

Democratic Watchman

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The Great Flood.

Pennsylvania has been inundated again by the waters of her rivers and smaller streams. Seventy-two hours of pouring rain were too much for the natural waterways, and the mighty torrents that swept down from the mountain regions left a track of devastation through the valleys, green with promising crops.

A flood is not an unusual thing in this State, but one like that from which she is just now drying out does not happen often and from the inestimable pecuniary loss following, it would seem the less frequent the better.

In 1889 Pennsylvania suffered a deluge, the horrors of which will be handed down to our posterity as almost indescribable. The breaking of a private dam near Johnstown ran the fatalities up to the thousand mark, but at other points the destruction was material only to property. This last flood, coming within fifteen days of the fifth anniversary of that catastrophe, has fallen little short of it in its property destruction but thank God the number of lives lost is not to be compared with the other.

The rain seems to have been general. The valleys of the Schuylkill, Conemaugh, Juniata, and the Susquehanna with its North and West branches, suffering from the raging waters. Millions of dollars worth of lumber, fences, buildings, and every movable object in its course are now known to their owners as nothing but loss. Growing crops have been washed from the fields, the soil carried away and in this manner untold losses have occurred in the farming communities. Yet withal, the people will recover and go to work doing just the same thing they did after the flood of 1889, never thinking of the possibility of the recurrence of the disaster of Sunday.

The man who builds on the sand need have little hope of seeing his property stand.

His Claim as a Businessman.

Among the Republican candidates for Congress in the Lebanon district is Mr. ROBERT H. COLEMAN, whose claim is being pushed on the ground of his being a businessman. He has been long known as the head of the great COLEMAN estate, valued at millions on account of its vast iron ore possessions and the revenue derived from them. But the management of Mr. COLEMAN has not been such as would commend him as a great business manager, for he has greatly involved the estate which ordinary business ability should have kept intact. If he should go to Congress would he be able to do the public business better than he has done his own?

Republican statesmen lay great stress upon their business capacity, and it is the Republican theory that this should be a business men's government. Mr. COLEMAN will no doubt be a candidate for Congress on that principle. McKinley's claim to statesmanship was based on his business capacity, and on that ground he assumed the ability to frame the fiscal system of the country, and yet he could not keep himself from becoming bankrupt in his private business. Secretary FOSTER, who managed the Treasury in HARRISON's administration was a business man of the same kind and got under the hammer of the sheriff. Mr. COLEMAN may think he ought to go to Congress as a businessman, yet there is reason to doubt the business capacity of Republican statesmen.

They Will See Their Folly.

The district composed of the counties of Northumberland, Montour, Columbia and Sullivan is one of the strong Democratic congressional districts of the State, but there is an impression among the Republicans of the district that they are going to carry it at the next election on account of the great revolution which they imagine has taken place in the minds of the people on the tariff question. Speaking of this hallucination, the Northumberland County Democrat says: "After the election next November the Republicans who wanted to run for Congress in this district will say, 'what fools we were,' and the one who gets the nomination will say, 'I was the biggest fool of the lot.'

Such an acknowledgement of folly will not be confined to that district. Great expectations are being based on the continuance of business depression by Republican obstruction in Congress, it being the Republican calculation to

carry the elections in consequence of the distress which they have created and kept up by their congressional tactics; but it is a desperate game which is more likely to injure than to benefit them in popular opinion.

In the first pinch of the hard times the voters were considerably unsettled in their views as to what caused it, and many of them struck out wildly and blindly at the ballot box, but public sentiment is now pretty well settled as to where the "calamity" came from, and the people are becoming every day more disgusted with the party that is doing all it can in Congress to continue the business distress for the effect it may have on the election. That the effect will be quite different from what Republican politicians are calculating it will be, has already been shown by the result of a recent election in a congressional district in Ohio, where the issue was directly on the tariff as now pending in Congress, the Democrats more than maintaining their party vote and wiping out the "calamity" gain made by the Republicans at the last State election.

After the election next November aspiring Republicans who were itching to run for Congress in Democratic districts will see what fools they were, and the folly will be particularly apparent to those who were unfortunate enough to be nominated.

Individual Communion Cups.

A remarkable innovation is being made in one of the most sacred ordinances of the Christian church by the introduction of a new method of administering the Lord's Supper. The innovation consists in having an individual cup for each communicant. It would appear that the old method of a general cup is condemned by the fastidious innovators on the ground of uncleanliness, and the charge is also brought against it that it is liable to impart infectious disease.

