

## First Annual Message of Archibald Johnston, 1918

### THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Foreword. We, the representatives of all the inhabitants of the City of Bethlehem, which inhabitants comprise a portion of the peoples of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of *civil* and *religious liberty*, and humbly invoking His guidance, meet, for the first time in the history of the Consolidated Bethlehems, to ordain and establish a municipal government, in order that the general, great and essential principles of liberal and free government may be the better recognized and *locally* applied.

The Municipal Problem. The municipal problem is primarily and essentially one of *human welfare*. Therefore, a city government is something more than a mere business proposition. We are concerned, as administrators, with the task of securing internal peace, virtue and good order; safety of lives, property and reputation; health and longevity; education, comfort, convenience and happiness for the inhabitants of our communities and relief of the poor. This applies to all alike, naturalized citizens, as well as those who have enjoyed the blessings and comforts of our civil and religious liberty, who have not become citizens or cast their lot entirely with us.

We are charged to perform this service in as high a degree as is consistent with whatever amount of taxation on the people can afford to reasonably bear. We, I say are concerned as *administrators*; you as citizens, should be concerned to no less a degree. We will do our utmost to perform *our* duty, and will succeed to the degree in which we receive your co-operation and support. The duties assigned to us, I repeat, are yours no less than ours.

From the municipal standpoint, the concentration of *industrial activity* with its accompanying dense population within small areas, is a comparative modern phenomenon, and hence the problems incident thereto are comparatively new.

Originally, the towns of the Lehigh Valley sprang up as places of residence and trade of those who devoted themselves to the commercial occupations made necessary by the *agricultural character* and economic conditions of the country round about.

Later, industrial developments characterized the growth, and, of course, religious and educational motives were also causes for concentration of population in the towns, as is evidenced by our churches, universities, seminaries, colleges and schools; but the controlling motives were the economic ones of *trade and industry*.

Trade was impossible without transportation, so important lines of communication, such as turnpikes, canals and railroads, were established. The growth of the towns attracted and diverted the individual from the soil and there was immigration from foreign countries as well as migration from the rural districts of Lehigh and Northampton Counties. The result is that today a larger urban than rural population is a normal and permanent economic condition.

The differences, in nativity, language, religion, morals and general habits which now obtain make the population one of extreme heterogeneity, segregated for economic production and distribution, and in general, the tendency has been toward economy and convenience of work without due regard to convenience of living.

As would be expected, the sociological problems presented in these communities of dense population have (on account of our liberal form of government) been difficult and slow of solution. With respect to one item alone, that of *health*, it may be noted that out in the open, natural country, the resident may suffer alone for his carelessness, but in man's *artificial city*, where natural agencies, like sunshine, air and drainage are not able, *unaided*, to cope successfully with the waste products of human existence, the rate

of mortality is increased and becomes greatest in the *most crowded* and uncleanly tenement districts. No amount of personal hygiene can protect one against the invasion of an epidemic whose avenues of approach are the *water or food supplies*, as well as improper *disposal* of waste products, and hence, in the city, it has come to be generally understood that public measures are necessary to protect and promote the health of the individual. These essentials assume greater importance with the size of a community. Nevertheless, adequate and absolutely safe *water* supplies and proper disposal of sewage and other wastes are NOT to be found in the cities and towns of the Lehigh Valley.

Every municipality is morally *bound* to furnish to its inhabitants an abundant supply of *pure water*, the purest *air possible*, and a well-drained soil (which means proper sewerage), street cleaning, garbage and refuse collection and disposal. Any other than these sanitary standards in a city will be considered, *some day* in America, as *criminal negligence* and sufficient cause for just punishment; since public health is a public duty. But these necessities can be obtained only by consent of the inhabitants through adequate taxation.

A very *important element* of our population is to be found in our children who have been born and are being brought up in the city, and I emphasize that the surroundings of and the advantages afforded to these, and all our citizens should not only be conducive to health and longevity, but to the greatest welfare and happiness of the community as a whole.

Baby Milk Station. Through the efforts of Miss Ernesta Drinker, the Board of Health of South Bethlehem, (with the assistance of Council and private subscriptions,) established the Baby Milk Station, which, under the capable management of Miss Mifflin, has accomplished wonders in reducing infant mortality.

