

THE LAMENT OF SANTA CLAUS

BY R.K. MUNKITTRICK

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I CANNOT think of any gift
To leave this dear old boy,
Who, while his hair falls white and swift,
Is gout's ecstatic toy.
His fingers warped, he cannot send
The marble on its course,
And all his joints 'twould quickly rend
To ride a rocking horse.
His teeth are gone and he can chop
No candy with his gums,
He's deaf and cannot hear the top
That whistles while it hums.
A big tin horn would surely pump
Him out, and very soon,
And on the chairs he couldn't jump
To fly a toy balloon.

*This fact grim fate most rudely flings—
Grim fate, the cruel jade—
Alas, there are no childish things
For second childhood made.*

THE picture book he cannot con
Because his vision's dim,
And he's too frail and feeble on
A bicycle to skim,
And, while on skates he'd somersault
And land upon his head,
He never could the bunker vault
Upon a scarlet sled.
Lead soldiers to his whim no more
In any way appeal,
Nor trains to run around the floor,
Nor lambs that squeak and squeal.
There is no plaything I can hand
Unto this ancient boy
To make him skip a saraband
Of eighteen carat joy.

*Because this fact fate rudely flings—
This fact none can evade—
Alas, there are no childish things
For second childhood made.*



ALMY AND ITS GREAT COAL FIELDS.

Almy is situated in the heart of a valley 15 miles in length and from four to five miles in width, in the southern corner of Wyoming, six miles from Evanston, the nearest point on the Union Pacific railroad. It has often been said, and not in the spirit of boastfulness, that Almy is the prettiest coal camp in the western country. As a rule, coal camps are situated generally in a narrow canyon where the houses of the miners are clustered on the hillsides, where the smoke and fumes from the mines cause the air to be impure and unhealthy. In contrast to these conditions, the town of Almy is situated on the

Eastern slope of the valley, from one to three miles distant from the residences of the miners. These residences, as a rule, are found in the middle of the valley on the bank of the beautiful Bear river, whose pure sparkling water springs up from the mountains 20 miles away, furnishing an inexhaustible supply for the miners' families. This is something to take into consideration, as miners of other coal camps in this section are compelled to pay as high as 25 cents for a barrel of water, piped for 10 or 15 miles, and unfit to use.

FARMING BEGINS.

Five years ago not one bushel of grain was raised in this valley, while during

the past year between 30,000 and 40,000 bushels of grain were raised by the farmers here. One farmer raised on 20 acres an average of 70 bushels to the acre. This is remarkable, considering the high altitude of this section of country.

WATER FROM BEAR RIVER.

The water for irrigation purposes is obtained from Bear river, and the farmers are blessed with plenty and have not yet suffered from any serious drouth.

RESERVOIR PLANNED.

At the northern end of the valley, where the waters of the Bear river dash through a narrow gorge in the mountains called the narrows, an immense reservoir site has been planned, which, when completed will back the water for

eight miles, making an immense lake of that length and from three to four miles wide, storing enough water to irrigate thousands of acres of land.

The engineer who planned the work states that it is one of the finest locations in the state. The canal which will empty the water of this artificial lake has already been surveyed, and it is stated upon good authority that work will soon commence.

TWO COAL MINES.

At present there are two mines operating in Almy under the superintendency of J. H. Martin of the Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron company.

Mr. Martin is one of the young mining men who solve big mining problems with comparative ease. He has labored under many difficulties during the past year, but he is a man who knows not

the meaning of the word "failure," but has come out of the fray with colors flying and a determination to succeed at all hazards. The present holdings of the Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron company comprise 2,000 acres of coal land, and control of a branch line of railroad to the city of Evanston on the Union Pacific railroad.

SOME LITIGATION.

During the past year considerable litigation has taken place between the Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron company and the Union Pacific Railroad company regarding the control of this branch line, but an amicable agreement has been reached and the Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron company now has the right of way, and cars will be run in the near future to the mines. The Rocky Mountain Coal and Iron

company is the only one operating in Almy on a large scale and in the near future 150 miners will be employed and an average of 500 tons of coal will be shipped daily. This company has 20,000,000 tons of coal which can be mined, sufficient indeed to employ a large force of men for years to come.

A SERIOUS FIRE.

Not only litigation has caused delay in operating the mines, but a disastrous fire during the past year destroyed the large fan and burned thousands of feet of timber in No. 5 colliery. This was shortly after the company had installed a new hoisting plant valued at \$15,000.

In consequence of this disaster the mine was closed down, but will be reopened in the spring.

At present No. 8 colliery is supplying the demand for coal, but the company has 50 men employed working night and day reopening No. 6 colliery which will be a large producer in a few weeks.

RETURN TO SPLENDOR.

Almy will in the near future shine with the luster of its old time splendor, and miners who have loved here for the peaceful influence found in her midst, will again return from distant mining regions to make their home here and live in peace and contentment.

With the coming of the new year, Almy will be re-clothed with renewed energy, and launch forward into an era of prosperity, which after the trials she has withstood, she well deserves.

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