This new way of administering the sacrament has been adopted by two churches in Rochester, New York, and is attracting considerable attention and exciting much comment, the congregations that have adopted it no doubt believing that they have made a decided improvement on the simple and common way of communions instituted and practiced by the great Master of Christianity.

Rev. CHARLES FORBES, of Rochester, is the new light on this subject. The cups he has provided for the congregation are described as of silver, with gold lining, bell shaped, with flat bottom, each holding a teaspoonful. They are handled in holders of oak, silver tipped, with a convenient handle, each holder containing forty or fifty of them. This arrangement looks very snug, cleanly, handy and attractive, but it is not likely to be approved by those who do not believe there can be an improvement upon the method hallowed by the example of the Savior.

Dr. FORBES is backed by a Professor of the Rochester University, who has given it as his opinion that if the individual communion chalice should be adopted as a preventative of disease and as a public object lesson of cleanliness." It is also urged by the communion innovators that "many fastidious persons are kept from the sacrament on account of the uncleanliness of a common cup and are thereby deprived of the sacramental benefits. Surely the twelve who sat around the first communion table were not so fastidious, and had at heart no other object lesson than that of spiritual devotion.

—Irvin Barnhart, of near Curtin's works, recently caught a ten pound carp in Bald Eagle creek.

A Great Deluge in the State.

The Flood Gates of Heaven Open and Drench The Country.—A Break in Kittanning Dam—The Waters Pour Down the Valley and Threaten to Wipe Out Hollidaysburg—The Residents Were Warned—Williamsport Under Water—The Susquehanna is Roaring, Booms Break, and Reports are Current of Lives Lost in the Lumber District.—The Schuylkill Waters Rise.

Not since the great storm of the last days of May 1889 when all the rivers in the state overflowed their banks, and the great Johnstown flood occurred and millions of dollars worth of damage was done, has there been a storm that equaled the one which swept over Pennsylvania during last Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The Schuylkill, Susquehanna and Juniata rivers and their tributaries were so swollen that they could not contain themselves and from every hand comes reports of washed out farms, ruined crops, inundated towns, merchandise destroyed, bridges swept away and families homeless.

Very little, if any loss of life has occurred but the amount of damage cannot be estimated at this time.

Reports from the suffering districts are meager but give some idea of the extent of the damage.

The crops on the farms along the smaller rivers are almost all destroyed and this alone will be a great loss.

Williamsport, May 20.—This has been the most exciting day in the his-

tory of Williamsport, and the stirring events that banished Sunday from the thoughts of all will not be effaced for years to come. A half hour before the time for the church bells to summon the worshippers all were alarmed by the ringing of bells to warn the populace of impending disaster from flood.

The constant downpour of rain reminded all of the conditions that preceded the memorable overflow of June 1, 1889, and long before the hour of noon thousands of people, aided by hundreds of teams and vehicles of every conceivable shape from a four horse dray to a push cart, were engaged in removing goods to places of safety.

Hundreds of tons of merchandise were carried from the first floors, stores to the second and third stories, and mills and manufacturing establishments prepared for possible disaster by securing the contents of their plants to the best advantage.

WILLIAMSPORT'S GREAT LOSS.

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa., May 21.—The great boom here broke early this morning and sixty million feet of logs were swept away. The Susquehanna river has risen to thirty-three feet and is a six foot flood through many of the streets of the city. The Pennsylvania railroad bridge over the river is standing the pressure solidly. But the city bridges have been badly damaged.

Four spans of the Market street bridge have been washed away and three of the four spans of the Maynard street bridge have gone. Both are iron structures and the pecuniary loss will be heavy. No lives have been lost here. A number of small boats were capsized to day, but all of the occupants, many of whom were endeavoring to save logs and property, were rescued.

HUNTINGDON, Pa., May 20.—In this place the water flooded the lower streets driving the people from their homes, and in the lower farming districts whole families are imprisoned in their homes, unable to be reached owing to floating debris, but the building did not fall. The large offices of the Cambria Iron company and the Gautier steel department and the store of the Penn Traffic company were submerged to a depth of four feet and a large amount of books and valuable papers were badly damaged.

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Mrs. Jacob Miller was drowned at Saxton while trying to save some property.

