

fortification, known as Fort Blanco, 107 feet above high-water; upon its ruins the present beautiful and substantial fortress was built (Fort Point). It was commenced in 1854, and is four tiers in height, including the battery in the rear, mounting in all 164 guns, with accommodation for 2,400 men. The Light House adjoins the fort, and a fog-bell is placed alongside, at an elevation of  $40\frac{1}{2}$  feet. Between the Fort on this side, and Lime Point on the opposite shore, is *the Golden Gate*, the entrance to the bay of San Francisco—1 mile and 17 yards across; here the tide varies about seven feet. The name of the "Golden Gate" first appeared in Fremont's Geographical Memoir of California. The term was descriptive, *not* of the literal golden treasures within (then undiscovered) but of the rich and fertile country which surrounded the shores of the bay. Added to this, the present site of San Francisco pointed it out as a great commercial center, and gold has only quickened a growth that was otherwise inevitable. "Within this Golden Gate is a mine of wealth in broad acres, yet undeveloped, that lack only the hands of energetic men 'to make the wilderness blossom like the rose,' and her plains and valleys yield riches, far more lasting than even the glittering ore, that each stroke of the miner's pick exposes to the light of the noon-day sun."

#### Islands within our Limits.

THE following Islands are also within the legislative limits of this City and County, viz., *Yerba Buena*, *Alcatrazes*, and the *Farallones*.

*Yerba Buena Island*—Is situated in the Bay of San Francisco. From Rincon Point and Market Street Wharf it is distant about one mile and a half, from Contra Costa nearly three miles, and the western point is one and three-quarters miles from Telegraph Hill. The northern end of the island is distant from the Golden Gate (Fort Point) five miles and a half. This island contains 198 acres, of which 75 consist of rich soil, well adapted for garden purposes; 15 acres are heavily timbered; 23 acres jungle and brushwood: 75 acres hilly, rocky and sandy, being thickly covered with the herb, or mint plant, from which the island takes its present name. Springs of excellent water abound on the eastern and western sides, in the midst of a fertile valley. The apex of this island is 343 feet above high water; the sides are steep and irregular—rising to a ridge running nearly east and west. In early times it was densely covered with wood, and was known to ancient mariners and whalers as Wood Island; but in 1839, one Nathan Spear placed a number of goats thereon, and hence the still popular name of Goat Island. On the easterly side is a wide, shoal bay, dry at low water, which, with the present material on the island, could be filled up, so as to be more than double its size. This island is formed of compact beds of sandstone, from a few inches to six and eight feet in thickness. Its texture varies but little in the different beds, and the grain is close and even, and generally very fine. The strata are laid bare by the action of the water around the base of the island, and form a bold, rocky shore, which in many places appears to offer great resistance to the persistent denuding action of the waves and strong currents. On approaching the island from the west, the evidence of stratification becomes visible, and the beds are seen to dip westwardly towards the observer. The position of these beds of sandstone is highly favorable for working, readily loaded at the wharf, and ferried over the channel to the city. Several quarries are now opened on the island, and the supply of build-