

country. From 1864 to 1869, until the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads were built, all merchandise, machinery for quartz, lumber and grist mills, and the majority of immigrants with their families, found their way to Montana by boat up the Missouri river to Fort Benton. The nearest gold mines to the southward were at Helena. Further south were the famous mines of Alder gulch, at Virginia City, and to the east and west of Helena lay the rich placers of Diamond City and Deer Lodge county. Helena, 145 miles south of Benton, was the central point to which all the commerce of Montana had to be taken for distribution, and where all people had to go before they could branch off to reach their chosen fields of labor. Besides this, she had rich gold placers of her own in Last Chance and twenty other gulches in her immediate vicinity. Employment was easily found at wages which seemed to the new-comer to assure him a fortune, and thousands abandoned the idea of searching for nature's treasures, and went energetically to work here. A city sprang up like magic. Merchants brought in immense stocks of goods, and sold to retail dealers in all the camps of the territory. Fortunes were accumulated rapidly. Helena, by reason of her own valuable mines and her favorable location in regard to other mining camps, became the great mining and commercial center; by accumulation of wealth, in the hands of shrewd, capable and energetic men who knew how to use money to conquer fortune, she acquired complete financial supremacy; and finally her political influence and commanding situation gave her the seat of government of the territory. All of these advantages she still retains, and they will, in a few years, when the railroad system of Montana is further developed, give her ten times the population and influence she now has, for then Helena will become the railroad center of this vast region. These are the reasons why she is the political, financial and commercial capital of Montana, and why she is proudly and lovingly called by all her citizens, "The Queen of the Mountains."

The circumstances of the birth of Helena have been recorded by Mr. R. Stanley, now of Attleborough, Nuneaton, England. In the spring of 1864, accompanied by three Americans, John Cowan, John Crab and D. J. Miller, he left the mines of Alder gulch (the famous mining camp of Virginia City, Montana, which yielded in three seasons \$30,000,000 of gold dust), where they had been unsuccessful in securing claims. One evening they camped on Last Chance gulch and prospected a little, finding color, but not enough to satisfy them. They went on over the range and down the Hell Gate river (between the present towns of Deer Lodge City and Missoula), intending to strike the "big thing at Kootenai," as the latest discovered placer mines were called. These were in British Columbia and a long distance away. However, they encountered Jim Coleman and party just from Kootenai, who said those mines were "played out," and they were on their way back to "old Alder." They had provisions in their wagons for three months, and concluded to expend them before returning to Alder gulch. The next morning they started on the back track, prospected on the Little Blackfoot river, crossed the main ridge of the Rocky mountains near where Mullan tunnel is now being bored, prospected upon Seven Mile creek and the Dearborn, Marias and Teton rivers to their sources on the east side of the mountains, only finding gold colors on all these streams, but not in paying quantities. After consultation, they concluded to return to this place, and if they found nothing, to go back to Alder gulch. The little gulch on the Prickly Pear they said was their "last chance," and they so named it after their great discovery was made; and upon its banks now stands the capital city and commercial metropolis of Montana.

Mr. Stanley says in a letter describing the incidents of the discovery:

They reached the spot one afternoon on or about the fifteenth of July, 1864, and made their camp a short distance up the gulch near to where the First National Bank of Helena was built in 1866.

That evening they sunk two holes to bed rock and found gold in paying quantities, in sizes from pin points up to the value of half a dollar. So here they camped and gave their gulch the name of "Last Chance." Here they made fortunes, were quickly surrounded by miners who had heard of their discovery, and the camp soon rivaled Virginia City in the number of its inhabitants. A meeting of the miners was held at the cabin of Captain Wood in the fall of 1864, to baptize the new camp. One miner from Minnesota proposed "Tomah," the name of an Indian friend, and another who had probably read Homer a little, proposed "Helena," who, he said, was the most beautiful woman of her age. The gallant miners voted for Helena.

Mr. Cowan stated while on a visit here some years ago, that the three noted mountains which tower above Helena were named by the first settlers in the town—the first west of the city, Mt. Cowan (now called Mt. Helena); the second, between Last Chance and Dry gulches, Mt. Stanley; the third, east of Dry gulch, Mt. Miller—in honor of the gentlemen who discovered the mines in Last Chance gulch. These names should be perpetuated by act of the legislature.

The distance by the Northern Pacific from Helena to Mullan tunnel is fifteen miles, the grade rising rapidly until the tunnel is reached. The scenery as the summits of the mountains appear, is of the most rugged character, and fully justifies the title of "Rocky mountains." The cuts and fills are enormous, and the work is among the most expensive on the whole line of the road. From the station at Helena the most powerful locomotives yet made will be used, and here will probably be large round-houses and repair and construction shops, thus adding much to the business and bustle of the city.

HOT SPRINGS.