Additional flood news is to the effect that the storm was general in the State and every section has shared in the great disaster. At Williamsport millions of dollars worth of uncut lumber were swept away. There were \$150,000,000 ft. of lumber in the Williamsport boom when it was swept away and 10,000,000 more in the boom at Linden, many of the big mill firms of that city had hardly recovered from the great flood of 1889 will find this second disaster a grave blow to their business. Along the course of the river all to-day has been gathering strength and volume with each hour and to-night the river is raging like a mountain torrent. Above the dam at the city water works the river is eight feet high. The water at the west end of the Sunbury yard is within six inches of the flood of 1889 and still rising, and the bank at Walnton is washed close to the track. The fifth span of the Northumberland wagon bridge has just gone out at 10:40."

THE SCHUYLKILL RIVER ON THE RAM-PAGE. MANY SCHOONERS DAMAGED.

PHILADELPHIA, May 21.—The flood that has swept down the Schuylkill river all to-day has been gathering strength and volume with each hour and to-night the river is raging like a mountain torrent. Above the dam at the city water works the river is eight feet high. The water at the west end of the Sunbury yard is within six inches of the flood of 1889 and still rising, and the bank at Walnton is washed close to the track. The fifth span of the Northumberland wagon bridge has just gone out at 10:40."

SCARED FROM THEIR BEDS IN HOLLIDAYSBURG.

HOLLIDAYSBURG, May 21.—The Juniata river again rose rapidly last (Sunday) evening, and in a short time was as high as on the preceding evening. By 10 o'clock Allegheny street in Gaysport was again covered with water. About 8:30 there was a cloud burst a short distance west of Gaysport, and in a few minutes that portion of the town known as "Canada" was flooded with water to the depth of several feet, which flowed down the streets and through the yards covering the fences and surging against the houses with great force. The inhabitants were greatly frightened, and quite a number fled to higher ground for safety. The water soon subsided, but remained to the depth of two feet in the lower yards. About 12 o'clock the blowing of an engine whistle aroused the people of the twin boroughs and the rumor was spread that the Kittanning reservoir had burst and that Gaysport would soon be enveloped in the deluge. The inhabitants fled precipitately from their houses, many of them rushing through the streets in their night robes, and for a time the greatest confusion prevailed. Everybody rushed for higher ground. Many of them soon returned to their homes, however, as the deluge did not come, and it was learned that the dam had not broken. Others stayed with friends and relatives in Hollidaysburg over night and quite a number remained on the adjacent hills until daylight, being afraid to return to their homes.

A CITY IN DARKNESS.

ALLENTOWN, May 21.—Allentown and the surrounding country is experiencing one of the heaviest storms in the memory of the generation. The city has been in darkness to-night, the water filling the electric light station basement. The trolley cars to-day were run with great difficulty and the car house was flooded. The greatest damage was at Hokendauqua, where a new bridge, costing \$40,000, and almost ready for use, was moved out of plumb and probably damaged. It is now raining harder than ever with no signs of abating and the waters are still rising rapidly.

JOHNSTOWN AGAIN FLOODED.

JOHNSTOWN, Pa., May 21.—At 3 o'clock this morning this city was visited by the highest water since the big flood on May 31, 1889. For several days rain has been falling continually. Yesterday morning Stony creek reached a height of twelve feet and began to recede. It was then thought that all danger was past. Last evening, however, a heavy rain swept the Conemaugh valley between Johnstown and Altoona, and by 10 o'clock the Conemaugh river was rising rapidly. To make matters worse, there was a cloud burst near Ebensburg and this mass of water poured down the Conemaugh valley and by midnight the river was a torrent. By 2 o'clock this morning the Conemaugh was over its banks.

The alarm was sounded by fire whistles and bells of the city and almost all of the people who live in the neighborhood of the Conemaugh river left their

houses and took shelter on higher ground. The water continued to rise rapidly and by 3 o'clock had reached its highest point. In many places it was from six to eight feet over the banks. It is now receding rapidly. All danger is past. The loss by the flood is variously estimated at from \$75,000 to \$150,000. The Pennsylvania railroad, whose tracks follow the river for twenty-five miles above this city, is perhaps the heaviest loser, and its loss is placed at \$50,000.

