



SUTRO BATHS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

BY F. W. PARSONS.

The most enduring monument to the memory of Adolph Sutro forms the subject of this descriptive sketch: The Sutro Baths of San Francisco.

Although this gigantic structure has been in active operation for two or three years, it is not well known.

The foundations for the bath buildings were hewn out of the rock, and a great catch basin, hollowed out by dynamite or giant powder, first receives the water as it dashes in upon the shore. From this pool, sea water is conveyed by tunnels to a settling tank; from the latter it is distributed through small canals to the six great swimming tanks that the baths provide.

The largest tank is L-shaped, 350 feet long, 250 feet wide in its widest part and 150 feet wide in its narrowest section. This mammoth tank is largely filled with sea water at its natural temperature. The five smaller tanks are regulated to various temperatures, to suit the convenience of bathers. The tanks have an ocean frontage, and the buildings being of iron and glass, bathers can see and hear the waves breaking without.

Great ingenuity has been exercised in emptying the tanks in accordance with the most advanced ideas on sanitary engineering. All six tanks empty their waste water, ultimately, into one main outlet, and from that it is forced through pipes hundreds of feet beyond the neighboring headlands and passes out with the current into the open sea.

Great ingenuity has been shown in protecting the baths, on their seaward side, from any dangers of a stormy sea. A massive break-water extends along the west side, 400 feet in length, 20 feet in depth, with a width at the top of 25 feet and a width at the base of 75 feet. It contains 450,000 cubic feet of rock. There is also another break-water, 300 feet long, with the same depth and width as the one just described, but with 300,000 cubic feet of rock.

Provision is also made for exceptionally low water. Pumping facilities are provided, in case the tides should run unusually low, so that water can be forced into the tanks at the rate of 6,000 gallons per minute. The buildings are, in a measure, sheltered on the south, north, and east by cliffs rising higher than the baths themselves.

Just above the tanks is the gallery for bathers, with numerous corridors leading from it to the many dressing rooms. Above and beyond the gallery for bathers rises a gallery for spectators, and tier after tier of seats, somewhat similar to the Roman amphitheater. From every part of this vast auditorium the swimming tanks are visible. The seating capacity of the auditorium and spectators' promenade is estimated at 7,400.

The main entrance to this great institution is on a land level much higher than the tanks. The main approach is through a classic temple, fronting on Point Lobos Avenue, a little north of the new Cliff House. The visitor descends a grand stairway, flanked by flowers and potted plants, to the original elevator promenade and museum galleries. Here are gathered together a collection of archaeological and historic objects, state papers of Great Britain, curios from many parts of the world, constituting an exhibition in itself, and not at all what any one would naturally expect

to visitors with a taste for mechanics. Taken throughout, the Sutro Baths will comfortably house 25,000 people. Some approximate idea of the vast extent of the buildings, so happily combined with light, airiness, strength, and durability, can be gathered from the following data:

Length of baths.....	499 5 feet
Width of baths.....	254 1 feet
Amount of glass used.....	100,000 superficial feet
Iron in roof and columns.....	600 tons
Lumber.....	3,500,000 feet
Concrete.....	270,000 cubic feet
Capacity of the tanks.....	1,804,962 gallons

