Smith had obtained judgments against the city on the scrip which he had received on his contract for keeping the city sick, and under those judgments, during that and the present year, disposed of nearly all the city's property in wharves, water and upland lots, worth several millions of dollars, for prices that did not pay his claim, which was less than \$65,000. It was not believed by the public at large that the sale was legal, and only a few persons had the nerve to bid, and of course the property was sacrificed. The Supreme Court subsequently confirmed the sales, and thus the princely inheritance of the city was lost to her forever. This was the result of a great conspiracy, or an ignorance little less than villainy, on the part of some persons. Who were they?

Notwithstanding the property of the corporation was thus sacrificed, the recklessness of expenditures, and consequently taxation, did not diminish. The city had paid, during the fiscal year ending on the 31st of May, 1852, more than one million seven hundred thousand dollars as taxes, in the form of licenses, taxation for City, County and State purposes, and as Custom House dues; besides which, there were some three hundred thousand dollars yet to be collected. An additional two hundred thousand dollars was added to the city debt by the purchase of the Jenny Lind Theater for a City Hall, on the 4th of June. A very large amount, besides, was expended subsequently to fit it up, and yet at this day there is a mortgage on the lot upon which it stands, for some thirty thousand dollars, unless it has been redeemed within a few weeks.