The presidio enclosure was about 300 yards square. In 1834, when it was secularized and began to be known by the secular name of Yerba Buena, the mission Dolores had a population of 500. In the summer of 1846 an American man-of-war took possession of the place. In the early part of 1849 the inhabitants numbered about 2000, and the embryo city had already come to be known by its future name of San Francisco. In consequence of the dis­covery of gold in California a strong drift of population set in towards the placer mines, and at the end of 1849 there were 20,000 people in the city. The first legislature of California granted a charter to San Francisco on 1st May 1850. Prior to that date the government of the pueblo had been administered by an alcalde. The pueblo grant originally made by the king of Spain contained four square (Spanish) leagues of land; this grant was subsequently confirmed to San Fran­

cisco by an Act of Con­

gress. The jurisdiction

of the municipality ex­

tends over the islands in

the bay. The area in­

cluded in the limits of the

city exceeds the original

four square leagues con­

siderably, including what

were originally denomi­

nated “ swamp and over­

flowed lands” (see Dwi-

nelle’s *Colonial History).*

In the first stages of its history the buildings of the city were chiefly of wood,—in many cases the frames and coverings having been brought from the Atlantic States round Cape Horn in sailing vessels. Within a few months of the establish- ment of municipal govern­ment the city suffered severely on more than one occasion from fire.

The fire of 4th May 1850 destroyed property to the value of about $3,000,000 ; another in the following month was still more destructive ($4,000,000); and the damage resulting from a third in September was estimated at $500,000.

These occurrences naturally led to the employment of more substantial building material in some cases, granite being imported from China for some buildings, and iron and brick being used to a considerable extent on others ; but to this day nearly all the private dwellings of the city are of wood. Since 1850, however, the damage from fire in the portion of the city occupied by private houses has been remarkably small,—partly because of the use of red- wood instead of pine. In the business houses erected recently the increase of solidity and costliness has been very marked.

Throughout a considerable part of the city the streets are laid out in rectangular form, and nowhere with any reference to the natural elevations. The most important business thoroughfare is Market Street, extending from the water front at the ferry landings to the hills on the

west, a distance of 3 miles or more. The more important streets are paved for the most part with cobble stones and basalt blocks; but asphalt on a stone or concrete founda­tion has begun to be used. Among the public buildings and institutions of San Francisco are the mint, appraisers’ stores, subtreasury, custom-house, merchants’ exchange, stock exchange, city-hall, industrial school, house of correc­tion, almshouse, Masonic Temple, new Oddfellows’ building, safe deposit, and seven theatres and opera-houses. The Palace Hotel cost $3,250,000, and can accommodate 1200 guests. The city has eleven public squares. Its greatest attraction is the Golden Gate Park of 1050 acres, 3 miles long and half a mile wide, having the ocean for its extreme westerly boundary. The greater part of this area was for­merly a shifting sand-dune. An extensive glass-house in a central position is filled with the rarest tropical and semi-

tropical plants and shrubs; a large part of the area is planted with forest trees, or is laid down in grass; the walks and drives are well planned and well kept.

San Francisco is traversed in various directions by horse railroads, which extend from the water front to the suburbs. There are also 50 miles of wire cable roads, which are yearly increasing. These cable tramways extend 2 miles on Clay Street, overcoming an elevation of 120 feet. The cost of their construction and equip­ment has ranged from $100,000 to $125,000 per mile. The speed is usually about 5 miles an hour. San Fran­cisco is the terminus of two continental railways, viz., the Union and Central Pacific and the Southern Pacific; while a third, the Atlantic and Pacific, enters the city over a leased line from Mohave. Two narrow-gauge lines and one broad-gauge, each less than a hundred miles long, to