

have the alleged delay or inefficiency of the Water Company's officials as a loophole to escape by.

In conclusion, I beg to say in reference to the "big bear" street watering, that the Company make no contracts with the city for watering streets. The city authorities advertise for tenders for watering various sections of the city in the season, the tenders are taken up by various carters in the city who have to provide securities to the satisfaction of the city for the proper fulfilment of their duties, and who, if the city required of them, would also give additional security for the repairs of the hydrants, when put out of order by them, they being the parties alone responsible for any damage. The Water Company simply sell the contractors the water, on the understanding that they have the permission of the city authorities to use the hydrants, and in getting this permission the ratepayers are well aware that their share of the assessment for street watering would be increased six-fold if such permission were denied to the contractors, and that they were compelled to fetch their water from the bay. I can find persons in this city who will undertake to keep the whole of the hydrants in repair for one dollar each per annum, and it is a great pity the City Council allow both themselves and the citizens to be so unduly exercised by so very paltry an affair.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
L. G. BOLSEER,
Sup. Met. W. W. Co.
Water Works Office, Toronto,
29th August, 1858.

AMERICAN SILVER.

Sir, — For the last month the newspapers of this country have been flooded with communications on this subject. First, with a grand flourish as the merchants in each town came into the combination to put silver below its proper value, and secondly, recording the secessions from the scheme, as the parties thereto found out the absurdity and impracticability of carrying it out. Doctors are said to kill oftener than they cure, which evil report against the profession probably arises from the malpractice of quacks, who, wanting in proper knowledge, impose upon the soft heads of the community. In the same way the currency may be likened to a profession; but alas! the educated doctors in it are few. Every man thinks that he understands the silver question and can remedy the evil at once, summarily and forever. However, when the infallible plan is tried it simply unsettles value for a few days and then is dropped; the result of the experiment having been profit to the few and loss to the many. In the name of common sense I protest against these currency quacks being allowed to meddle any more with our silver circulation, which, if let alone, regulates itself according to supply and demand as justly and systematically as any other article of commerce.

The amount of silver capital in this country is estimated at \$10,000,000, nearly all of which has been accumulated within the last five years. This amount, to a great extent, represents the profits that we made out of the necessities of the people of the United States during their war; the representative in fact of an extreme value for all our productions. Let me ask whether the country is less prosperous now than it was before we received this accession to our wealth. Does not the improved financial position of every branch of industry in the country answer no? The Americans, from whom we got this silver, have to rest content with a depreciated currency, worth only seventy cents in the dollar, while we wretched people complain of a currency which is depreciated only on account of its plentifulness; a currency, the value of which is contained in itself, being really better value to the holder than notes of the Bank of England.

It stands to reason that a country which owns

a floating capital of specie out of the power of the banks, lending institutions or anything in that nature, a capital which like labour, only enriches by active and useful employment, a capital which never lies dead in stocks or bonds, but which is always being employed by thousands of small holders in every description of investment and enterprise, must be richer than one whose capital may be almost entirely drawn in by banks or individuals in seasons of commercial or agricultural depression.

At certain periods of the year the banks call in the largest part of their loans, and their money is, for the time, withdrawn from use, but the silver is not withdrawn, but remains continually circulating without being influenced in any way by bank panics or withdrawals. People feel no uncertainty about the value which they own when they hold silver, but serious doubts sometimes arise in their minds about bank notes. Silver, at least, has the merit of being worth a certain absolute value, say ninety-five cents to the dollar, while bank bills, which compose the rest of the currency of our country, Canadian silver being but trifling in amount, are worth their face, or are not dependent altogether on the wisdom and prudence of managers and directors. Without in any way reflecting on the management of our banks, I hold that the \$10,000,000 of absolute value in the hands of the people is better secured to the country than it would be if deposited in the banks, and the void filled by the promises to pay, of any chartered institution. I would strongly urge on the people of Canada to hold fast to their silver, which is worth so much an ounce all the world over, and is certainly better value than bank notes, which depend for their value on the uprightness and ability of managers and directors, and which may be rendered irredeemable any day by a panic in the commercial world.

