

near the city, who saw the deed committed. Shepperd left a confession of his—innocence! Of so much value are such professions, on the gallows, of just so much value are death-bed conversions, both, usually, breath and no more.

The fire-proof brick office of the "Alta California" newspaper having been purchased for the round sum of nearly fifty thousand dollars in scrip, for a Hall of Records, was opened for that purpose on the nineteenth of July. This is one of the very few evidences of any value received by the city for all of its vast expenditures. About this time the strong opposition felt by many to the great influx of Chinese, received new strength from the dreadful condition in which many of them reached the port. Whole cargoes of them—or rather such as lived to reach the bay—were landed at Goat Island, where the mortality was very great. The disease which caused such wholesale destruction, was the scurvy. The horrors of the African slave trade seem to have been reproduced on board some of the miserable old hulks which left China loaded with these wretched creatures, bound for California.

To the great number of churches already erected, were soon to be added two synagogues, the corner-stone of the first being laid on the twenty-third of July. A House of Refuge having become necessary, the Supervisors made a movement toward one by purchasing a lot of ground to the west of the Mission, for an immense price. This done, and the cash or scrip paid and divided, the whole subject was left to fall asleep where it slumbers still. The Plaza was inclosed with a handsome iron fence, and the ground considerably improved, leveled, and planted with trees and shrubs. The election which occurred on the seventh of September exhibited a heavy vote, 10,883 being cast in the city. On the first of October the Yankee Blade steamship, was lost near Point Conception, and many of her passengers were drowned. Soon after, the city was thrown into another intense excitement, by the discovery that Harry Meiggs, "honest Harry," who had held office in the Council for years, and who had possessed an enviable reputation as a man of integrity, energy, enterprise and benevolence, had escaped by sea with his family and brother just elected Controller of the city, leaving behind him several hundred thousand dollars of forged city warrants which he had hypothecated and for which he had received heavy amounts of cash. Harry made his way to South America where he resided when last heard from.

Col. Walker having been indicted and tried for having fitted out an armed expedition to Lower California, etc., was acquitted on the nineteenth of October. This ended that filibustering tragedy and farce. The assessed property of the city at this date was over \$34,000,000. The schools at this time were in a flourishing condition, the children by the census amounting to 3,780, of ages entitling them to the privileges of scholars. Much interest was exhibited at this period in favor of inducing immigration, and several meetings for the purpose took place. But they resulted eventually in nothing more than resolutions. The last event of importance of the year 1854, was the decree by the Board of U. S. Land Commissioners, that San Francisco was a "Pueblo" under the Mexican Government, and as such entitled to the lands within its limits, etc. Many hailed this decision as their salvation, others denounced it as a fraud, although indorsed by the Commissioners. Upon a question respecting which learned lawyers disagree, and differ so widely, a non-professional may be excused for expressing no opinion, especially as it could have no beneficial