Moves of this kind cannot be too strongly commended and should receive the unqualified and continued support of our Council and citizens of the community.

Notwithstanding the good work that has been accomplished, there is room for enlarged and improved facilities of this great health move, and I heartily recommend this important subject to your consideration.

Mere city life tends to helplessness. If one has to travel, there is the public conveyance. If a fire starts, there is the trained expert force at hand to put it out.

Properly disciplined professional police department stands ready to quell outbreaks of disorder and press acts of lawlessness. The individual does not produce the food he eats nor the clothing he wears. This is increasingly true as the population increases and becomes more dense. He is a dependent, relying on public utilities and systems of co-operation for his daily needs.

Consequently, the sovereign state entrusts the city with large powers to borrow money and to tax, not only as the state's financial agent, but in addition, in its own behalf; to exercise such financial powers to the end and purpose that the acts of the city with regard to public welfare shall actually enlarge the scope of individual opportunity.

To receive our thorough consideration, we must start with the foundation — beginning with the HOME, the CHILD and its PLAYGROUND.

Next comes the common school period of realization, of impressions and associations which memory never effaces.

Then the high school period, during which the body matures, useful arts are, or should be, taught and from which dates life's *active career* for many young men and women, while others aspiring to professional attainments, pursue higher educational advantages; and so we continue on through the busy work-life into declining years.

Unquestionably, this *journey* could be made much easier and better through a wiser discharge of the functions of municipal government. What if our educational facilities are good? Can they not be extended

and improved and made more useful? How about advantages of learning for boys and girls, for men and women, with respect to manual training and the applied arts and sciences? Progressive measures for broad PUBLIC EDUCATION could with advantage comprehend facilities for communication and public gatherings as well as schools, practical museums as well as libraries, gymnasiums, parks and playgrounds, athletic sports and healthful pastimes of all kinds for

Winter and Summer, as well as charities corrections. These should be provided and so conducted as to encourage and promote broad *social unity*, in order to prove the greatest blessing to our community or to any locality or country where our citizens may migrate.

We know that overcrowding of tenements and bad housing conditions are prejudicial to normal standards for family life. Also that where a mother is employed away from home, care and nurture of the children may be neglected, the infant mortality is high, and governmental authority may have to be exercised in the interests of public welfare.

A Home is of First Importance. We know that a matter of *first importance* to the average man of family is the purchase of a HOME and in thus helping himself he helps the community by rendering it just that much more stable; for he as a property owner is not likely to advocate public expenditures regardless of the financial resources of the city, since he must knowingly, as a taxpayer, feel the consequence of public extravagance.

Furthermore, we know that the city population, because of its industrial characteristics, is not likely to take the broadest views of municipal affairs. The individual is an expert in narrow lines. Hence, because the population is dense, individualistic and heterogeneous, it readily organizes into societies, clubs, etc.; into class distinctions, rather than into broad social concerns. The former answer to some extent, but are not sufficient for the broadest end.

The municipal government, having powers of distinctly local significance, should suit its activities to the conditions of life found in that city. Every progressive citizen and all good agencies should be links to be forged into the chain that shall *unite* the community for the common weal in peace, as the spirit of *patriotism* is now uniting the peoples of America in this time of war.

I invite your attention to certain specific ITEMS which it should be OUR AIM to attain. First, by adopting certain POLICIES, and then by a *gradual development* of them as opportunity and means at hand shall dictate.

Water Supply. Authorities declare, and experience in this vicinity affirms, that consideration of public health demand the discontinuance of use for drinking purposes of all water drawn from the ground or taken from the surface in *populated* areas. It is not safe to drink water that comes from wells or springs anywhere in the city of Bethlehem unless it is first thoroughly filtered and purified.

With respect to the public water works, a part of the system now in use is municipally owned and operated, the source being deep seated wells in the valley of Monocacy Creek, outside the city limits and a considerable distance from the populated areas. This supplies old Bethlehem and portions of the West Side. The remainder of the system is owned and operated by the Bethlehem City Water Company, which in general supplies the South and West sides of the City and other territory outside Bethlehem's limits. Analysis made twice a week under the supervision of the State Board of Health show absence of Colon bacilli in Bethlehem's municipally owned water plant.

