

Johnstown Weekly Democrat.

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NO. 5

THE RIVERS AGAIN.

More About the Cause of Their Overflows and the Remedy.

To the Editor of the Johnstown Democrat.

In an article in the *Tribune* recently, headed "Our City and its Rivers," the writer very keenly calls to notice our dreadful disaster, loss of life and property caused by waters. The lesson was indeed one very dearly purchased. But would it not be well for us, in all sincerity, to look the causes of our disaster and troubles from water squarely in the face, and in doing so we find, in the first place, it is an undeniable fact that the prime cause for the loss of so many lives and thousands of dollars worth of property was the giving way of the South Fork reservoir on May 31st last. Of the reservoir, can only be said there did exist some fourteen miles from our city a death trap longing an opportunity to sweep down and rob us of thousands of inhabitants and millions of dollars worth of property. But did we not know the reservoir was in existence? Were we not fully aware of its unsafety? Was it not a known fact that unfit material was annually used in the breast of that very reservoir, which possessed not the required resisting power for so enormous a body of water? And, lastly, were we not fully familiar with the correspondence on the subject that took place between John Fulton, now General Manager of the Cambria Iron Company, then Chief Engineer of same institution, and the officers of the South Fork Sportsmen and Fishing Club? We were told as plain as language could make it by our townsman that the resisting power was insufficient, taking character of material and manner of construction as a basis for our protection. Certainly no one can deny these facts; they were well founded, and we have the evidence—a ruined city. This is our disaster and cause in a nutshell.

Now as for our rivers. It is undoubtedly true that our channels in their present condition are insufficient to carry off the water should a large amount of rain fall. But why are they insufficient to discharge all the waters now? Were they not also insufficient for several years before the flood? It is true that a portion of our present trouble must be attributed to deposits in our channels as a result from the flood, but does the cause solely rest there as we are led to believe? Certainly not, for we have had overflows for several years before the flood. We older citizens who have lived in this valley from 30 to 50 years have no recollection of troubles from high water. No other solution can therefore be given than as we know and see them, and that is a practical game of scientific taking that which does not belong, has been indulged in on the banks of our stream to such an extent that our channels have, within the last few years, been so narrowed that the space left now has been and is unable to discharge all the water and overflows are natural results. The Stonycreek, which now seems to so sincerely attract the attention of our would-be philanthropists, urging City Council to grant privileges to change the stream, was in former times no source of trouble, and why? Because it then had the average width of 225 feet.

This width our borough fathers in all their wisdom thought was extravagant by fifty feet, and assumed the questioned responsibility to reduce the width to 175 feet and grant permits to fill to that width. A corporation determined to see the town Council with their reduction of fifty feet in width and go fifty better. So that in place of leaving a channel of 225 feet as formerly we now have a channel to convey off same amount of rain fall at 125 feet at some points. The same ratio will hold good with all our streams in the City limits, and yet the question is daily asked why have we trouble from water sources now? The time has arrived when prompt and decided action for our relief is necessary, our City Council to whom is intrusted the task, should at once take the position that private individuals though ever so poor have equal rights with corporations that both are amenable on the same basis, and to that end should negotiate and not allow, as in former years that schemes of various kinds shall form the basis of legislation. The change of Stonycreek would not doubt be profitable at least to the projectors, who with tears ask to be recognized. That our streams have been encroached on is now beyond a doubt. That the bed of a stream is a highway is equally true. If therefore a highway is encroached upon, there is a remedy. The law of Johnstown borough Council without authority narrowed our streams or allowed it to bedone then there is a remedy for restoration, and my word for it, restore to our channels that which was without any well founded authority, taken from it from Coopersdale to the extreme limits of the City. Remove the most serious deposits from the flood, as well as the stone railroad bridge, and arrange at proper angles the confluence of the various streams, and the result will be as in former years no trouble from water sources, without even the assistance of your extremely generous Construction Company.

JUSTICE.

THE CASE FULLY STATED.

Confutation of the Ebsenburg Herald's Charges That We Misstated Matters in Our Report of the Directors' Convention.

