

Population San Francisco, January, 1871.

The following table, compiled from reliable data obtained during the progress of the canvass for the present volume, is presented as an estimate of the population of the City of San Francisco, January 1st, 1871, and in directing attention thereto, the compiler believes it to be a fair approximation to the actual figures:

White males over twenty-one, names in the present volume.....	57,850
“ Females over eighteen, estimated	36,400
“ Males under twenty-one and females under eighteen, estimated.....	56,500
“ Males, names refused, and foreigners, estimated.....	3,000
Chinese, male and female*.....	9,000
Colored, male and female.....	2,000
Total permanent population.....	164,750
To which should be added a large element of our population known as “floating,” which consists of: 1st. Transient boarders, etc., at hotels, boarding-houses, etc. 2d. Soldiers at the fortifications in the harbor. 3d. Persons engaged in navigating the bay, who claim this city as their residence. 4th. A large number of persons who have no permanent place of abode, together amounting to about.....	
	8,000
Total population	172,750

IMPROVEMENTS.

The records of the progress and improvements, made annually in the City Directory, constitute the most succinct and concise history of San Francisco that could be written. Less elaborate and diffuse than the daily newspaper, it still contains in the briefest possible space brought directly to the eye, all that tells of advances made from year to year, congregated with the names of citizens; the municipal officers; the financial condition; state of trade; public institutions; condition of streets; extent; population; laws, and principal events. In previous numbers of the Directory, the chief points in the history of the City, as well as of California, have been mentioned—first the discovery of the bay by Gov. Portala in 1769 in an expedition by land from San Diego, then the founding of the Mission Dolores, by the monks Francisco Palou and Benito Cambon in 1776; the subsequent establishing of the pueblo of Yerba Buena in 1836; the transfer to the United States in 1846; the survey and change of name to San Francisco in 1847; the discovery of gold in 1848; followed by the rapid rise to the present time when it promises to become one of the greatest commercial cities of the world.

The first census, made in 1847, reports a population of 459, and the last, in 1870, gives a population of 150,361. The great influx of population, commencing in 1849, has continued to the present day, sometimes fluctuating, but with such general regularity that the future may be confidently calculated upon. Since the occupation of the city by Americans, there have been periods of rapid advancement followed by stagnation and depression. The natural inference is, that a city with such a basis as this—a harbor of unequalled capacity backed by a country of extraordinary resources, and fronting an ocean that washes countless islands of great fertility, and countries of the oldest civilization and greatest wealth of the earth—should progress with a certainty, and that there could be no such thing as recession. The very confidence so strongly felt in the future, has, at different periods, so impelled investments and improvements that the city has grown beyond the necessities of business; consequently there have been times of halting in the advance, a partial suspension of improvements and a depression in prices.

There was a wild rush of investments in city property during the first five or six years following the gold discovery, when there came a period of depression, and property outside of the main business streets sold for less than the costs of the improvements on it. This depression, commencing with the failure of the leading express and banking companies in 1855, continued until 1858, when the development of the agricultural resources of the State gave greater confidence in the producing capacity and stability of the country. This was followed by the discovery of silver in Nevada, in mines of fabulous wealth, giving such an incentive to mining enterprise that business of all kinds was carried forward with it. Then for the first time was the attention of the capitalists of San Francisco directed to mining investments, the consequence of which was the exploration of the hitherto unknown regions of the Pacific Coast, opening valuable mines in every section of the vast interior, and correspondingly extending the commerce and influence of this city. The opening of the mining regions of Idaho, Nevada, Arizona and Mexico created a great demand for machinery, and foundries and other manufactures flourished most prosperously. The spread of mining explorations throughout the distant Territories and the development of the agricultural interests continued with great energy and success, with San Francisco as the center of operations, although suffering severe losses from illconsidered investments but reaping the reward of the general activity and prosperity, that city rapidly increased in population and wealth. During this period the trans-continental railroad was commenced and finished,

* The Federal Census (September, 1870) returns the aggregate Chinese population at 11,817. Assuming these figures to have been correct, it is believed that this number has been reduced since by recent departures to the figures included in our table.