Water Intake. At a point just above our city line the Bethlehem City Water Company maintains an intake in the Lehigh River and derives its source from this supply. Four miles up stream from this intake is the city of Allentown, with a population of approximately 70,000 people; above it, in the valley, are extensive

cement works, slate quarries, as well as other municipalities. Still farther up the valley there are numerous coal mining operations and settlements.

The river source of public supply is under the supervision of the State.

The water is filtered (this operation is also under State supervision). NEVERTHELESS, THE SOURCEIS CONTAMINATED. The sulphur mine drainage and the washings and culm dirt from the breakers, discolor and contaminate the water. The pollution by sewage and manufactural wastes, though checked, is nevertheless bound to be on the increase as the valley develops. This is evidenced by the fact that the Water Company (in an endeavor to supply good water) has within a year been compelled to almost double the capacity of its filter plant. Storm drainage from the streets and alleys of populated areas in itself constitutes an added and an unavoidable source of contamination.

Privately vs. Municipally Owned Water Works. One important difference between a privately owned and a municipally owned public water works is, that the former is considered in the light of an investment upon which the fixed interest and other charges must of necessity be earned at not less (let us assume) than the legal rate of interest. Hence the water company must consider extensions and improvement of plant and service in the light of probable returns on capital investment, otherwise bankruptcy might result; but a municipality, owning its own water works system, may elect at any time, on the score of public policy, to make extensions and betterments and distribute the cost by general taxation. The facilities and SERVICE ARE PARAMOUNT in the latter case, while in the former, they MAY be subordinate.

There exists enabling legislation under which the city may acquire the water works or erect its own system and finance the proposition outside of the constitutional limit of indebtedness.

The inhabitants are in need of a better water works and a purer source of supply at the *present* time, and this need will grow with the community. However, if the city now owned the existing plant, in my opinion it would not be a sound financial policy for Bethlehem to undertake to secure a different source of supply without co-operation with the *other municipalities* of the valley, more especially with the city of Allentown, whose supply also is not all that could be desired. The good people of this valley are entitled to as pure, undefiled and palatable a public water as it is possible and practicable to secure, and steps *should be taken* with this end in view. There would appear to be favorable opportunity and prospects or the ultimate development of a *Lehigh Valley Metropolitan Water Works System* that will give the people the quality and quantity of water and the facilities and service to which they are entitled at a fair and reasonable cost per capita.

Recommendation. I recommend for your consideration the taking of the necessary preliminary steps to secure municipal ownership of the Bethlehem City Water Company's plant and property, and I STRONGLY URGE THE TAKING OF SUCH STEPS AS WILL BRING INTO BEING A MUNICIPAL, PREFERABLY A METROPOLITAN, WATER WORKS TO MEET THE PRESENT AS WELL AS PROVIDE FOR THE FUTURE NEEDS OF THIS SECTION OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. One of the most important ways of conserving the public *health* is by a proper *removal* and *disposal* of what is called sewage. Under this head is included the water which enters houses for domestic purposes, is used to cleanse the houses and the people living therein, as well as the food they eat and the clothing they wear. In getting rid of this soiled water, it has been found advantageous to make use of it as a vehicle for the removal of household and community wastes.

A sewerage system may be described as a series of underground pipes conforming generally to the topography and following down natural ravines and valleys, in which pipes the sewage is collected and conveyed to some *remote* point, where, after treatment to destroy the harmful properties, it is discharged into a river or other large body of water.

The disposal of sewage, untreated, into the waters at the State is, prohibited by statute.

Gesinger Farm. Our sister city of Allentown, after several years' consideration, has recently adopted a sewerage plan whereby the trunk or outfall sewer will terminate on Geisinger Farms, adjacent to the City of Bethlehem, in close proximity to the point on the Lehigh River where the Bethlehem Water Company takes its supply. On said farm of approximately two hundred and forty (240) acres, Allentown proposes to erect a sewage disposal plant, all in plain view and close proximity to the homes of many of our Bethlehem citizens on the West Side. This location and plan of disposal will be obnoxious to these citizens, and already disturbs them and lessens the enjoyment their homes, not to mention the value of the properties. Naturally, the project will receive the serious consideration of the citizens of Bethlehem and will be regarded as against public policy and the interests of the inhabitants of Bethlehem in particular, and we believe the good citizens of our sister city will see the justice of our objections and co-operate with us, as we will with them, on this and all matters so vitally important to the health and happiness of the community at large.