The Cambria Herald of last week says that the DEMOCRAT misrepresented things in its report of the School Directors' Convention. They quote from our paper of the 7th inst, the following:

The directors from the new borough of Hastings presented a decision of the Superintendent of Public Instruction setting forth that they were entitled to a vote in the convention. The chairman read some law on the subject and interpreted it against them, refusing to acknowledge the decision of the State Department. The Hastings men were not permitted to vote.

Then the Herald goes on to comment, as follows:

The truth of the matter is a director got up in the convention and said that one of the directors from Hastings had received a letter from the State Department, but that he forgot to bring it with him.

The chairman read the school law in regard to the matter, which explicitly states that new boards can not vote before the organization in June.

And it is not contrary to custom, as intimated by the DEMOCRAT, to fix the salary question after the election of a county superintendent.

We do not wish to get into any controversy in regard to this matter, but every word we said is true, and the "veracious" writer in the Herald, who is easily distinguished by his italics, either through ignorance or for the purpose of putting matters in a light more acceptable to the people of the county, told in the statements quoted above several things that are untrue.

Mr. John A. Platt, a director from Hastings, stated that he was prepared to take oath that the board from that borough had authority from the State Department to participate in the election. Mr. Platt also stated that he had accidentally omitted bringing with him the letter from the Department.

The chairman thereupon produced from a copy of the School Laws this section:

That when a new district shall hereafter be formed, such district shall not be considered and recognized as a separate and independent school district until after the termination of the current school year in which it became a new district, and until it have a full board of directors regularly elected or appointed and organized, except that the directors thereof shall have authority to levy, assess and collect tax, procure school-houses, and do all other acts necessary to the commencement of the schools for the ensuing year.

Does that "explicitly state that new boards cannot vote before the organization in June?" Reader, compare the Herald's statement with the above and see who "misrepresents matters."

If the chairman, who would certainly make a good judge, if the dispatch with which he disposes of legal questions be a merit, had looked a moment at a decision of the department appended to the above section of the law, he would have found this:

The board of a new district may do every official act, during the year next before that in which it goes into separate and independent operation, necessary to the putting of the schools into full working order, except that of actual opening them for instruction.

The letter received by the Hastings board, in answer to the question whether they were entitled to vote for county Superintendent or not is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, Harrisburg, April 29, 1890.
John A. Platt, Esq.
DEAR SIR: You have a legal right to vote for county Superintendent on the first Tuesday in May. Yours Truly,
HENRY HOUCK, Deputy Supt.

Has the Herald anything more to say on the subject? Our reply has been delayed a little in order to get possession of the above letter. The right of the Director's to a vote was presented at the convention by a gentleman who would not misrepresent the matter, and the decision was ruled out by the Chairman, either because he and those who were back of him didn't know any better, or because they did it for a purpose, and that purpose it isn't hard to see.

On the matter of fixing the salary there is only this to say: It has been the custom in this county for a great many years to first settle the salary and then elect the Superintendent, and the man who wrote the article for the Herald knew he was writing an untruth when he wrote it. If what we say is not correct will he state in what instances for the last fifteen or eighteen years has the Superintendent been elected before the salary was settled? Is not that long enough to establish a custom?

Reduced Rates to German Baptists at North Manchester, Ind., via Pennsylvania Railroad.
For the benefit of visitors to the meeting of the Old German Baptists at North Manchester, Ind., the Pennsylvania Railroad Company will sell excursion tickets to North Manchester at one fare and a third for the round trip. Tickets will be sold May 20th to 25th, valid for return until June 25, 1890, inclusive.

The exceptionally good facilities afforded by the Pennsylvania's through trains to the West, commend this route most strongly to the patronage of visitors to this meeting. The specific round-trip rate from Johnstown to North Manchester is \$17.39, Conemaugh \$17.48.

Further information will be given by ticket agents or upon application to Thos. E. Watt, Passenger Agent Western Division, 110 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh.

BOARD OF TRADE.