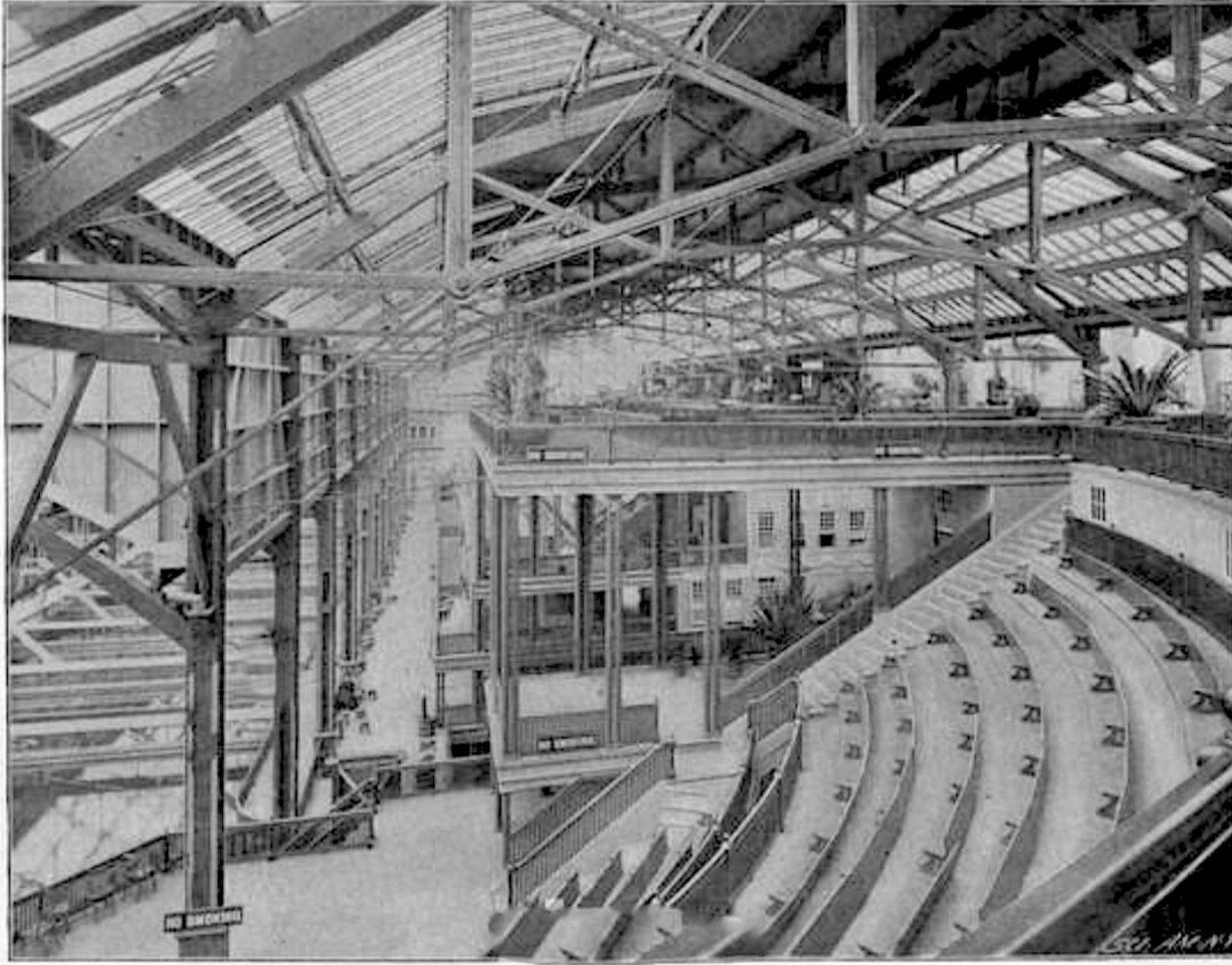
Besides the salt water tanks, already described, there is one fresh water plunge tank. In the way of apparatus there are 7 toboggan slides in the baths, 9 springboards, 3 trapezes, 1 high dive, and 30 swinging rings. There are 517 private dressing rooms, also club rooms, each of the latter with a capacity of accommodation for 9 bathers, the total rooming capacity of private and club dressing rooms amounting to 1,627. There are 69 shower baths.

Business at Guam.