Our own city stands in need of *sewerage*. The present method, extensively in vogue, of disposing of sewage into the ground on the premises, is contrary to best sanitary practices. To this method has been attributed several of the epidemics which have visited our community with fatal consequences. The sewerage plan will have to be comprehensively developed to take care of the city limits and all outlying territory which may be annexed or is tributary. A main trunk sewer must be *planned* and built extending down the river valley and terminating at some point remote from habitation, and into this outfall tributary sub-mains will be connected. This important subject should receive the same consideration as our water supply; that is, a Lehigh Valley Metropolitan Sewage Disposal System.

Recommendation. Just as Allentown's sewage disposal project is bound to protect the communities below her (especially her near neighbor — Bethlehem) so Bethlehem is morally bound to play a similar part in protecting the people who live in close proximity to Bethlehem.

It would appear to be in the line of economy and efficiency and there seems to be no reason why the cities of Allentown and Bethlehem should not at once enter into negotiations for the consummation of a *joint* intercepting and outfall sewer and sewage disposal project.

Recommendation. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND FOR YOUR SERIOUS CONSIDERATION THE TAKING OF SUCH IMMEDIATE STEPS AS MAY BE NECESSARY, WITH OUR SISTER CITY, TO CAUSE AN ABANDONMENT OF THE GEISINGER FARM DISPOSAL OF ALLENTOWN'S SEWAGE AND THE SUBSTITUTION THEREFOR OF THE JOINT PROJECT ABOVE OUTLINED, AND THE PREPARATION, WITHOUT DELAY, OF A COMPREHENSIVE SEWERAGE PLAN FOR OUR OWN MUNICIPALITY AND ADJACENT TERRITORY, AND TO REQUEST THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN TO CONSIDER AND ACT JOINTLY WITH US IN HIS IMPORTANT MATTER.

Stream Control and Utilization. Since the main sewers will in all probability follow closely along the creeks and river banks, where locations and rights of way must be permanently chosen, the question of flood control and industrial water supply regulation of the streams becomes pertinent. Channel improvements should be planned and the establishment of permanent shore lines of all said streams should be undertaken. Such a course will tend to prevent flood conditions and assure the *orderly* and systematic development and control of the Lehigh River and tributary streams. The main sewer locations and their grades can then be definitely determined and fixed with the assurance that they are *permanently* adjusted to and are really a part of the comprehensive channel improvement. In fact, it is not unlikely that conditions at some points are ripe for undertaking improvements in the channel and along the banks in conformity to a comprehensive plan for sewerage and stream control with due regard to utilization.

**Recommendation. THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE STUDIOUSLY INVESTIGATED.**

Garbage and Refuse Collection and Disposal. Garbage comprises the *organic* wastes of the kitchen and the inorganic wastes, such as ashes, rags, crockery, paper, tin cans, etc. Their accumulation in the city is

so rapid that it becomes a serious problem and by its own insistence *demand*s our attention. Undoubtedly, it is the quantity that is the primary cause of its removal, judging from the imperfect methods of collection and supervision which in general still prevail. Vessels for its temporary retention often become putrid, swarms of flies and insects infest them and the whole operation becomes obnoxious and a nuisance. In the more resourceful quarters of the city, where the offal from the kitchen is of the best quality, it is easily possible for the householder, to secure, by the *fee* system, regular collection and removal. The garbage too has a commercial value: it may be rendered or fed to swine. The collector can make it profitable to gather garbage of this kind; but he will not go into the poorer districts where the offal is promiscuously dumped into the can or onto the ground from where the dry rubbish is scattered about. There has been found no system that works satisfactorily in these districts except the one of *municipal collection* and disposal.

Incineration in the crematory owned and operated by the city is today considered the *most perfect* sanitary method for disposing of this wet and this dry medium of disease transmission.

#### Recommendation. THE SUBJECT IS RECOMMENDED FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

In some cities the incinerating plant is located at the sewage disposal works to facilitate the destruction of solids screened from the sewage. The point or points to be selected for the crematories should be with a view to requiring the medium length of haul for the collecting vehicles, always bearing in mind, however, that no furnace and its surrounding premises can be relied upon on all occasions to operate without some offense to the immediate neighborhood.

