

# The Anaconda Standard.

DECEMBER 12, 1901.

## NICK KESSLER DEAD

ONE OF HELENA'S MOST PROGRESSIVE CITIZENS AND AN OLD PIONEER OF THE STATE.

### HIS END IS UNEXPECTED

Taken Ill on Saturday Last, When About to Leave for California to Spend the Winter—Not Considered of a Serious Nature at the Time. Direct Cause of Death Is Rupture of a Blood Vessel—Expressions of Regret Heard on All Sides at His Taking Off.

Special Dispatch to the Standard.

Helena, Dec. 11.—Nicholas Kessler, one of Helena's first citizens, a man of pleasing personality, large of heart and endowed with the noblest of attributes, passed away early this morning in his 69th year. It is no exaggeration to state that not since the death of Col. Charles A. Broadwater have the people of the capital city felt that the grim reaper has taken one who could so illy be spared. On every side were heard expressions of deep regret and general sorrow. Many did not know that Nick Kessler, as every one called him, was ill. This made the news of his taking off all the more bitter. The sad news was on every lip to-day. Everybody was his friend, while it is doubtful if he ever had an enemy. In storm and in sunshine he was the same jovial, whole-souled man, ready to help, quick to do more than his part in any public enterprise that was intended to advance the city or the state. The sturdy pioneers who had known him since he first came to Montana 38 years ago joined with the younger generation in expressions of profound sorrow over his death and sincere sympathy for his afflicted family.

He was taken ill only last Saturday, with a complication of stomach and liver trouble. Neither he nor the members of his family considered his illness of a serious nature. Plans were on foot for his departure in a few days to San Diego, Cal., where in company with his daughter he expected to spend the winter visiting with his two nieces, Mrs. A. Eckert and Mrs. Hecket, of whom he was very fond. His condition became more serious last night. He was taken with a spell of vomiting and fainting. About 2 o'clock this morning he was in a very serious condition. Dr. William Treacy, who was called in, remained until the end, and did the best that medical skill could to save the pioneer's life. Mr. Kessler was in a semi-conscious condition almost until the end, dying at 6:40 this morning. The direct cause of death was the rupture of a blood vessel. Telegrams were at once dispatched to his nieces in San Diego, who with a niece living here, Mrs. Kelley, and his three children, constitute his relatives in this country. Until the nieces arrive the funeral arrangements cannot be perfected, but it is expected that the funeral will be held on Sunday under the auspices of Morning Star lodge of Masons, of which he had long been a member.

Mr. Kessler was born in Befort in the canton of Echternach, Luxemburg, May 26, 1833, and was therefore in his 69th year at the time of his death. He came to America in 1854, locating first in Sandusky, Ohio, and later in Detroit, Mich., where he was employed as a clerk in the grocery business. He spent three years in Chicago in the feed and commission business. Meeting with business reverses he joined the argonauts going across the plains in the Pike's peak excitement. After mining in Buckhorn, Joe Breckenridge and other Colorado gulches, he joined a party coming to Bannack. He reached Alder gulch on Sept. 22, 1863.

He engaged in the bakery business and in mining. The next year, having accumulated a little money, he made a trip to the fatherland. He returned in 1865, going first to Blackfoot and then coming to Last Chance. He bought an interest in Charles Beehrees' brewery just east of where the Broadwater hotel now stands. Mr. Kessler eventually bought out Mr. Beehrees' interest and continued to run the establishment up to his death, improving the plant each year until to-day it is one of the leading breweries of the state. He also embarked in the brick manufacturing business and became interested in stock and mining enterprises. He was interested in the Cascade Land company in Cascade county and at the time of his death was comfortably fixed.

Mr. Kessler was married in New York to Miss Louise Ebert in 1873. Three children were born, Charles N., Fred E., and Mathilda, all of whom survive him. Mrs. Kessler died in 1880. Mr. Kessler served one term in the territorial legislature. He was often urged to accept public office after Montana became a state, but he could not be induced to leave the walks of private life. He was an active member of the Society of Montana Pioneers and always made it a point to attend the annual meetings. He kept open house whenever there were public gatherings in Helena and his hospitality was known everywhere. The last time the State Press association met in Helena, in 1896, he spared no effort to entertain the newspaper men.

His name generally headed every subscription list of any importance started in Helena. As one of his lifelong friends said to-day he could not say no, and often in business transactions rather than have any difficulty he would take the worst end of a bargain. He was an honorary member of the Helena lodge of Elks. For several years many members of the order had been in the habit of going out to his hospitable home upon the occasion of his birthday to spend the evening and enjoy his hospitality. Two years ago the lodge presented him with a handsome silver loving cup, a gift that he treasured. It is expected that his funeral will bring to Helena many of his friends from all parts of the state.

Nicholas Kessler was born in Befort, in the grand duchy of Luxembourg, May 26, 1833. He was the youngest of a family of six. At the age of 20 Mr. Kessler came to America, landing at New York in 1854. From there he went to Sandusky, Ohio, and afterwards to Detroit, where he was employed in a grocery store. Soon afterwards he went into the commission business in Chicago, where he lost all he had in the panic of 1857.

The Pike's Peak gold excitement broke out in 1858 and Mr. Kessler joined the stampede across the plains. His prospecting experiences in Colorado were not profitable, and in 1863 he came to Virginia City, Mont., then in the height of its prosperity. Mr. Kessler started a bakery and restaurant and fortune smiled upon him after the hard luck of six years. In 1864 he made a visit to his old home in Germany, but returned soon to Montana.

In 1865 Mr. Kessler took charge of the brewery at Helena, which he soon after purchased, developing it to one of the largest plants of the kind in the state. Mr. Kessler did not, however, confine his business interests to brewing alone, but was also concerned in various other business enterprises—brickmaking, real estate, mining and stock raising.

Mr. Kessler was married in 1873 to Miss Louisa Ebert of New York. Mrs. Kessler died in 1880, leaving three children, two sons and a daughter.