Proceedings of the Regular Meeting Last Evening—Chances for a Public Building Not Good.

The regular meeting of the Board of Trade was called to order last evening by Vice President Moses.

The roll was called and a quorum answered to their names. G. W. Mcses, G. W. Wagner, James Quinn, Scott Dibert, S. Dean Cannon, Geo. K. Stryock, P. S. Fisher, John Hannan, G. A. Hager, Chas. Suppes, J. M. Shumaker, Chas. H. Griffith, P. L. Carpenter, were present.

The minutes of the last regular and special meetings were read and approved.

Reports of Committees being called for the Committees on Manufactures, Real Estate, Finance, Municipal Affairs, Statistics, Publication and Arbitration had no report.

The Treasurer's report was read as follows:

Dr. To amount on hand at our last meeting, \$1270 72
To amount received from the Secretary, 54 00
Total, \$1324 72

By amount paid C. T. Frazer, \$25 00
By amount paid Johnstown Electric Light Co., 8 13 33 1/2
Balance, \$1291 59

Geo. A. Hager, Treasurer.

The secretary read a letter received by the special committee on Public Building for Johnstown, from Hon. Edward Scull, as follows:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Washington, D. C., April 26, 1890.

Hon. L. D. Woodruff,

MY DEAR SIR: I have the honor of your self and colleagues, a committee of the Board of Trade, relative to an appropriation for the erection of a government building in your city. Of course, I stand ready to do all in my power to meet your wishes in this matter, but I do not think this is an auspicious time. You will observe on an examination of the House calendar, a copy of which I mail you, that it contains a very large number of bills of a similar character. The Committee on Public Grounds and Buildings has had its day, or rather two days, during which it procured the passage of a number of bills, four of which were for buildings in our State. It is not probable that it will get another day during this session, but if it does, it will call up bills in their order on the calendar. Apart from this there is no other way of getting a bill considered except by "unanimous consent." The objection of a single member prevents the privilege being granted, and gentlemen having bills on the calendar will, in defense of their own rights, object to have bills below them taken out and passed. It is current rumor at this time that the enormous sums of money which would be required to erect but a title of the buildings that are asked for, and bills for which are on the calendar, has attracted the attention of the Executive, and that, if passed, will not meet with his approval.

The committee has now on its file a large number of bills not acted upon, and probably will not be during this session. If, however, on due consideration, your committee thinks it would be in the interest of the project to have a bill introduced at this session, it will afford me pleasure to do so. Truly yours,

EDWARD SCULL.

The Secretary read the following bills, which were approved and paid: A. E. Blain, janitor, \$8.33; C. T. Frazer, rent for April, \$25; L. D. Woodruff, \$3.00; Ramp & Horan 75 cents; W. J. Rose, \$1.02.

The names of Wm. C. Kreiger, Assistant Cashier of the Citizens Bank and Wm. A. Donaldson, were proposed for membership and under the rules were laid over until the next regular meeting.

The river question was freely discussed.

They Had Better Acquiesce.

To the Editor of the Johnstown Democrat.

The enemies of Dr. Beale since they have failed through the congregation and the Presbytery to effect his defeat are now making use of the columns of the *Tribune* to vilify him and annoy the church. It would have been very much better for them, when they had counted their strength, and at least two instances found a majority of the actual members and contributors of the congregation against them, and the recent action of the committee, in which the pastor and congregation was sustained, to have quietly acquiesced and either withdrawn from the church or accepted the will of the majority.

Neither Dr. Beale nor his supporters are necessitated to go through the town with a petition pleading for money to pay his salary, nor will he have to issue an execution against the parsonage to liquidate it. As long as he can be prevailed upon to remain with us, which we hope will be for many years, his salary will be provided for and promptly paid.

ANOTHER MEMBER.

Carriages Run by Gas.

