

between solicitor and client, there can be no objection to the firm taking the commission. Whether in such a case the solicitor is entitled to do so, as between agent and office, is quite another matter and would depend upon many circumstances varying in almost every case.

"As to the secrecy in such cases, it seems difficult to believe that anybody can nowadays be unaware that insurance offices pay commission to solicitors. A few, perhaps, there may be, to whom this would be news, but, it may be safely assumed, that by these people no objection would ever be made to their solicitors taking such commission.

"In another part of his letter, Mr. Justice Fry says:—But the claim of this branch of the legal profession to remunerate themselves for the services rendered in paying premiums for their clients is, if not opposed (as I think it is) to good manners, distinctly at variance with the spirit of the provisions of the Legislature with reference to their remuneration. Knowing the great power and influence of legal advisers over their clients, the Legislature has provided officers to settle the amount payable to solicitors for their services, and to tax—i.e., to reduce, if needful—the amount of their bills of costs.

"But this seems to us to beg the question at issue, whether the commission received by a solicitor is remuneration for his services to the client. The offices paying the commission certainly do not so consider it. They do not pay the solicitors for collecting the premiums. They would pay him exactly the same commission if his client sent them the premiums direct.

"On the question of legal etiquette, we should not, of course, presume to argue with Mr. Justice Fry. All we have endeavoured to shew is, that in taking commission from insurance offices, the solicitor is, under ordinary circumstances, doing nothing contrary to equity. Doubtless, there are many special cases, in which a high-minded solicitor would find it impossible to take commission, but, speaking generally, the offices are glad to pay it, the clients, who lose nothing thereby, are quite willing that their solicitors should take it, and we cannot think it either reprehensible or unnatural that the solicitors should be ready to receive it."

OTHER BANKS CHARTERS EXPIRING.

Our neighbours are engaged in speculating upon the best thing to do in view of the approaching expiration of the period for which charters were granted to their national banks. The reference to the Canadian system of dealing with chartered financial institutions makes the following extract from an article on "The National Bank Situation," which appeared in the New York "Bulletin," of Wednesday last, interesting. That paper says editorially:

"The report of the Comptroller of the Currency directs attention to the fact that the end of the second 20-year period in the history of National banks is now at hand. Originally chartered for twenty years, nearly all the older banks extended their charters as they expired, and the extensions will begin to expire July 14, 1902. As the law now stands, these charters cannot be extended again, though the banks may secure new charters by process of reorganization. There is no reason why this inconvenience should be

imposed upon the banks; their continuance in business is desired, and, while there is sound reason for limiting these renewals to twenty years at a time, there is no reason why Congress should not act favourably upon Mr. Dawes's recommendation that the law be so changed that the banks can do what they have been doing, secure an extension of charter without reorganizing.

"But the method of securing renewed existence of the National banks is a small matter. The important thing is that this convenient opportunity should be seized upon for the rectification of the National bank system. Canada, which has shown us how we might have a truly elastic currency, whose volume should, in the language of our political platforms, be equal to the demands of business, has a system of creating its banks for decennial periods, near the end of which the law can be revised and amended in the light of experience. The life of all the banks would terminate at the same period if not renewed, and each new banking law becomes operative upon all banks at the same time. This has its advantages, but our system is not without some features to recommend it. A new banking system might be introduced gradually, becoming effective with each bank as its present legal existence expires, and it takes on a new extension. We do not attempt here to pass upon the practicability of introducing a new system side by side with the old, but we suggest its possible advantages, and we refer to the fact that before the Civil War, this State had banks operating under two laws, and in spite of the National bank law, and the restriction of circulation, State banking has continued and made great growth. If a new bank law could be introduced in one bank at a time as its present charter expires, there would be an opportunity of watching the new system and rectifying any errors it might be found to contain without a sweeping change that would affect all the banks of the country."

BANK CONSOLIDATION RUMOURS.

A circular has been sent to stockholders of the Bank of New York, which is the oldest bank in the city, offering 300 for half the holdings of each holder. The circular has been distributed by Charles D. Leverich, of C. D. Leverich & Bro., who is one of the directors of the bank. The price of the stock is 275 bid, and while considerable discussion has been aroused as to the reason for wishing to obtain control, it is believed that it is desired to purchase control of some other bank.

The New York "Journal of Commerce" adds: "It will be recalled that Ebenezer S. Mason, president of the Bank of New York died a few weeks ago, and his place has not yet been filled. Banking people who were questioned, regarded as entirely without foundation any idea that any interests were seeking control of the Bank of New York, in order to merge that bank into another, as the bank's name and its old charter are too valuable to be changed. The capital stock is \$2,000,000, and half that at 300 would require \$3,000,000, showing that the people whose interests are represented in the circular are certainly substantial