

# Johnstown Weekly Democrat.

VOL. XXVII.

JOHNSTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PA., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1889.

NO 29.

## CONSOLIDATION.

REV. JAS. P. TAHANEY INTERVIEWED  
LAST EVENING.

Consolidation For the Best Interests of the Community—Selfishness Only Opposed to It—The Question Need Only be Fairly Stated to Win—Call the New City Johnstown.

Rev. James P. Tahaney, pastor of St. John's Catholic Church of our city was seen by the reporter Tuesday evening, and on the subject of consolidation had the following to say:

"I am for consolidation all the time. I may say, also, that I am somewhat of a stranger here, but since the flood I have learned the Johnstown people pretty thoroughly. I am interested in the matter of consolidation only as it concerns our people. I believe it to be to the best interests of all the people of this valley to consolidate into a city."

"On this matter I feel very much like Mr. Moxham. There are so many arguments in favor of consolidation and so few against it, that I sometimes think the case is hardly worth contending—that it should carry on its own strength. I have no doubt that many of the saloon keepers are against it, and many local politicians too. The former have some of our boroughs almost in their hands, but with a city they fear they would be shorn of their power."

"Then again some of our boroughs are largely Catholic, and there may be some among their people who think they would not be able to run those places to suit themselves. But politics and church matters should not be mixed. Catholicism is not selfish, it is broad, general, universal. I am going to build my church in Johnstown borough. If consolidation carries I may change my plans and locate the church elsewhere. A lot in Conemaugh borough belonging to the church might then be selected. I want it in Johnstown wherever it is."

"This whole valley is known abroad as Johnstown. A man from Conemaugh borough goes to some city hotel, and he registers 'Johnstown' as his place of residence. It is the same if he is from Morrellville, from Woodvale or any other place about here. The people of Johnstown, since the flood, apart from any political or religious opinions, have shown themselves to be very generous. In fact, I think that nothing else besides selfishness is against consolidation. I am opposed to the local idea—the idea of each part remaining selfishly by itself, while the interests of all our people would be best served by consolidation."

"I might be said to represent two characters. I am a citizen having an interest in the civil affairs of our people, and I am a priest having the spiritual interests of my flock in charge. As a priest I think the interests of Catholicism and temperance would be advanced by consolidation. It would lessen the power of the saloon element, order would be better, and the morals thereby improved. All our interests would then be united, and in union there is strength. A strong central government would certainly be promotion of temperance, order, and morals in general. As a Catholic, my duty is clear on this point. As a citizen I represent no ism, but believe in doing what would be best for all. Abroad Johnstown is the whole valley. The other boroughs are unheard of. The census gives to the borough of Johnstown a small population. A city of 30,000 people would attract capitalists. They would be eager to come here to seek investments. As one who advocates the interests of the whole valley, I can not help purging the people, one and all to vote for consolidation."

"With a city government Woodvale would have been cleaned up long ago, an embankment would have shut out the river, and the water would not have made a highway through her heart yesterday. I can not see what some people want."

"It may be that some of our boroughs, which are largely Catholic, wish to remain by themselves. All this is wrong. Some of them do things that are a scandal to the church. In church matters we recognize no such thing as Republican or Democrat. This quasi-Catholic idea, if any such exist, is opposed to the spirit of the church. The church asks for no privileges not accorded to everyone. Liberty, law, unity, in these are her strength."

"And after all are not all the individual interests identical? If one borough goes in debt to build a bridge, do not the people of the other boroughs use it whenever it suits them? Should they not help to build it? Such selfishness has no manhood about it."

"Let us have a unity, let us have strength, let us have the best men for our leaders, men of prominence, men of ability, let us have a city with a name abroad."

"What about the name of the city?" asked the reporter.

"Let us call it Johnstown. It is all Johnstown now among people elsewhere. Let all this valley be Johnstown in reality."

Then shall we have the strength to pull ourselves out of where the great flood has left us, and then can we best show the world what we are able to do in the face of the greatest of modern calamities."

MR. JOHN THOMAS GIVES HIS VIEWS OF THE MATTER.

Strongly in Favor of Consolidation—Order Would be Better—Taxation Would Not Necessarily be Increased—Not a Question of Dollars and Cents, but the General Public Good.

