Relief business directory, May, 1906 : giving names, business and address of San Francisco firms and business men who were compelled to change their location by the disaster of April 18 : and who have since located in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda and Emeryville.
Berkeley, CA : Beecher & Pike, 1906.
Bancroft F869 S3 .1 B3 \x\

Room Five: Reconstructing a New City

Businesses Thrive, Then Tourism

After the initial trauma passed, San Francisco quickly started on the road to recovery. The city's small businessmen in particular hastened to open shop again. Much of San Francisco was in ruins and its population displaced, but entrepreneurs realized that their services would soon be in demand. Once people began reconstructing their lives, they would need contractors, employment and real estate agencies, dentists, and all other manner of daily industry. The members of San Francisco's business community knew they needed to be prepared when that time came and were eager to resume business, even when faced with the destruction of their own offices and shops.

In May 1906, the Berkeley publishing firm of Beecher & Pike released a *Relief Business Directory* with the "Names and new locations in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley and Alameda of 4,000 San Francisco Firms and Business Men." The high number of advertised entries revealed the strong determination to conduct business – names and addresses even spilled out onto the publication's cover. A sense of civic pride supplemented the desire to start earning again. These men wanted San Francisco to preserve its title as capitalist center of the West Coast – Los Angeles or Seattle should not be allowed to benefit from the calamity.

While plenty of conventional businesses were reborn, at least one wholly new industry arose from the ashes: disaster tourism. The San Francisco earthquake and fire had immediately become legend, and there were visitors – some curious, some morbid – who desired to see the wreckage firsthand. Considerable money was to be made in guided tours. It appeared that San Francisco's entrepreneurial spirit was indeed alive and well.