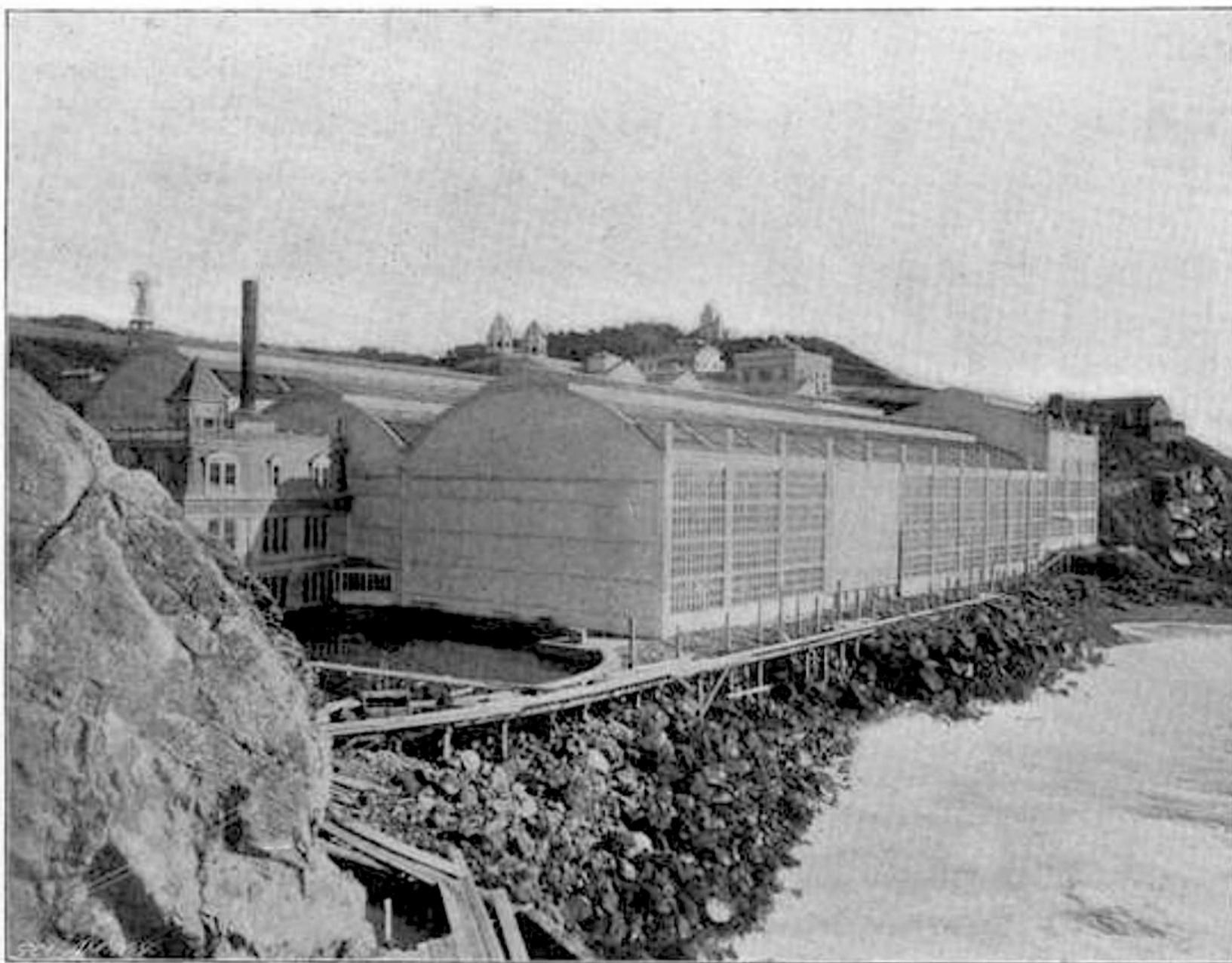
The Navy Department has received a report made by the surgeon, Dr. Ward, of the cruiser "Bennington." Surgeon Ward went ashore and investigated the commercial products and mercantile establishments, during the stay of the "Bennington" in the harbor, with a view of determining what dependence could be placed on local markets for supporting the force to be kept on the island by the United States. At Agana, the chief town, he found eight so-called stores; in some of them he found it possible to buy cotton clothes of various colors, embroideries, shoes, matches, soap, candles, and a few varieties of poor canned goods, also Manila cigars of poor quality. A Japanese store was the best in the town; here were also sold imitations of imported wine, and very bad bread. The American store was more pretentious than any of the others, but was found to be inferior in many respects to the Japanese. A greater variety of goods were kept, including canned vegetables, meats, oil, musical instruments, lamps, crockery, trunks, nails, etc.

Even such staple articles as flour are very hard to obtain. Milk, chickens, and eggs were plentiful, however, but the beef was poor. The chief native sources of food are bananas, coconuts, bread fruit, clams and oysters; besides, game, birds, ducks, etc., are plentiful.

ACCORDING to a French medical journal, the London and Northwestern Railway Company has set up at Crewe an establishment or factory for making artificial hands, arms, and legs for its employes and injured passengers. These are supplied without charge to the recipients.



AMPHITHEATER AND PROMENADE, SUTRO BATHS.