Mr. John Thomas, senior member of the firm of J. Thomas & Sons, was interviewed yesterday evening. Mr. Thomas has extensive business interests here and is the owner of much real estate in several of our boroughs. As to whether he thought all the boroughs of the valley should unite and become a city, Mr. Thomas said:

"I am for consolidation by all means. I believe it to be for the interest of all our people. All our boroughs have more to do than they, as boroughs, are able to do. Improvements of every kind are needed, and with each borough struggling for itself they cannot be made."

"What do you think of the taxation scare?" asked the reporter.

"There is nothing in it. I want the improvements, and do not care for the question of a few dollars. We cannot improve with nothing. We must have money to make them. It will cost a city far less than it will cost the different boroughs, each one working by itself."

"How do you think the expense of running a city government would compare with maintaining our ten boroughs?"

"It would be less, much less, in my opinion. In many instances it would be clearly an economical move. We should, as a city, have only one chief executive, a mayor, instead of ten Burgesses, as at present. How much would our expenses be increased by such a move? In many other matters it would be the same. A number of different municipal buildings would not be necessary. With a city we should have fewer officers than by the present system."

"Order would certainly be better if we had a city. I have been strongly in favor of consolidation this long time. But, if we are ever to consolidate, now is the time. Our needs are greater now. United we shall be better able to build up our city. A question of a few dollars and cents should not decide the matter, but the general good of all."

A SPIRITED BUSINESS LETTER.

The Bookkeeper Was Shown How It Should be Written.

From the Cincinnati Enquirer.

A story is told of a prominent Third street clothing firm. Looking over their books they discovered an account of long standing. "Write him a saucy letter," said the junior member to the bookkeeper. "Yes, make it very strong," replied the senior. The bookkeeper followed instructions, and penned the following: "Your account is past due. If you do not settle within ten days we will draw on you at sight." This letter was handed to the firm.

"Do you think this is a smart letter?" asked one of them.

"It is a business one," said the bookkeeper.

"Well, I don't think so, replied the former."

"Give me your pen, and I'll show you the way to do it," and he proceeded to write the following:

"Who bought the goods? You."  
"Who promised to pay for them? You."  
"Who didn't do so? You."  
"Who is a liar and a thief?"

"Yours,"

And, after signing the firm's name, he handed the effort chucklingly to the bookkeeper.

Democrat, Watch Your Tickets.

EBENSBURG, PA., October 28, 1889.

The ring of the Republican party in Ebensburg, commonly called the "Corner Drug Store Gang," has always been noted for its political jockeying and treachery, and this year is no exception to the rule. Their motto is: "A Desperate Case Needs a Desperate Remedy," and they are resorting to all that is mean and unfair to elect D. H. Kinkaid as the next Register and Recorder. They are willing to sacrifice all others on their ticket to elect their favorite, and this statement is verified by the fact that thousands of bogus tickets have been printed at the Cambria Herald office, this place, and sent throughout the county, principally to the rural districts. Most of them are Democratic tickets which have Kinkaid's name substituted for that of Blair. Here is a fac-simile:

COUNTY.

Prothonotary, Clerk of the court of Quarter Sessions and Clerk of the Court of Oyer and Terminer,

James C. Darby.

Register of Wills, Recorder of Deeds and Clerk of the Orphans' Court,

D. H. Kinkaid.

District Attorney—F. J. O'Connor.

Director of the Poor—Ephraim Hite.

Coroner—Egbert McGough.

County Surveyor—Henry Scanlan.

Auditor—Joseph Higgs.

## AGAINST IT.

A CITIZEN OF FRANKLIN BOROUGH GIVES HIS VIEWS.

Not Yet Ready for Consolidation—Taxes Would be Too High—Rents Would be Increased and Only Certain Parts of the City Benefited.

FRANKLIN BOROUGH, Oct. 29, 1889.

To the Editor of the Johnstown Democrat.

Sir:—As you purpose giving the consolidation question a fair and impartial hearing, I will take the liberty of saying something on the subject.