One of the recent inventions is carriages to be propelled by gas generated from benzine. The motor is placed in the rear over the main axle and the benzine is carried in a receptacle under the seat. It holds enough for a trip of eighty miles. The gas mixture is ignited in a cylinder by an electric spark. The motor is started by simply turning a lever. A link chain belted to a wheel in the rear applies the power. In its make-up the carriage is something like a tricycle, having only three wheels, and is guided precisely the same way. It is easy to increase or diminish the speed and the carriage can be stopped in a moment. The system can be applied to large or small vehicles. The cost is comparatively low. The speed is from ten miles an hour down to that of a horse car.

Subscribe for the DEMOCRAT.

THE CITY'S SCHOOLS.

The Number of Schools in the New City, Organization of the Board of Controllers, and Other Interesting Matter.

The number of school rooms furnished the city by the several boroughs as follows: Johnstown, 24; Millville, 14; Conemaugh, 4; Woodvale, 2; Cambria, 2; Grubbtown, 2; Prospect, 1; a total of 49. Johnstown borough lost 10 rooms by the flood. Conemaugh—deducting those in the new building—4; Woodvale 2, and Cambria 2; a total of 18. It is likely that within a very short time all these rooms will have to be replaced, making about seventy schools. And the growth of the city will in a few years give the city a sufficient number of schools to entitle it to hold a separate institute. The number of schools necessary is seventy-five.

One of the first duties levelling upon the Board of City School Controllers after organization will be the choice of a City Superintendent for a term of three years at a salary to be fixed by the Board of Controllers.

Many of the matters pertaining to the organization of the Board of Controllers and the management of the school government of the city are best told by the following paragraphs taken from the law on the subject applying to cities of the third class:

The Board of School Controllers shall annually organize on the first Monday of June, by the election of a President and Secretary, by a vote of a majority of members elected thereto. The Secretary shall receive such salary as the Board may determine, and shall give bond, if thereto directed, with such securities as the Board may require, conditioned for the faithful performance of his duties and accounting for and delivery over of all moneys, books, accounts and vouchers which may come into his possession. No member of the Board shall be eligible to any office or employment under the Board to which compensation is attached.

The City Treasurer shall be ex-officio School Treasurer, and before entering upon his duties he shall give bond to the city school district in such amount as the Board of Controllers shall approve, with two or more sufficient sureties conditioned for the honest and faithful discharge of his official duties, and the safe keeping and payment over of all school moneys entrusted to his care. He shall receive such salary from the school district as the Board of School Controllers shall fix and determine before his election or appointment. When the said Controllers are satisfied that the school funds in the hands of the City Treasurer are endangered from any cause they may require additional security, and in case of default in the giving thereof, may elect a treasurer to serve until another City Treasurer is duly elected and qualified.

The City Controller of any city of the third class shall exercise the same authority and supervision of the finances and accounts of the school district as he does by law with reference to the finances and accounts of city affairs, and he shall countersign all warrants for the payment of money out of the school treasury in the same manner that he countersigns city warrants; his compensation for such services shall be fixed by the School Board prior to his election, and he shall be required to give bond to the school district, with surety or sureties, conditioned for the faithful performance of his duties.

The law provides that where a city is made up of several heretofore separate districts, each such district shall discharge its own obligations, which shall be adjusted in the annual levying of taxes until all the debts contracted prior to consolidation shall have been paid.

Finding of the German Lutheran Church Bell.

The bell belonging to the German Lutheran Church was discovered in the Fifteenth ward on Monday evening by Officer Martin. It was in a stable, and he was attracted by the sound while walking through an alley near by. He thought he recognized the sound, and reported to Rev. Glasgow, who, with several trustees of the church, went down and fully identified it. The bell was brought up yesterday afternoon to the new school building, in course of erection by the people of that church. It will be placed in position at once. It had been found shortly after the flood by Mr. Richard Howe, and not knowing to whom it belonged, he had it placed where it was found.

Through Mighty Waters.

Altoona Tribune.

Mr. D. K. Ramey has in his possession a volume which has an interesting history. It is the minute book of the Allegheny synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and it passed through the Johnstown flood. It was in sad condition when rescued, but after passing through the hands of Bookbinder W. C. Loudon, of this city, looks almost as good as new, the discoloration of the leaves being the only traces of the flood left. Our Lutheran friends will be glad to know that this repository of their church minutes has been saved and rehabilitated.