Street sweepings are generally utilized for filling up lowlands *not* to be used for residential purposes.

Street Pavements and Transportation. The city inhabitants necessarily depend for transportation on the common carriers, such as street railways, steam railways, bus lines and express companies. All of these utilities use the public highways. The steam railroads cross the highways at grade or above or beneath them. The street railways, buses and express companies, like other vehicles, operate on and along the highways and the public bridges.

It is common knowledge that, with a few exceptions, the surfaces of our streets and alleys are in a deplorable condition and that one of the pressing needs of the community is the *permanent paving of all the streets*. *The problem must be met and solved as it has been in other municipalities of Bethlehem's size. We cannot afford, however, to spend our money for costly pavements until the lines and grades are permanently established and we are sure that the community will derive the maximum benefit for the expenditures made.*

This means, with respect to steam railroad transportation, that the location of the facilities, their grades and capacities, shall have been permanently fixed in so far as they may have any bearing on improvements in the *streets* and *public bridges*. For instance, the elimination of grade crossings must be *planned* and the grades of the tracks and the highways determined; the location and necessary connecting facilities for permanent passenger stations, freight depots and yards in their relation to street grades and bridges should be definitely fixed, and only when these and other relevant matters shall have been decided upon can a *comprehensive street grading* and paving project be *wisely adopted*, so far as steam railroad facilities are concerned. To proceed under other circumstances will likely result in waste of the citizens' money.

Street Railways. The proposition also means, with respect to street railway transportation, that the present facilities, routing, tracks, road bed and type of construction, extensions and re-routing, must first be comprehensively studied and agreed to, and methods of operation, points of loading and unloading, and traffic regulations, in so far as they each and all may affect the use of the highways and bridges, must be

determined before a street should be permanently paved in which a car line is located or likely to be located.

With these ends in view, we will invite conferences with the steam and electric railroad managements at an early date.

Furthermore, all facilities that are underground, or should go underground in the streets, should be comprehensively *planned and provided for*, including gas, water and sewer pipes. Zones should be laid out and definitely established in which all overhead wires will ultimately be placed underground in conduits planned and built by the city. These things should be considered before the permanent surfacing of all the streets is undertaken.

Highways are dedicated to the public use, and no matter how efficient a police department may be in the enforcement of traffic regulations, the public travel and convenience will be needlessly interfered with and the public funds *wasted* in repairs unless such a comprehensive *construction program* is made *precedent* to the necessary financial program for the laying down of permanent street pavements extending over a series of years.

City Planning and Housing Conditions. City Planning is an extremely practical thing. Its object is the *regulating* of the laying out of streets and lots within the limits of the city and (as provided by the law) for three miles beyond the city limits; and then regulating the *making* and *use* of certain public improvements, such as streets, boulevards, parkways, playgrounds or other public grounds, public buildings, subways, railways, sewer, water and gas or other pipe lines in order that these public utilities and facilities shall be comprehensively laid out and built from time to time to meet the demands of *future* as well as present needs, with economy in construction and efficiency in operation, and at the same time for the best interests of all concerned, particularly of the tax-paying public. Under this procedure, lands may be acquired and dedicated and *set apart*, though not *actually used* during the early years of the municipal development. It enables the establishment of comprehensive financial and construction programs extending over a long period of time, so that the *consummation* of the projects may be finally attained without undue burdens of taxation being imposed in *any one year*.

It contemplates improved housing conditions, and when wisely planned, it promotes the interest of the man of family who desires to purchase a home.

By proper city planning, moderate priced lots are designed with respect to the street in front, and the rear alley, space for lawns and gardens are planned with a view to plenty of sunlight and ventilation, and at the same time handy to direct means of communication with other parts of the community and to connections with the public utilities of water, gas, lighting, transportation, etc.

I know of no city where additional houses are more in demand and would prove more beneficial , to citizens, of the community, as well as to the country at large, than in Bethlehem. Yet due consideration must be given to the character of the structures being reared in our midst —

1. Due regard should be paid to sanitary conditions; that is, health.
2. With the view of preventing fires.
3. From an aesthetic point of view.

