

# THE BONANZA ERA

1870 - 1890

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## THE PALACE HOTEL AND “THE MAN WHO BUILT SAN FRANCISCO”

*I have made me great works and I have builded me stately mansions and behold! All is vanity and vexation of spirit. And there is no profit under the sun.  
Yea, I hate my labor, for I shall leave it for the man who shall come after me.  
And who knoweth if he is a wise man or a fool?*

— Ecclesiastes 2:4

**D**URING THE HEADY YEARS between 1870 and 1890, San Francisco was like the profligate child who went through one fortune only to inherit another. As the gold in the Mother Lode began to play out, a great mountain of silver was discovered in Nevada. Miners devised new techniques, diverting whole rivers and blasting away mountainsides with streams of water, or constructing vast networks of tunnels to get at the silver or gold below the surface. Meanwhile, the trans-continental railroad, completed in 1869, promised new wealth to merchants in San Francisco, as well as to railroad barons Crocker, Stanford, Huntington and Hopkins, who amassed staggering fortunes and set new standards in lavish spending.