

THE MILK RIVER UNITED IRRIGATION ASSOCIATION

By Hon. L. Newman, President

The Milk River United Irrigation Association is perhaps the most important factor in the development of the Milk River Valley as well as northern Montana, and while nearly all of the farmers in the valley are familiar with the aims and accomplishments of the association, it may be of interest to a large number of readers in northern Montana to know about the origin of the association and its proposed destiny.

In March, 1904, word was received in Chinook that the Canadians near Quitts were constructing a large canal or the irrigation of thousands of acres of land, and that the waters of the Milk river were to be diverted into this canal and supply the Canadians with water for their enterprise. This news was received with great apprehension on the part of the settlers in the Milk river valley, because with the main water supply appropriated by the Canadians, the prospects to the rancher who had already spent a good part of a life-time cultivating his land seemed ruinous. At a meeting held in Chinook on March 18th of this information, telegrams were sent to the various towns in the valley requesting that protests be written to the state department at Washington, and that the Montana representatives be advised as to the situation. But owing to the lack of organized effort on the part of the

people in the valley, nothing was accomplished and the Canadians proceeded with their construction.

On March 1, 1905, Mayor L. Newman, of Havre, prepared some blank protests addressed to Secretary of State, John Hay, against the threatened diversion of the Milk river waters by the Canadians. These blanks were distributed through the entire Milk river valley for signature; who returned to Havre they contained the names of nearly every rancher in northern Montana, and were then forwarded to Washington. Secretary of State John Hay acknowledged the receipt of this monster petition, and replied, stating that the department would do its best to stop the Canadians from appropriating the Milk river waters.

THE MILK RIVER PROJECT.

This is one of the first projects undertaken by the government, but owing to the great number and variety of obstacles encountered it had made very slow progress. Engineering difficulties, international complications and local water right contentions, all had a tendency to discourage the reclamation officers, so that the government was all but ready to throw up the sponge. It was at this time that the need of the association became manifest. At the first meeting of the association a delegation was sent to Washington to present resolutions urging the speedy construction of the Milk river project. This committee returned from Washington with a promise from the president of the United States personally, that special attention would be given the Milk river project.

In the presence of the committee the president called for the secretary of the interior and the chief reclamation officials and enquired as to the cause of the delay of the Milk river project. The various difficulties were then described, the principal one being the intentions of the Canadians to divert the water after crossing the line. At this conference the president instructed the reclamation officials to proceed at once with the St. Mary's canal, stating that if the Canadians failed to show a disposition to be fair to the water of the St. Mary's canal, it could be diverted by an all-American route.

The next and greatest obstacle in the way of the government or reclamation service was the danger of the water users and water claimers in the valley appropriating the water artificially turned into the Milk river on old water right claims. The federal officials decided that it would be prudent to have these water rights adjudicated before the work on the project was far advanced. To this proposition there were a number of protests, but after careful discussion and consideration of the subject by the association at one of its meetings in Malta, it was decided to authorize the Harlem Canal Company to institute adjudication proceedings against all of the water right owners—the association agreeing to support the Harlem Canal Company, morally as well as financially. Subscriptions amounting to about \$1,300 were taken up for that purpose in the various towns in the valley and the case is now pending. By mutual consent all interested parties agreed to wait the decision of the United States supreme court in the case of the United States vs. Waters, this being the case of the Fort Belknap Indian agency against the settlers in the valley, in which case the federal court granted the Fort Belknap Indians 5,000 inches, which in extremely dry seasons reports the case referred to, she is all that flows in the river. The purpose in awaiting the decision is commending Zam-Buk as a cure for skin disease. My three children were all broken out with sores on face, ing on the final adjudication. It is only on the evidence of good faith on the part of the people in the

valley, as demonstrated by the action taken by the Irrigation association, that the government has begun actual construction on the St. Mary's canal. The purpose of the Irrigation association, as outlined in the above abbreviated history, is to do everything possible to bring assurance to bear with a view to the early construction of the Milk river project.

It is in line with that purpose that the meeting on the 11th of this month was held at Harlem. The resolutions adopted at this meeting are in part: That we realize that in order to reserve a beneficial use of the St. Mary's waters, the diversion of dams and canals of the lower Milk river valley must be conditional, and that until they are completed, said waters will only run to waste. That we earnestly request the reclamation service to complete in detail the surveys upon said diversion dams and canals in the lower valley.

With a continuation of the splendid progress accomplished through the influence of united effort and with a continuation of united effort I feel justified in predicting that the great Milk river project will be a realization complete in every sense inside of three years.

A GLANCE FORWARD.

To describe the change and effect on the future of the Milk river valley as a result of this irrigation project would require a more imaginative and literary mind than my own, but in rough substance, I do not feel guilty of crossing the border of conservatism by saying that where there are small hamlets now there will be thriving towns and where there are towns at present there will be prosperous cities; that within a few years the vast acreage held now by a few individuals will be owned and cultivated in 80 acre tracts, and a quarter section will be the exception. The will be increased to thousands. Additional railroads, sugar factories, flour mills and other industries will spring up like magic.

In the history of northern Montana as it will be read in the future, the people of to-day will be the second pioneers, as were the men of thirty years ago the first.

CURED OF SKIN DISEASE BY ZAM-BUK.

Once more Zam-Buk, the great herbal balm, has been proved vastly superior to ordinary remedies, and has cured where other preparations had signally failed. Three children in one family have been healed by it. This not only shows the power of its pure herbal ingredients as against the Fort Belknap Indian agency vs. Zam-Buk, but goes to prove how beneficial its pure herbal ingredients are to the delicate skin of children.

Mrs. J. C. Bates, of Burk's Falls, the Fort Belknap Indian agency reports the case referred to, she says: "I take great pleasure in recommending Zam-Buk as a cure for skin disease. My three children were all broken out with sores on face, ing on the final adjudication. It is only on the evidence of good faith on the part of the people in the

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ointments and salves they did not seem to be able to get at the root of the evil, and the sores continued to spread. One day I saw a report in a local newspaper telling how beneficial Zam-Buk was for skin diseases, ulcers, etc. I got a supply of the balm and applied it to the children's compound from saps and essences. Almost immediately they got relief, and the sores began to heal. Although the skin disease had defied all the salves I had previously tried in one week Zam-Buk overcame the festering trouble, and today the children have

Christmas Toys

This week we will open up five large packing cases of Christmas toys and fancy goods—everything that could be desired by all classes of people. Come and pick out what you want while the stock is fresh, and we will put them aside for you.

We have just received another lot of Sweet, Ore & Co.'s overalls and smocks.

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We are showing all kinds of fancy Christmas groceries in the very choicest lines.

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