In this connection, I take the liberty of quoting from a letter from Dr. Samuel G. Dixon, State Commissioner of Health, on this subject:

"In the matter of housing conditions there are, as you know, several problems. I have had our Housing Bureau working in your section for some time and therefore these problems are particularly vivid to me.

"The tremendous industrial expansion due to war conditions has had a great effect on your locality, South Bethlehem in particular. You have, therefore, had, as is the usual phenomenon in these cases, a great overcrowding of your buildings, and you have had a rush of speculative building that

has been concerned in getting human habitations up as quickly as possible in order that a return on the money invested should be as quick. The result has been, as always, that not only sanitary precautions and facilities, but even common decency, have been lost sight of in the scramble.

"Fortunately, in South Bethlehem, the local Board of Health, working in conjunction with our Department, has already taken a great step for the better. Between us, we have been able to work out and have adopted a housing ordinance which gives the local authorities control over the erection and maintenance of human habitations. This ordinance was approved December 19, 1916.

"You have in this ordinance the germ of a means for controlling the whole housing situation. If it is enforced by a capable Health Officer, you will be able to bring about a betterment of conditions as to housing."

Parks. Plans should be laid with a view of setting aside a tract or tracts of land for a comprehensive scheme of *public parks*; a gymnasium and natatorium for winter and summer use might be maintained and supported and used by *all the people* without distinction as to class or residence; where athletic exhibitions could, be given, prizes awarded, mutual respect, understanding and the spirit of emulation fostered in all healthful athletic sports; leading up to which parkways might subsequently be built, and to which adequate street car facilities would be extended.

Parkways can with advantage be installed on several of our wider streets, without in the least interfering with traffic requirements. This will not only tend to beautify the city, but will probably result in considerable saving by the installation of considerably less paving and materially reduce the maintenance cost.

Furthermore, and pursuing this same idea, parkways should ultimately be built over and along the sewer lines in the valleys of the creeks, leading to and connecting up the various playgrounds. Somewhere in this comprehensive PARK SCHEME should be provided a forested area, furnished with facilities for family picnics and other pastimes which the whole project suggests. No planning would be adequate unless it provided for the need of ALL the people, both children and adults. Consequently, the development of these ideas calls for deep study and the broadest consideration, and it is realized that this cannot all be accomplished in the immediate future. Recommendation. IT IS NEVERTHELESS RECOMMENDED FOR YOUR THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION AND ATTENTION.

In furtherance of this important subject, we have employed some of the best landscape architects in the country from whom we have taken advice and have this important subject under consideration.

With a view of impressing on our fellow-citizens how lacking we are in parks, parkways, playgrounds, etc., we quote from a report made by Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, City Planning Expert, which shows in concise form the city parking areas in sixty-four (64) cities of populations between 50,000 and 100,000, as follows:

22	[	11 had from	0.5	to	50	acres of parks.
		11 had from	50	to	100	acres of parks.
		20 had from	100	to	200	acres of parks.
22	[	16 had from	200	to	500	acres of parks.
		5 had from	500	to	1000	acres of parks.
		1 had	1990			acres of parks.

Schools. While the Mayor has no official duty connected with the conduct of the public schools, yet as a citizen it may not be misunderstood when I say that better educational advantages should be offered and extended and that the community stands in need of a technical high school. I would consider it a privilege to co-operate in advancement along educational lines.



Music. Our municipality rightfully enjoys the distinction of being a musical centre. An auditorium for musical and other public gatherings of an educational character is a consummation most earnestly to be desired.

Public Safety. Contrary to the popular notion that the exercise by the city of its police powers tends to limit the freedom of action of the individual, it actually operates to *promote liberty* and the fullest enjoyment of one's, personal rights, provided the police officers faithfully discharge their duties and give every inhabitant a *square deal*. The police department is under civil service. The preservation of peace and maintenance of public safety is in the hands of this department and under the direction of the Mayor.

Public Health. The care of the public health demands our closest, scrutiny and untiring attention, and in this connection I am in favor of the ultimate establishment of a municipal laboratory for the free examination of such specimens of blood and urine as the practicing physicians of the city and its environs may care to submit on behalf of patients unable to pay for such services elsewhere.

Recommendation. I RECOMMEND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH A LABORATORY TO YOUR CONSIDERATION.

