

arrivals for the year 1851, with a tunnage of less than one-half that amount. Clearances exceeded in number, but not in tunnage, those of 1851. The generosity of the mines may be inferred from the shipments of gold dust, which, during the year, amounted to over forty-six and a half millions of dollars.

One of the first notable events of 1853, as marking the advance of the city in intellectual progress, was the establishment of the Mercantile Library Association. This institution, which has received the warm support of the community, is in a very flourishing condition. It has a large and increasing library of valuable books, and the influence it is exerting upon the minds and morals of the community, is beyond calculation. Like the churches, schools and benevolent associations which have been formed, public libraries operate not only upon the intellect, but upon the morals, the heart. The essentially animal nature may not be won by them; but to him who possesses a soul above that of the beast in its propensities, these means of pleasure and improvement have charms superior to the degrading course of amusement to which the ignoble nature resorts, as much more powerful as virtue is more beautiful than vice. Viewed in this light, the formation of the Mercantile Library Association seems a blessing more valuable as an encourager of virtue, a winner from demoralizing pleasures, than for its intellectual influence, or the great convenience it proves to the people at large no less than to the scholar.

Many had been the obstructions to the city's progress. None had been more so, not even the great fires, than the unsettled nature of land titles. There were so many claimants under different titles for the same lots, that he who bought, despite all the care expended in examination and inquiry, was pretty certain to buy from one to several lawsuits when he purchased land. During February, the famous claim of Limantour, for a large portion of the city's site, was presented before the Board of Land Commissioners, and notwithstanding all which was said against it as being fraudulent, was finally confirmed by that tribunal. Limantour's claim professed to be in virtue of a grant by Governor Micheltorena, in consideration of moneys advanced the agents of the Mexican Government by the claimant. Abuse and ridicule followed his claims, which were enormous in extent, covering, besides those in the city, and which were of four leagues in extent, numerous other localities, islands in the bay and in the Pacific Ocean, and vast tracts of land in other parts of the State. But as the lawyers and the courts must decide this question, it is passed over to their tender care. The suit, when brought, threw additional doubt upon land titles, already as deep over the land as was the drifted sand over the original soil.

An election of three delegates from each ward to revise the city charter, occurred on the 16th of February; and, among other names of those elected, are found, for the first ward, those of Harry Meiggs, Edward McGowan and William Carr. The first, for forgery, voluntarily sailed away; the second, for safety from various charges and an indictment for murder, gladly run away; and the third, for ballot-box stuffing and other villanies, involuntarily was sent away by the Vigilance Committee of 1856.

The efforts of Governor Bigler and his sympathizers to extend the water front of the city, met with determined opposition from its inhabitants, and during April, the city government took strong ground against the proposed measure, and memorialized the Legislature upon the subject. The bill, however, passed the Assembly—two of the San Francisco members voting for it. The five who opposed it, resigned, returned to