I think the time for consolidation, so far as our town is concerned, has not yet arrived. We are composed largely of the laboring class, and many of our citizens have purchased homes and are gradually improving them, and the expense of a city government would operate disastrously with them.

The Act of the 23d of May, 1889, gives the corporate powers of a city authority to levy annually, a tax for general revenue purposes, not exceeding ten mills on the dollar of assessed valuation of the taxable property, a tax of ten mills for the payments of interest on bonds, a tax of three mills as a sinking fund for the payment of bonds, and a poll tax of one dollar upon every male citizen in the city, and in addition, a separate tax on the taxables of each borough, incorporated, to pay its present indebtedness. Also to levy and collect annually, for general revenue purposes, a license tax, as high as one hundred dollars upon all auctioneers, contractors, druggists, merchants of all kinds, persons selling or leasing goods upon installments, grocers, confectioners, butchers, restaurants, drays, hacks, carriages, omnibuses, carts, wagons, street railway cars and other vehicles used for hire or pay, lumber dealers, furniture dealers, saddle or harness dealers, stationers, jewellers, livery or boarding stable keepers, real estate agents, insurance agents, market house companies, telegraph, telephone, steam heating, gas, natural gas, water, electric light or water companies, etc., and may also compel the grading, paving, or macadamizing and curbing of streets, lanes and alleys by persons owning property bordering or abutting thereon. Taking into consideration the condition of many of the boroughs to vote upon the question, we must presume taxes and licenses will be assessed at the maximum rates, and business men will raise their prices accordingly. Council shall prescribe the number, duties and compensation of officers, and therefore we may expect a large force of officers and high salaries. All revenue and taxes must be paid into the city treasury, and will be expended in the city as directed by the city authorities for such purposes and in such localities as they may deem proper, and as we will be only a suburb, we cannot expect one fourth of the revenue paid by us to be expended within our present borough limits, for the next fifteen years at least.

I see in the columns of the DEMOCRAT, the views of the prominent gentlemen upon consolidation, but fail to find in those views one convincing argument in favor of such a measure.

He alleges that in case of a city charter a railroad may pass through Johnstown at some future time.

A great railroad now passes through the territory proposed to be consolidated and I do not see any prospects of another road passing through, at least, for a long time hence.

He says, most emphatically, that if there had been a consolidation of the several boroughs, the terrible calamity of the 31st of May would not have occurred.

I cannot conceive how a city charter would, on that fatal day have closed the windows of Heaven or prevented the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep—South Fork dam—as a number of cities have, during the present year suffered very severely from floods and fires.

He speaks of eleven punny little boroughs—although I can count only ten—that with our borough organizations it requires dynamite, a wolf or a dog to move us, but that with a city organization, our city would respond to every public need, like a well balanced piece of machinery.

If a city organization is accomplished, will not the same persons now residing in the several boroughs become citizens of the city? And if they are incompetent to govern a borough, will they be competent to govern a city?

He alludes to well paved streets, clean sidewalks and fine buildings.

No doubt there will be well paved streets, clean sidewalks and fine buildings in some parts of the city, but we must remember all cities have likewise a skeleton in the closet; they have their five points, old breweries, and purloins of squalid poverty, vice, immorality and general wretchedness.

He alleges the richest borough will be richer.

That may be so, but may not the poorest one become poorer? At least eight of the boroughs suffered severely from the flood disaster,

and I do not see how one can assist the other to restore the heavy losses sustained, therefore in what way will a city charter benefit us?

Much more might be written, but I will only caution every voter to acquaint himself with the act of Assembly alluded to, before casting his ballot on so important a question. I do not see that a city charter will increase the demand for labor or raise the wages thereof, and the probability is that while the workingman must labor for the same wages as now, he will have to pay higher rents, higher prices for the necessities of life, as higher taxes, higher and more numerous licenses will necessarily raise the prices of these commodities. PRO BONO PUBLICO.

A BODY GOES DOWN THE RIVER.

The Rise of Water Brings the Body of a Boy to the Surface, But Sight of It Is Lost Again.