At Conemaugh the roundhouse seemed to be about destroyed, and all the engines were removed to a place of safety. The foundation was undermined but the building stood. The overhead bridge at Conemaugh, erected by the Pennsylvania Railroad company years ago, was badly damaged and a number of houses were flooded, but none washed away. A temporary bridge across the river at this point was carried off down the river and completely demolished. The greatest

damage to houses in Johnstown was done in the very heart of the city within a stone's throw of the Pennsylvania Railroad. A store owned by Teff George, at the north end of the Lincoln bridge, was completely swept away with all its contents. A frame building in the rear of the Grand Central hotel, owned by Emanuel Jones, was also swept away, as well as the Starler residence.

On the opposite bank of the river the corner of the Grand Central hotel, a large brick structure was knocked out by floating debris, but the building did not fall. The large offices of the Cambria Iron company and the Gautier steel department and the store of the Penn Traffic company were submerged to a depth of four feet and a large amount of books and valuable papers were badly damaged.

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LATER FLOOD NEWS.

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa., May 22.—Williamsport to-day emerged from its enforced isolation and began to calculate the damage done by its immersion by the flood.

A careful estimate of the financial loss for Williamsport and Lycoming county, at this time is \$10,000,000.

This city sustained its greatest loss in the wreck of the Susquehanna boom and the loss of 175,000,000 feet of logs held in it. At 1 o'clock yesterday afternoon the boom burst and the logs went floating down the river. These logs in their rough condition were worth on an average of \$10 per thousand feet. Manufactured here, they would have been worth twice that sum. In consequence of the loss to the lumbermen also will foot up over \$3,000,000. Added to this the loss occasioned by wrecked bridges, the sack of merchants, household effects, damage to crops, etc., will easily bring the damage to \$10,000,000.

By reason of the high water the plants of the two electric light companies and the gas company were drowned out yesterday and the city was in total darkness. The lower portion of the city is without water by reason of the mains of the city works having broken. The lower or business portion of the city presents a sad spectacle. The main streets are full of logs, boardwalks, wreckage and debris of all descriptions.

No newspapers were issued from any of the offices here yesterday, as the plants of all were drowned out.

The total losses here, as estimated by conservative men, are \$3,000,000. This includes \$1,500,000 on logs, \$250,000 on sawed lumber, and the balance on property throughout the city.

The boom held 170,000,000 feet of logs. All are gone, but the boom justified the confident expectations of every one and held out to the last moment. There was some difficulty with packing on Sunday and many logs escaped by smearing out. On Monday morning at 1:30 o'clock many logs went out by smearing, but the boom proper and its valuable contents did not break until yesterday afternoon at 1:30 o'clock. At that time not less than 75,000,000 feet of logs that were packed mountain high in the lower boom went out almost as one log. They stuck together and passed down through the city. It was a magnificent sight, and those who saw it never expect to see it like again. What was left of the Maynard street bridge at one side of that time was swept away by the logs. The iron spans rattled down on the pile of logs and rested there. All came down on the river and struck what was left of the Market street bridge, taking it along. The water at that time was thirty-one feet. About 25 per cent. of the logs, with the experience of 1889 to estimate from, will be recovered if they are captured down the river.

A LITTLE HERO AND HIS SISTER PERISH.

NANTICOKE, Pa., May 21.—Michael and Mary Kososko, aged 10 and 8 years respectively, were drowned in a creek near their home. Usually, the water in the creek is about two feet deep, but to-day it was about five feet and running very rapidly. Brother and sister were playing on the bank when they were caught in the current and swept out into the creek. The little boy might have saved himself, but he died trying to rescue his sister.

THE DELUGE CUTS OFF RENOVO.

RENOVO, Pa., May 21.—There have been several landslides above and below this place along the line of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad. No mail has arrived from the East since Saturday morning, and all communication from the West is cut off.

The lower part of the town is submerged, and many families are moving their effects into empty cars.

There has been great damage done to mills and bridges throughout the county. The Susquehanna river to-night is as high as it was at the disastrous flood in 1889.

READING UNDER THE FLOOD.

READING, Pa., May 21.—Not since 1889 has there been a flood to equal the one that is now sweeping down the Schuylkill Valley. At 8 o'clock this evening the river is 17 feet high, and rising at the rate of 8 inches an hour.

The entire lower portion of the city is, however, under water.

All the manufacturing establishments along the river front have their floors submerged.

Hundreds of tons of