Subscribe for the Democrat.

The Danger of Overflows.

To the Editor of the Johnstown Democrat.

I have just read what Mayor Rose has to say on the question of Stonycreek overflows, and having previously noted an engineer's report on changing the channel back to the foot of the hill, and having heard opinions, wise and otherwise, of leading citizens, permit me to ask how, in the name of common sense, such a change would avert the danger of freshet overflows? Suppose the water should be diverted from its present channel to that mapped out by the engineer, what good would come of it, other than dispensing with bridges between Johnstown and Kernville? Or suppose the present channel should be widened to its original size, or to the extreme of 400 feet, or, for that matter, to 600 feet, is there a sane man in or about the town that really thinks it would give the desired relief to the lower part of the town?

So long as that stone obstruction stands below the junction of the two streams, no changes in the channel of the Stonycreek that can be made whether by widening it or by diverting the water into a new one, will or can obviate the menace of danger to life and property caused by overflows.

It requires no engineering skill to see that those narrow arches of the stone bridge will cause overflows every time a freshet brings down trees, logs, roots and dirt. They are skillfully and admirably adapted to catch and hold such things until a dam of many feet is created. Then what? Why, with no outlet for the water, it will necessarily and naturally back up over the embankment, and flood the lower end of the town.

The terrible flood of last May would not have caused half the destruction of life and property it did, had there been no bridge with narrow arches below the junction. It is well known that the logs that came down on the rise clogged up the outlets at an early hour on that fatal Friday, and backed the water up to Walnut street, then to Market and even to Franklin, and finally caused the Stonycreek to break through to Clinton street. Who does not know that the two or three feet of water on Franklin street at 2 o'clock was the result of the big dam down at the railroad bridge?

Go on then, making an ado about narrowing the channels of the Conemaugh and Stonycreek, attributing overflows to that work, and closing your eyes to the real cause of danger, and see what you will accomplish by affording relief to buildings down about the Point. Squander money in widening or changing channels, and pay no attention to that fearfully dangerous obstruction in the form of the stone bridge, and overflows will continue to mock at your fears. Oh, for a little common sense to the real cause of danger.

Let some one should say this is written by some one interested in ground made by narrowing channels, permit me to say I am only

A LOOKER ON IN VIENNA.

RED MEN PARADE.

Three Thousand Braves March Through the Streets of Scranton.

SCRANTON, May 21.—Delegates from 300 tribes of the improved Order of Red Men gathered in the Great Council of the State here to-day. Music Hall was completely filled when at 10 o'clock Great Sachem W. G. Myers called the meeting to order. Rev. D. C. Hughes, of Scranton, invoked the Great Spirit. The Great Sachem delivered an address on the history of the order and then introduced Mayor Fellows, who offered the freedom of the city to the tribes and gave them a hearty welcome.

At 3 o'clock the members of the order paraded. Three thousand braves in picturesque costumes were in line, and the streets down which the parade passed were densely crowded. All the Philadelphia braves have their squaws and papooses. Among them are Great Sachem Myers, Great Sachem-elect John McCully, Great Junior Sagamore Conley, Deputy Great Sachem Conn and Richard Vaux, Randall's successor.

This evening "The Farm in the West, or the Indian's Revenge," was played in Music Hall for the benefit of the order.

Cherry-McCabe.

Although our sister borough of East Conemaugh very decidedly said she would not consolidate with the new City of Johnstown, some of her fair daughters, it seems have not such decided opinions upon the question of annexation. We are led to this remark because of the marriage Tuesday of Miss Mattie McCabe, daughter of the late Thomas McCabe, to Mr. S. A. Cherry, of Manayunk. The writer has known Miss Mattie as a bright school girl, an obedient and studious pupil, and an estimable lady of much worth. It is a pleasure to her friends to know that she has taken for a husband a gentleman who is worthy of the love and trust she has reposed in him. The best wishes of a host of friends will follow them both through life and may many full-blown cherries be gathered by them in their pathway down the stream of time.