Tuesday forenoon, between the hours of 9 and 10, some men were engaged in dislodging some trees and other materials that had formed a drift against the bridge between Woodvale and Conemaugh borough. Mr. James Brecken, of Woodvale, was one of the men. While he and the other men, with hooks and poles, were trying to remove the drift, he discovered a body partly afloat in the water. The men ran along the banks and tried, by means of hooks to bring the body ashore. They were unsuccessful, and after it had floated about fifty yards, being under the water some of the time, and at no time much of it above the water, it disappeared. Search was made for it some distance below, where there were some obstructions against which it might have lodged, but it could not be found.

As near as it was possible to tell, the body was that of a boy about twelve years old. The water was swift, and the body remained on the top of the water only a very short while at one time. One foot had on a buttoned shoe, and the other was bare. The face looked much decayed, from which it is evident that it was the body of a victim of the flood. The body also had on it knee breeches.

As people were crossing the Lincoln bridge all day, it is very probable that the body did not pass there on the surface of the water, or it would have been seen. It may be found when the water falls.

Wants to Know.

To the Editor of the Johnstown Democrat:

I see by the papers of Saturday that acting Burgess Hart fined eight young men for violating a borough ordinance. Now by what authority does Squire Hart act as Burgess. The ordinance or law says that if the Burgess is absent, the President of Council shall be acting Burgess. The Burgess and the President of Council were both in our city yesterday and on the corners of our streets, now it is about time that this should stop. I know it is convenient for a policeman to run to acting Burgess Hart. If it ever becomes my misfortune to be "pulled in," and acting Burgess Hart appears while Bro. Kennedy, President of Council, is in the town their will be fun. HALT.

Johnstown, Pa., Oct. 28, 1889.

Repairing St. John's Convent.

St. John's Convent on Clinton street, is nearing completion. More than half of it was taken away by the flood. It is being rebuilt the same size as before, but improved in appearance by a roof with pitch, the old roof being flat. Some cut stone will also add to its appearance. In the center of the front near the cornice is a large stone tablet inscribed as follows:

Flood  
May 31, 1889.  
Rebuilt 1889.

At present Father Tahaney is occupying the part of the building that remains standing, as a residence.

The Wreck of the Franklin Street Bridge.

The wreck of the Franklin Street bridge lies on a deposit in the Stony Creek below the end of Napoleon street. It would have been a sight in ordinary times to see such a wreck, but owing to the awful destruction caused by the flood, it does not attract much attention. The bridge was completely overturned, and lies with the bottom up. The huge iron are broken and twisted in an almost incredible manner. Workmen of a Philadelphia Company, which bought it from the Edgemore Bridge Company, are engaged in taking the bridge apart, preparatory to moving it. It was bought from Johnstown boroughs by the latter company.

Removing the Bluff.

About 135 men, under Contractors T. Banton Brown & Co., of Philadelphia, are at work removing the bluff on the north side of the Pennsylvania Railroad, opposite the upper works. The rock and earth, as they are cut from the north side of the track, are carted across and dumped on the south side to make embankments for a new track. Another track will also be laid on the north side, at this point. By the time the contemplated improvements are finished there will be four tracks from below Sheridan to half a mile beyond East Conemaugh.

STAY EAST, YOUNG MAN, STAY EAST

Here's Advice From the Greatest Boom City of the Booming West.

Mary S. Putnam, M. D., of Spokane Falls, Washington, writes to the New York Sun: Western towns are built up by immigration. They lure by exaggeration, by the united efforts of Boards of Trade incorporated by shrewd capitalists and a few original locators, who, less than a score of years before, had built their shacks on Government claims.

The uninitiated do not know how easy it is to purchase a column in a leading journal to boom a town.

In less than no time a dull, dreary, uninteresting Godforsaken waste nourishes into life a row of one-story frame buildings, foremost a saloon (the Monarch of the Mountain, the Elite, the Bon Ton, or the like), then a general merchandise store, which holds the postoffice, a smithy, a lodging house and a restaurant combined, and few primitive buildings, these form a street—collectively a town.

The place instinctively assumes the name of the first squatter, who, perhaps, had not spunk enough to extricate himself from the original mud, and the deed is done.