In this connection, it may be found advantageous to ultimately extend the facilities of the proposed laboratory to have supervision over all Water, Milk, etc., as well as aiding physicians in correctly diagnosing such diseases as tuberculosis, typhoid, diphtheria, etc.

Fire Prevention. Public safety, so far as fire protection is concerned, is in the hands of local fire companies and coupled with such facilities as we are afforded by the local water works. The best kind of equipment sufficiently manned to secure prompt response to all fire alarms is the standard to which we should *aspire* and I vouchsafe my hearty support to all efforts towards this end. Especially necessary is it that sufficient pressure and quantity of water shall be available at the public fire hydrants at all times to reach all occupied points in the city. The present lack of such adequate [sic] facilities for public fire protection argues in favor of municipal ownership of the water works system, AND WHILE IN GENERAL I DO NOT FAVOR MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP, I SUBMIT THIS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION. Nothing plays so important a part in the health of a community as water and sewage.

Fire Protection. I quote the following from a letter to me from Mr. G. Chal. Port, State Fire Marshal, of Pennsylvania:

"Within recent years the matter of fire prevention has been gaining recognition in the successful advancement and development of social and industrial life, and while it is highly important and necessary to maintain proper and efficient fire protection facilities, it is also *equally important and necessary* that *fire prevention* methods be established in order to effectually reduce and prevent the unnecessary fire waste and the sacrifice of life by the carelessness, indifference, and neglect of the citizens.

"Fire prevention in its co-operative state may be identified as civic *betterment*, but where such cooperation is *lacking* it is the progressive prerogative of a municipality to REQUIRE adherence either through the statutory laws, as far as their jurisdiction extends, or by the enactment of *ordinances* that will fix responsibility upon those who willfully jeopardize life and property by fire hazards.

"Chiefly among the methods for fire prevention should be considered:

"(a) Construction, Alteration, Repair, and Maintenance of Buildings.

"(b) Demolition or Repair of Dilapidated Buildings constituting a menace to surrounding property and the endangering of life

"(c) Prohibiting the accumulation of rubbish and waste materials in and about premises, and regulating the burning thereof.

"(d) Regulating the storage of gasoline and other petroleum products, explosives, etc.

"(e) Fixing liability for the cost of extinguishing a preventable fire upon persons in whose premises fire occurs as a result of disobedience to a fire prevention regulation or ordinance.

"The enactment of such fire prevention methods affords the best means of *eliminating fire hazards*, but it is, of course, necessary to see that the provisions are properly enforced. This can be conveniently and successfully accomplished by the organization of a Fire Prevention Bureau, under the direction of the Chief of the Fire Department, (with the consultation of the *Building Inspector* insofar as it relates to caption "A,") who shall appoint two members, or such number as may be deemed necessary, from each fire company, whose duty it shall be to make *periodical inspections* of all properties and premises in the territory assigned them, and order the *abatement* of any fire hazard. The report of such inspections shall be *filed* with the Fire Prevention Bureau and where it is found that conditions have not been remedied within a reasonable length of time, or a recurrence is permitted, action should be taken against the offenders. Fire Prevention *publicity* is usually welcomed by live local newspapers, and has a far reaching effect in the community.

"The details of fire prevention methods can best be applied in conformity with local requirements. The provisions under caption (b); that portion of caption (c) relating to the accumulation of rubbish and waste materials, as well as caption (d), are covered under the Act of June 3, 1911, establishing the Department of the State Fire Marshal, which provides for the appointment of *fire chiefs* in third class cities to act in the capacity of Assistants to the State Fire Marshal in the reporting of fires and for the purpose of bringing to the attention of the State Fire Marshal Department conditions applying to the captions referred to. For the present, at least, it will be necessary for the municipalities, in order to secure further protection, to enact ordinances for the institution of such other provisions which are deemed necessary for the proper protection of life and property from fire.

"As a community grows, the populated area becomes more closely occupied and fire risks (in fact all risks — health and safety as well) are an increasing evil.

"As a result, fire *prevention* is a DUTY, and when the citizens realize that their co-operation is demanded in this movement, they should freely assist the local authorities and avert jeopardy of life; unnecessary fire waste, which is an irrecoverable loss; interruption of business, and loss of employment; and secure in its stead civic cleanliness, industrial prosperity, and reduction of insurance rates."