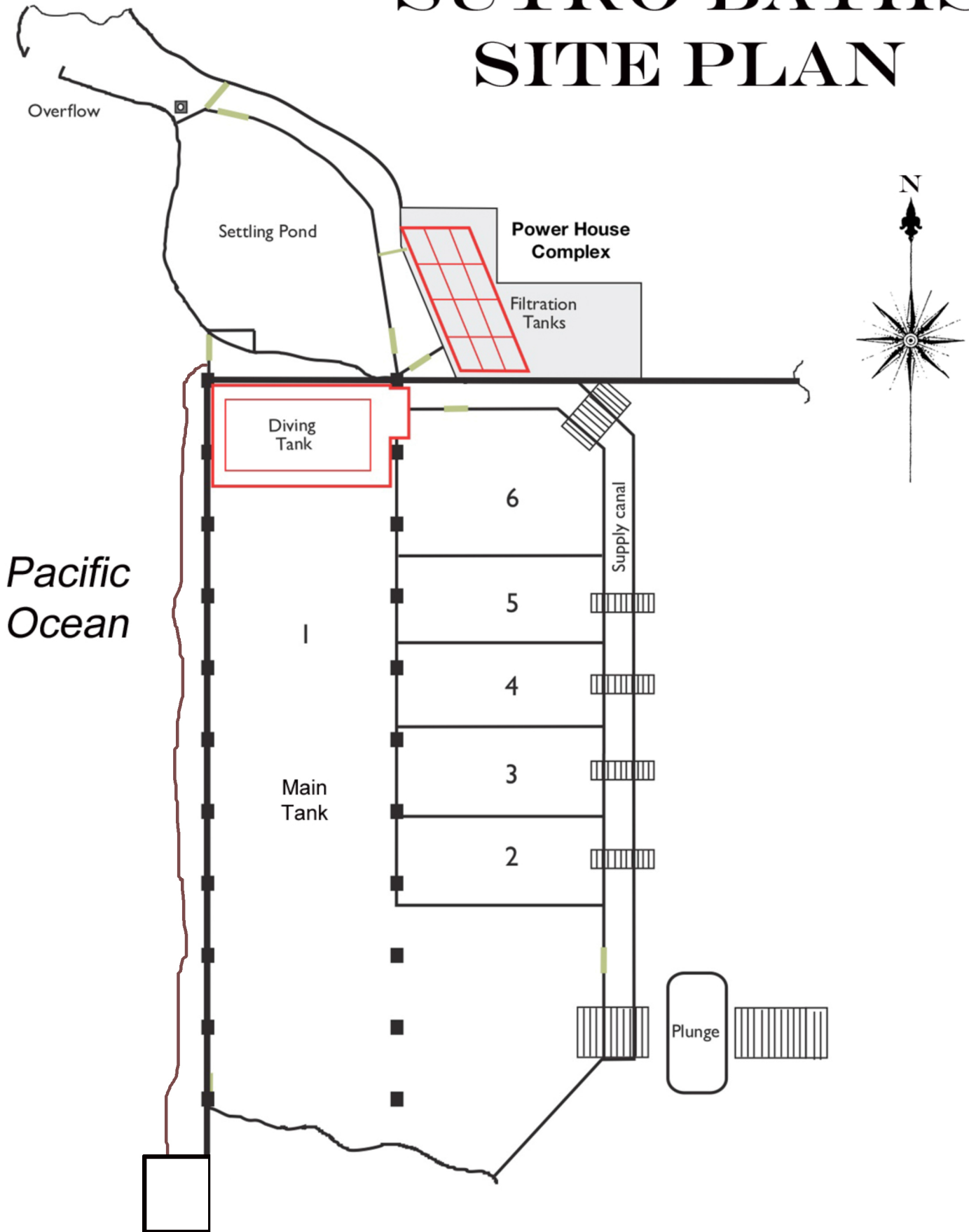


EXTERIOR OF THE SUTRO BATHS, SAN FRANCISCO.

to see as an adjunct of a great bathing establishment. In the auditorium is a restaurant, comprising three floors, each 30 x 75 feet in size and with a capacity for 1,000 people. The restaurant verandas are just to the right of the stairway leading down to the main tank, as seen from the water, or on the left of those descending to the tank. A capacious kitchen is attached to the baths. The establishment also boasts a laundry, equipped with washer, drier, wringer, and ironer. Its capacity is equal to 20,000 suits and 40,000 towels per day. The buildings are lighted throughout by electricity.

The engines and boiler room are of unflinching interest

SUTRO BATHS SITE PLAN



Sutro Baths facts at a glance:

Length of Baths:	499.5 feet
Width of Baths	254.1 feet
Amount of glass:	100,000 superficial feet
Iron in roof columns:	600 tons
Lumber:	3,500,000 tons
Concrete:	270,000 cubic feet
Seating – bleachers:	3,700
Seating – promenade	3,700
Holding capacity:	25,000
Salt Water tanks:	6
Fresh water tanks:	1
Capacity of tanks;	1,804,962 gallons
Toboggan slides:	7
Swinging rings:	30
Spring boards:	1
Private dressing rooms:	517
Club room capacity:	1,100
Time required to fill Baths – by wave action	1 hour
Time required to fill Baths – by pump	5 hours

Source: Article: “Pacific Service Supplies the World’s Largest Baths”, by J.D. Van Hoosear, *Pacific Service Magazine*, September, 1912.