If there is a creek, there is water power; if a mealy potato has struggled into a feeble existence there is agriculture; if a cutting survive its first pangs there is no end to fruit prophecies. Acres are laid off into town lots; in lieu of the dusty, rattling stage coach, liable to periodical disbursements to road agents, railroad schemes are projected, a prospectus is insinuated everywhere, and land auctions, real estate and building booms follow.

Well-to-do farmers in the East sell the old homestead, mechanics leave fair employ with tools and blankets, professional people searching for a location take a new start—one way or another all reach the promised land, or rather land of promises.

Once there, there is no retreat. Irreparable sacrifices have been made; money has been exhausted by exorbitant railroad rates and a thousand and one extortions incident to travel; a little to judiciously invest is all that remains.

Plausible real estate men, with their small capital of a desk in a convenient corner, with mock enthusiasm and hackneyed phrases, bait the anxious new comer with "our fine location," "what we have back of us," "the future county seat or capital," "the advance in real estate," "this is no boom," and such rot.

The shameless success is an easy one. All is lovely with buyer and builder until second payments and interests are due. Provisions have been high; outlay, incidental to getting settled, incessant; sickness has come too, and, as is invariably the case, work is scarce.

And now nothing is left but to sacrifice improvements and turn the land back. Real estate has reached its maximum; there is no more speculation, local transfers wane. Indeed, for some time, the fact has been significant that none but strangers are purchasers; and they, when beaten do not need a second lesson. Outwardly the town flourishes but it is nevertheless rotter to the core. Stores are stocked with goods bought on credit, cheap buildings are put up on leased ground, everything is heavily mortgaged. Liquor saloons, gambling resorts, etc., are here a solid basis, vampire-like sucking the prosperity and dignity of the town. In consequence of all this there is a mad rush to keep heads above water. Every one for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. There is no pity, no money for the unsuccessful, the unfortunate. Honest men stand twenty deep on the sidewalk, discouraged, resentful. But the wheel of fortune turns, and behold poetic justice! The town lies in ashes. There has been a great fire, a terrible, appalling conflagration. In a few hours millions of dollars have been consumed in a lurid flame. And so, in the west, history repeats itself from town to town. The essays of Ella tell us that in our antipodes it was also necessary to burn a village to get roast pig.

Removing Bodies from Prospect.

The work of removing the dead from the temporary burial ground to Grand View continues. A large number of people has been present ever since the work began, viewing every body that is raised with the hope of identifying some lost ones. A number of bodies was removed yesterday, one being identified as Mr. John Fenn, the Washington street tinner. Mrs. Fenn was present and recognized her husband's body by the beard and teeth. The features were recognizable also, the body being in a fair state of preservation. This makes two of the Fenn family that have been recovered, a little boy having been identified at Grand View.

It now appears that the story about Krupp intending to settle his gun works in the Monongahela valley was all a fairy tale. The removal, on reflection, is regarded not only as improbable, but impossible, and it is said the story was invented to boom certain lands for salable purposes.

Contractor's Troubles.

Sheriff McMillan, of Somerset county, on Monday last levied on all the tools, engines, and other machinery, belonging to Brown & Emery, and which have been used by that firm in the work of laying the thirty-six inch pipe line for the Johnstown Water Company, from Border's Station, on the Stony Creek, to this city. There have been rumors for some time of difficulty between the members of this firm, and it is presumed that this step has been taken to bring matters to a crisis.

A Queer Inscription.

In a graveyard owned by colored people, near Wetumpka, Ala., is an old tombstone with the following inscription: "To the memory of Henrietta Henriette Demitritter Cream of Tartar Sweet potato Caroline Bostwick, daughter of Bob and Sukey Catlin. Born at Covington, Georgia; died at Wetumpka, Alabama. Aged fourteen years."

SEARCHING FOR THE DEAD.

The Work Continues to Progress Rapidly—One Body Found and Identified.

The work of searching for the dead continues along the Stony Creek, below the Franklin Street bridge. About eight feet of a deposit has been removed, leaving bare the original bed of the river in places. At the present rate of working all the deposit will be removed in a short time.

Up to the present three bodies have been found, one of which, that found yesterday, was identified as the remains of Michael Lavelle.

Some of the Advantages to be Derived From Consolidation.