Citizens must above all bear in mind that there is no disposition to hamper building. On the contrary, everything possible must be done to encourage building. But the time has arrived when the safety of life and property demand proper supervision, and we ask your patient, intelligent co-operation in this important field.

Charities and Correction. It is my purpose, as time may permit, to look into and examine the condition of all charitable and correctional institutions within the limits of our city or to which our unfortunate citizens may go, and to confer with the Board of Public Charities of the Commonwealth if necessary in connection therewith. Viewed from the standpoint of the most enlightened thought now given to this matter by men and women pursuing this specialty, encouragement and practical support is needed. The subject is a new one to me and I wish to be first well informed before recommending what additional activities, if any, the inhabitants of our city as a whole should take in this forward work.

The Viaduct. As our citizens well understand, the Public Service Commission has created a Bethlehems' Bridge Commission, which is now engaged in the arduous task of preparing the detailed construction plans for the erection of the viaduct across the river and over the railroads in substitution for the existing wooden bridge and grade. Existing conditions and the exigencies of the times have somewhat retarded the completion of these plans; nevertheless the work is going on and the temporary bridge will be ready for use in a few weeks.

Consolidation. It is gratifying to realize that the outlying communities surrounding us, being alive to the advantages of better Water, Fire Protection, Health, Sewage and Educational facilities, are already engaged in a move petitioning for admission to the new City. They should be welcomed in that broad spirit of fellowship and co-operation which is certain to make of Bethlehem a model city of the State.

The consolidation of all the boroughs hereabouts will result in a city of 75,000 souls.

Taxation. Considerable interest has been manifested, and justly so, as to what attitude the new City Council would assume in connection with taxation and what tax rate would be recommended. This is but natural, as no one has a desire to be taxed beyond what necessity demands.

In this connection, however, the citizens must bear in mind that at the present time, with material and labor costing almost twice what they did two years ago, the same rate of taxation applied to the same assessed valuation and resulting in a yield of the same amount of funds (approximately \$200,000.00) as heretofore would result in a diminution of the work has been heretofore accomplished by your two Councilmanic Bodies. The subject has received considerable amount of thought and study.

The city's income is based on the valuation of lands, buildings, etc.

Taxation should not be made PROHIBITIVE, yet the assessed valuation and tax rate should be such as to *stimulate industry*. Land owners should not hinder progress by maintaining the price of land at figures which are prohibitive. Where this is the case, unproductive lands should be taxed to stimulate improvements, to cause the owners to sell when they, themselves, will not improve the property. It is not just to the remainder of the community to hold land, at prohibitive figures if the owner is not disposed to improve the same, either by building industries or erecting houses.

Assessments. WE, THEREFORE, RECOMMEND THE ADOPTION OF SO-CALLED SCIENTIFIC APPRAISAL OF PROPERTY VALUATION BY ASSESSORS, the object being to cause an *equalization* assessment, resulting in reductions of valuations where necessary (in general the small property owners) and corresponding raises where conditions demand.

War Conditions. The burdens resulting from the world war are beginning to be felt on all sides. These burdens will of necessity be increased, and it is the duty of every loyal citizen to do all in his power to further the aims and ends of the PRESIDENT and those whom we have charged with the affairs of state and the oversight of the Army and Navy, to the end that success will sooner crown their efforts, that injustice and oppression *will be wiped out* and replaced through an honorable and lasting peace, resulting in great benefit to all the world. While the endeavor to accomplish this much to be desired end will of necessity claim our untiring ENERGIES and PATRIOTISM and probably tax our resources to the utmost, yet we must not lose sight of the fact that we, as citizens, would fail in our duty both to our Government and ourselves if we did not at the same time *improve* our living conditions and indeed aid our Government by making and keeping our municipal management efficient. We must, therefore, redouble our efforts to improve our conditions and act in unison to achieve the ends aimed at, remembering that nothing comes to you in this world that is thoroughly appreciated unless it is obtained by a sacrifice on your part.

Citizenship. A word may not be out of place to our foreign brothers whom we have welcomed and who have lived and thrived amongst us here in the Bethlehems and throughout the Lehigh Valley. Many are numbered among our best and most progressive citizens and ALL SHOULD and MUST be made to cast their lot truthfully with us in good will in return for the advantages of civil and religious freedom they came amongst us to enjoy.