Among the attractions of Helena are the hot springs four miles west of the city. They are a favorite resort for people afflicted with rheumatism and other diseases, who are benefited by bathing in the medicinal waters. The temperature varies from 110° to 190° Fahrenheit. They are situated in a picturesque glen, and there are a hotel and bath house neatly kept and of ample accommodations.

HELENA'S BUSINESS.

The business of the city, both wholesale and retail, is enormous, and such as few places of but 6,000 inhabitants can boast of. This is accounted for by its favorable and commanding position as the trade center of the territory. Nearly \$2,000,000 are invested in cattle and sheep by men residing here, and from that business alone some of them derive an annual income of from \$30,000 to \$50,000. The clerical, medical and legal professions are fully and ably represented by men who derive from them a good support. As yet little manufacturing is done, but the advent of a railroad will stimulate that industry and add another important factor to the prosperity of Helena. There are now in operation two foundries and machine shops which repair and even manufacture machinery for quartz mills, and the manufacture of lumber, sash, doors and woodwork in general is quite extensively engaged in. A few wagons and carriages are made, but the iron and hard wood are imported from the east. As yet no iron ore has been reduced here, though both iron and coal abound. Lime is plentiful and great quantities of it are burned within the city limits. Several million bricks are annually made, and to the cheapness of brick and lime is largely to be attributed the existence of so many substantial business blocks. Woolen and soap factories could be profitably operated here, where the raw material is so abundant and the facilities for manufacturing so good.

The handling of the enormous trade of Helena is facilitated by four national banks, three of which have been established within a year. The First National Bank has handled the money and exchange of the city for many years and has grown with its development. It has associate banks at Butte City, Fort Benton and Missoula. The following official statement of its condition December 30, 1882, will show its substantial character.

RESOURCES.

Loans and discounts.....	\$2,039,285.59
United States bonds.....	303,000.00
Real estate and fixtures.....	44,057.88
Cash and sight exchange.....	347,838.10
	\$2,734,181.57

LIABILITIES.

Capital surplus.....	\$ 400,569.63
Deposits.....	2,243,611.94
Circulation.....	90,000.00
	\$2,734,181.57

The Second National Bank of Helena commenced business August 26, 1882, and on the first of January presented the following statement, indicative of the business prosperity of itself and the city in which it has become a necessary institution:

RESOURCES.

Loans and discounts.....	\$ 91,890.25
United States bonds.....	30,000.00
Cash and sight exchange.....	23,949.21
Furniture and fixtures.....	2,000.00
Due from U. S. Treasurer.....	1,350.00
	\$149,189.46

LIABILITIES.

Capital stock paid in.....	\$ 75,000.00
Surplus and profits.....	2,564.24
Circulation.....	27,000.00
Deposits.....	44,625.22
	\$149,189.46

The Montana National Bank opened its doors on the 11th of November, 1882. It has an actual paid up capital of \$250,000, and an authorized capital of \$1,000,000. It is designated as the United States depository and has \$100,000 in U. S. bonds to secure the government deposits, also \$85,000 to secure its circulation. After being in business less than two months it made a statement on the first of January showing resources of \$525,000.00. The deposits amounted to \$272,162.02, and loans and discounts to \$150,000.00.

Helena is well represented abroad by two daily and weekly papers, the *Herald* and *Independent*. They are both enterprising journals and reflect the business prosperity of the city, to which they contribute in a large degree.

The leading clothing firm of the city and consequently of the whole territory, is the long-established house of Gans & Klein, wholesale and retail dealers in clothing and furnishing goods. The house was founded in 1866, and by its long association with commerce and its enterprising and judicious management has come to be considered as one of the great foundation stones of the city's trade. They not only have two stores in Helena, one for wholesale and one for retail trade, but have large branch establishments in Butte City and Fort Benton. In 1882 the firm imported 550 tons of merchandise, an amount of clothing beyond the comprehension of one not familiar with the trade. The house in Helena is under the management of H. Klein, assisted by H. Gans. The senior member of the firm, L. Gans, resides in New York and attends to the eastern business, including the purchase and manufacture of all goods for the three Montana houses. It is a constant matter of wonder to strangers that an establishment of this magnitude can exist in the interior of a territory far beyond the reach of railroads, yet it is a fact that it does exist, and that it pays annually for freight in excess of railroad charges a sum equal to the profits of many houses that have no doubt considered themselves superior to anything in Montana. Large as it is, the business of this house will be much increased when the railroads are completed, as these will not only give them better facilities for importing immense stocks of goods, but will widen their commercial field. These gentlemen are also extensive owners of land and stock, from which a large revenue is derived.

H. M. Parchen & Co., wholesale and retail dealers in drugs, medicines, paints, oils, glass-stationery, wall paper, etc., began a business in 1865 which has steadily grown to its present mag-