Again, it is idle for any man to say that silver is not worth what it brings. Silver is, from its very excess, made an article of commerce, and is bought and sold as such. Each man who handles it receives it as a representative of a certain value to him, and if it is not the representative of the value he parted with, he was simply a fool to sell. Nothing can be clearer than this fact, and any man who states that he sells an article at a loss, because he is obliged to take silver at par, is a poor business man, to say the least of it, and would get his name in the *Gazette* if we had no other currency than gold.

The present silly attempt to set a value on an article of commerce like silver, is almost entirely due to the retail merchants, and is simply an attempt to make more money than they are entitled to. If they have succeeded in getting, as in fact they are bound to get 10 per cent. on all silver they receive, they have been simply making four to five per cent. on all that people have been fools enough to give them at that rate. Some pretence was made when the movement was initiated, that the silver would be exported, but that blind is now dropped, and the storekeepers are actually selling the silver which they receive at 10 per cent. to the brokers at 5 per cent. for large and 64 per cent. for small. The brokers return the silver again to the country through the medium of the produce buyers, and the storekeepers expect that the farmers will give them another 4 or 5 per cent. profit on it. The wonder is that the dealers do not allow a little discount on their goods to any one that will pay them in silver. These facts need no comment.

The main evil with the storekeepers in this country is the long credit which they give and receive. A man commences business with a small capital, buys goods from the wholesale dealers at 4 or 6 months credit and sells them out again on an indefinite credit hoping to get his money, or rather the wholesale dealers money, back in time to meet his notes. The result generally is that their customers do not pay up in time, and then commences the "kicking against the pricks," which generally ends in the failure of the retail dealer

and loss to the wholesale dealer. The storekeeper is of course glad to get silver or anything that will give him ready money and is forced to sell goods too low for cash in order to receive of the demands of his creditors. If the retail dealer was in an independent position and could afford to pay cash for his goods, or at least a large portion of them, he could then demand a price sufficient to cover any loss incurred in taking silver at par. But until they do restrict themselves within their capital, or near it, they will always be paying too much for something, say butter, wheat, or any other article of produce for which they can get cash, as they do now for silver.

The wholesale merchants are in a different footing; being independent they insist on receiving silver only at what it is worth to them, and they suffer no loss by it. It is not the silver which affects the retail merchant, it is the silver which they take at par, but the practice they have of posting their business beyond their means, by which they lose their independence, and put in the power of the wholesale merchants to overcharge them for their goods, and in the power of their customers to undersell them for the purchases. If the young generation of Canada could be brought to see that labor is fully as honorable as trade, and that independence as a father and merchant is far preferable to the misery, degradation and dependence of the storekeeper. We would have fewer complaints about an excessive silver currency, and certainly no organized attempt by an overcrowded occupation, to impose a tax on the whole people for their sole profit and annoyance and loss to all others. Especially let us have no Government interference in this matter. Silver is an article of commerce, and its value is determined by supply and demand. This is a free country, and no man is forced to take silver at more than it is worth, nor should he be forced to sell it at less than it is worth. Government action or patent combinations will never settle the silver question. It can only be settled between man and man. Each person is at full liberty to take it or leave it as he will.

H. H. MUSEL,
INSURANCE QUOTATIONS.

Editor Canadian Monetary Times.
Sir, — I observed in your paper that the shares of this Company are quoted at £1 10s. paid up, and selling price £1. I beg to acquaint you that the quotation is in error, the shares of this Company have always been disposed of at par when sales have been effected.

Believing upon your kind offices to be in a mistake in the columns of your influential and well conducted Journal,
I remain, Sir,
Yours respectfully,
J. H. MUSEL,
Manager,
The Royal Insurance Company (Limited),
46 & 47, Upper Berkeley Street,
Dublin, 18th August, 1858.

Financial.
TORONTO STOCK MARKET.

(Reported by Telegraphic Brokers.)

Business in stocks was very limited last week, there being little of any class of securities on the market.

Bank Stock.—There are buyers of Montreal at 133, and sellers at 134; no sales. No British in market. Sales of Ontario are reported at 98, 99, and 99½, and it is now offering at the latter rate. No Toronto in market. Buyers would give 115. There are buyers of Royal Canadian at 84½ and 85.