WHEREAS, The Johnstown Board of Trade is composed of citizens of the several corporate municipalities, and it seems proper that it should take some action by which the citizens may be assisted to rebuild their homes with comfort and safety to their families, and that our commercial interests may be restored; to that end we believe that these declarations are truths that will solve the problem of the present situation:

First, We admit that the benevolent people of the world have done more for us than a suffering people could expect, and it is now time that we turn from the consideration of our personal affairs to those which affect the public interests. Second, we believe it is essential to consolidate under a city charter, for these reasons: Neither borough can raise a sufficient sum to restore its public property; the several separate municipalities seeking public aid to dredge our rivers and protect their embankments weaken a just claim; consolidation would enable us to better protect our rivers and prevent encroachments upon their banks; therefore, and for these reasons, consolidation is a necessity. Third, If we operate under a city charter we will then be able to negotiate a loan, payable within thirty years. This fund can be used to build all necessary bridges, to construct a city limit; to construct all public buildings and school houses; to open and improve the highways, rivers, sewerage system, and the fire departments.

A statement of indebtedness and assessed valuation of the several boroughs for the year 1888:

	Bonded Indebtedness.	Assessed Valuation of Property.
Johnstown.....	\$20,000	\$1,175,536
Conemaugh.....	12,000	884,841
Mitliville.....	750	754,277
Cambria.....	1,200	161,742

Paragraph 1 of Section 3 of Act of Assembly, May, 1889, is as follows:

To levy and collect taxes for general purposes, not to exceed ten mills on the dollar on any one year, on all persons, real, personal and mixed property within the limits of the proposed city limit; to construct all public buildings and school houses; to open and improve the highways, rivers, sewerage system, and the fire departments.

That when two or more towns or boroughs shall, under the provisions of this Act, be consolidated into a city, the debt or debts of each of said towns or boroughs contracted prior to such consolidation shall be paid by such towns or boroughs respectively.

Gladstone's Eulogy of America.

Mr. Gladstone made an address at Chester, England, on Saturday, on the condition of the working classes. He urged English workmen to study the history of the American Revolution. He claimed that it was by and from this country that a love of freedom was sown in America. England now in return reaped advantages from the American vindication of those principles of freedom which animated the Revolution. The system of government in America combined that love of freedom, respect for law and desire for order which formed the surest elements of national excellence and greatness.

It was no extravagance to say that, although there were only two millions of people in the thirteen States at the time of the Revolution, the group of statesmen that proceeded from them were a match for any in the whole history of the world and were superior to those of any one epoch. Their fortunate appearance was doubtless due to well-regulated, muscular freedom.

United Labor League.

From the Union, October 28, 1889.

"The United Labor League, some time ago, sent a communication to Henry K. Boyer, late Speaker of the State House of Representatives and the Republican candidate for State Treasurer, asking him to give his reasons for voting against the Ballot Reform bill, introduced at the last session of the Legislature. To this request Mr. Boyer has made no reply, and the League, at its last meeting, adopted a series of resolutions, asking organized labor to manifest its displeasure at Mr. Boyer's action."

The Ballot Reform bill was one of the most important measures before the last session of the Legislature, and its defeat was a public calamity. Mr. Boyer is the first of the opponents of this measure that the lovers of honest elections have had a chance to express their opinion of, and it would be a warning which the political bosses would not dare to pass unheeded if Mr. Boyer were allowed to continue the practice of law unhampered by the care of the finances of the State."

Contractor's Troubles.

Sheriff McMillan, of Somerset county, on Monday last levied on all the tools, engines, and other machinery, belonging to Brown & Emery, and which have been used by that firm in the work of laying the thirty-six inch pipe line for the Johnstown Water Company, from Border's Station, on the Stony Creek, to this city. There have been rumors for some time of difficulty between the members of this firm, and it is presumed that this step has been taken to bring matters to a crisis.

A Queer Inscription.

In a graveyard owned by colored people, near Wetumpka, Ala., is an old tombstone with the following inscription: "To the memory of Henrietta Henriette Demitritter Cream of Tartar Sweet potato Caroline Bostwick, daughter of Bob and Sukey Catlin. Born at Covington, Georgia; died at Wetumpka, Alabama. Aged fourteen years."