New Schedule.

Trains now run on the Johnstown & Stonycreek Railroad every fifteen minutes. See time table of the new schedule.

SHE WON THE GLOVES.

How a Northwestern Widow Convinced Inquisitive Man of His Error.

In one of St. Paul's palatial apartment houses lives a young widow—one of those willow blondes, with brown eyes warranted to kill at 100 yards. The next time she has occasion to appear in full dress she will probably wear a pair of gloves which she won from a well-known gentleman who has apartments on the same floor. This is how it happened: The gentleman came home one afternoon, and as he passed along the hall to his rooms he saw through the half-opened door of the fair one's room a sight that caused him to stop and exclaim: "What on earth are you doing?" The lady stepped to the door and explained that a new dress had just been sent home and that she had placed her mirror down on the floor so that she could see how the dress looked as she walked past.

"Looks all right," said he.

"That's all you know about it," said the widow. "In the first place it doesn't hang well behind; there is a certain satisfaction and peace of mind to a woman who knows that her dress hangs well behind that the comforts of religion do not give. But the greatest fault with it is that it is so short that I am almost ashamed to wear it."

"That's so, it is awfully short," he said, looking down to the widow's graceful ankles as she moved around under a chair. "But I always did admire those embroidered lisle threads—"

"You don't know what you're talking about; they're not lisle thread, and you have nothing to base an opinion except your too fertile imagination."

"Well, I never worked in a dry goods store, but I'll just bet you a pair of gloves that I am right, and that they are lisle thread."

"And you won't ever tell a living soul if I show you that you are wrong?"

"Never! upon my honor."

"Well, come in and close the door, but remember that I trust you to be honorable in this and never breathe a word of it. And if I satisfy you that you are wrong I am to have a pair of eight-button white gloves."

"Yes, yes, that's all right," he answered, impatiently thinking it would be a good bet if he lost.

Walking demurely to a dressing case, she opened the upper drawer and said:

"I bought three pairs yesterday; here are the other two, and you see that they are silk, not lisle thread, and they have just a little line up the side instead of embroidery."

"But I thought you were going to—"

"Sir! There are some subjects upon which you have no right to think. Never mind what you thought," she continued, as she held the door open for her caller's exit. "Just utilize your thinker in remembering that you owe me a pair of gloves."

THE RIVER BOUNDARIES.

The Mayor and the City Engineer Take a Trip to Blairsville to See Certain Maps.

Tuesday morning Mayor Rose and City Engineer Downey went to Blairsville, taking the Johnstown Accommodation to the Intersection. Owing to the fact that several of the trains were not running on time they missed connecting with train that goes down to Blairsville. They then set out and walked the three miles to Blairsville.

The object of their trip was to see certain maps of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which are in the hands of Mr. Antes Snyder, Chief Engineer of the Right of Way of that road. They were shown a map of the water courses of the Conemaugh from where Woodvale stood to where the stone bridge now is, as they appeared in 1857, when the Pennsylvania Railroad was projected. Maps of the present courses of the stream were also shown to the visiting gentlemen, as was a map in part of the course of the Stonycreek at both periods named.

It is the purpose to get a tracing of those maps, if possible, so that some idea can be obtained that will be of assistance in determining the proper width of the streams to be fixed by the city ordinances. If the natural course and width of the streams were to be restored, there is little doubt that there would be any further danger from inundations.

Messrs. Rose and Downey returned on the afternoon train yesterday, being obliged, in order to get home before evening, to walk from Blairsville to the Intersection.

LICENSE PLATES FOR VEHICLES.

They Have Been Received at the Controller's Office.

The City Controller wishes us to state that the license plates for the vehicles for which the license tax has been paid have been received by him and are ready for distribution. The ordinance requires that they shall be placed on vehicles, the owners of which are required to pay the license, as an evidence that the city law has been complied with.

Five cents is now charged for a message over the branch telephone line to Bernard Nees' hotel, Geistown.