

cot, door, and window frames, shutters, columns, ornamental work and the back stairs, are all of iron. The broad, lofty front stairs on the Fifth Street front, are of Rocklin granite. The doors and window sashes, golden mahogany; the counters and furniture of Honduras mahogany; the window-glass of French plate; door fittings of brass; the flat-link sash-weight chains are copper, and the roof covered with copper, tinned on both sides. Six solid fluted columns, massive and lofty, give beauty and grandeur to the main entrance on Fifth Street. The style of architecture is the Doric.

A particular description of the location and especial purpose of each room, with the peculiar elaborate machinery contained therein would fill a volume. Much of the costly machinery is of the most massive description in its proportions and solidity, and finished with the finest possible mathematical nicety. As is not generally known, the San Francisco Mint is no longer a Branch Mint, even in name. Nearly two years since it was erected into the full dignity of an independent establishment. In fact, when one considers the magnitude of the business done within its walls, it would seem that in respect to this, and most important of all particulars, all the other mints in the country might more properly be ranked as branches of this. Its coinage of gold and silver during 1874, up to the first of December, was: Gold—Eight hundred and seventy-five thousand double eagles, worth \$17,500,000; five thousand eagles, worth \$50,000, and seven thousand half eagles, worth \$35,000; total, \$17,585,000. Silver—two million one hundred and thirty-three thousand trade dollars, worth \$2,133,000; three hundred and forty-four thousand halves, worth \$172,000; three hundred and ninety-two thousand quarters, worth \$98,000, and two hundred and forty thousand dimes, worth \$24,000; total, \$2,427,000—thus making a grand total of over \$20,000,000.

THE UNITED STATES APPRAISER'S BUILDING.—Upon the west half of the block, bounded by Washington, Sansom, Jackson, and Battery streets, commonly known as the Post-office Block, stands, or has begun to stand, the new United States Appraiser's Building. Its length, on Sansom Street, is two hundred and sixty-five feet and six inches; its depth from west to east, along both Washington and Jackson streets, one hundred and twenty feet and six inches; its height is to be three full stories above a lofty basement. The material is what is known among the builders of this coast as Napa stone, from the locality of its most abundant quarries. It appears to be a kind of metamorphic granite. Only the basement and the first floor are to be used as appraiser's stores; the two upper stories are intended for occupation by the United States courts. The basement, nine feet and three inches in the clear, is already completed or so nearly so that the first floor, or at least the foundation, is fully laid. The basement wall rests upon a bed of solid concrete, five feet wide and as many deep. The material is broken rock firmly bedded in the best Rosendale cement. This was laid in courses about eight inches thick or deep, and each course was thoroughly tamped down into the utmost obtainable solidity. The first floor consists of arches of brick turned between deep and strong iron beams. Among the closing acts of the last Congress was the passage of a bill appropriating \$150,000 for the continuation of work upon this building. The progress of this immense and valuable building has been greatly delayed by the unexpected, yet almost imperative, necessity of changing the material of the outer walls from pressed brick to stone, a very considerable modification of the original design. Gen. Samuel McCullough, Superintendent of Construction of United States Buildings in California, the same who completed the United States Mint for \$50,000 within the appropriation therefor, has charge of this. Under his economical administration, masterly management, and watchful care, it bids fair to rank among the most faithfully and substantially-constructed Government buildings ever erected.

THE POST-OFFICE still occupies its old, insufficient, and inconveniently-located quarters on the eastern half of the block, bounded by Washington, Battery, and Jackson streets. Here it is horizontally sandwiched between the basement and upper story, both of which the Custom House appropriates. The Postmaster, Gen. Coey, with his customary zeal and efficiency is still multiplying all possible conveniences for the accommodation of the two hundred and thirty thousand people to whom his is by far the most important of all the Federal offices. His small army of employés, already numbering some hundred and twenty, can hardly be recruited fast enough to equal the constantly-increasing demand upon their indispensable services. Between forty and fifty find ample employment in the in-door service; upward of thirty are postal clerks or stage agents, and nearly forty are employed in the distribution and collection of written and printed mail matter throughout the city. The multiplication of the iron postal boxes, placed at convenient intervals within and to even beyond the corporate limits of the city, proves an indispensable public convenience, and, in fact, an almost inestimable public benefit in saving to our citizens the thousands of daily journeys to the Post-office, which, under the former system, they were necessarily compelled to make several times a day. Yet, although the service of the carrier department is so frequent and efficient, the two thousand three hundred post-office boxes still used, directly or indirectly, by upward of sixteen thousand persons, show that a very considerable portion of our citizens still prefer their conveniences. The number of letters dispatched daily by the regular Overland Mail is between three and four thousand, while the State and Coast Mail is nearly five times as great. The mails to China and Japan carry six thousand letters a month; those to Australia, five thousand; to the West Coast of Central and South America, four thousand; to the Sandwich Islands, four thousand; to British America and Alaska, two thousand. Thus, the grand aggregate of letters annually dispatched from the San