

pany. There was also a letter from C. A. Birge, asking that exemptions enjoyed by the Canada Screw Company during the time it has been in operation in this city, be extended for a further period of five years.

## Correspondence.

### BANK TELLERS AND OTHER BANK CLERKS.

Editor MONETARY TIMES.

SIR,—I have read carefully what your correspondent "V" says on the above subject in the last issue of your journal. And there are portions of his letter which I think are hardly called for; at least, some of the conclusions of "V" do not agree with mine—and I am not without experience in dealing with young men. Quoting THE MONETARY TIMES, which stated that bank clerks are made of much the same clay as other young men, "V" goes on to express his opinion, that "in relation to culture and business acumen, it is to be doubted if they stand on the same plane as our bright young merchanting men." I do not, of course, know in what part of Canada your correspondent lives, or has formed his opinion of bank clerks as compared with the occupants of merchants' counting-houses. But I cannot think he is fair to the average bank clerk when he relegates him, as he seems to do, to a lower plane than the general run of clerks at mercantile desks. A clerk in a bank, it is useless to deny, has a better standing in a community than an entry clerk in a wholesale warehouse, or an invoice clerk in a factory. No matter whether it is in a city or a village, you will find this is the case. I do not propose to argue at any length why it is so, or whether it ought, perhaps, to be different; I am only stating the thing as I have found it in half a dozen places that I am pretty familiar with in Quebec and Ontario. That the bank clerk has less business acumen than the average clerk in a store, I do not admit; and that the bank clerk is behind the other in culture, is a proposition that does not seem to me capable of being sustained. I am assuming, of course, that "V," when he speaks of the two classes being on different planes, means to put the bank clerk on a lower plane than the "bright young merchanting man." The better standing a bank clerk usually holds in a community may arise from the fact that he has generally better manners than store clerks, and in the majority of cases that I have observed he is also better educated. At any rate it seems to me that there must be some personal reason why what are known as the best people, of both large and small places, like to have bank clerks at their houses. They certainly cannot consider the bank man on a lower plane than the merchanting man in education, whatever they may think about his relative business smartness, or they would hardly prefer him.

In saying this, mark you, Mr. Editor, I am not contending that a bank clerk, or any other clerk, should aim to be a "society man," if that phrase means anything inconsistent with his salary and his circumstances. What is known as "society" differs much in its tone in different places. There is such a thing as "good society" properly so-called, entrance into which will do a young man nothing but good. But there are also circles of what is dubbed "society," the tone of which is rude and low; other circles where people are snobbish, purse-proud, shallow; others, again, where back-biting is indulged in, and contempt poured upon those in a different social scale. And, in my humble opinion, the young bank clerk would be far better reading his book and smoking his pipe in his room, than mingling in any of the three circles of "society" I have mentioned.

But I have extended my letter beyond what was intended. Let me conclude by saying that I agree with "V" that bank reading might well be encouraged and the young men advised and assisted therein by their superiors and elders. Many a lad, by a little pains, might be interested in his profession and got to devote regular periods to reading (I do not mean books on banking alone), forming thereby a habit which would result in his great present benefit and future delight.

November 26th, 1897.

X.

### BANK JUNIORS—AND SENIORS.

Editor MONETARY TIMES.

SIR,—Your article of October 22nd, on "Bank Clerks and Other Clerks" has, I perceive, resulted in a number of letters on the subject from correspondents of THE MONETARY TIMES.

Bank clerks are indebted to the affair at Napanee for a good deal of criticism, both adverse and in their favor, and this will, perhaps, be of much assistance to some who are too apt to follow the example of those persons whose habits of life are not altogether what befits a gentleman, who seem to make a practice of running into debt, and living, generally, in a reckless sort of way.

I have been strongly impressed, at times, with the small amount of consideration shown to the juniors, and the bad example set by their elders to those just entered on a bank's service; mere youngsters in most cases, inexperienced, and easily led into bad habits. The older men I complain of have, perhaps, knocked about a good deal in the world, and have acquired evil habits and associations. These men, far from showing any sense of shame, seem to take a pride in relating their experiences—often discreditable ones, before those who are, very often, new hands, and think it the correct thing to admire and applaud the stories. And I have no doubt, it is sometimes their starting point for steps in the wrong direction. They do not seem to realize the fact that they are looked up to by the younger fellows, and that their bad example produces, too often, a strong influence on the boys' minds.

As a general thing, the salaries of bank clerks are, I think, as high as, for instance, those clerks working in the wholesale houses, but in most cases the bank men find it harder to live within their incomes than the others. I think that there are more temptations thrown in our way for spending money. But young fellows in banks often possess the erroneous idea that they must live up to a certain standard, because such and such a thing is expected of them. And I think that in some cases the boys are brought up to expensive habits at home, and on entering a bank they find it still harder than at home to keep within an allowance. The fault does not always lie with the boy.

Speaking more especially of the tellers in our banks, I certainly think that there should be some special fund to provide against losses by tellers. One of the banks has, I believe, such a fund, but only one. Some bank tellers start work on the cash at a very small salary, often not more than \$350; and though the "box" may be a light one to start with, it is quite possible, and indeed, no matter how careful a teller may be, almost inevitable, that in some cases he will lose a sum which, out of his small salary, he will be unable to meet. Such a loss may occur not only in the handling of cash, but sometimes by forged cheque, or forged endorsement of cheque, etc.

Tellers often find themselves placed in an awkward position, perhaps at a busy time of day, by the consideration they feel to be due to customers of the bank. They find themselves called on to trust the customers to a certain extent, or else offend them by a too close reference of their affairs to the manager or accountant. The customer does not always consider the teller's position and duty in a case of this kind, and that he as an officer is himself liable to the bank in the event of losses.

BANK CLERK.

Toronto, Nov. 29th, 1897.

—Not So Bad.—Perry Patettic—"I see that they have found a mine of natural soap up near the North Pole." Wayworn Watson—"Oh, that ain't so bad as it sounds. The water up there is all froze."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

—Greater New York embraces 359 square miles, has 1,200 miles of streets, 700 miles of sewers, 54 theatres, 112 hotels, 218 banks, 63 libraries, 30 art galleries, 1,093 churches, and 73,336 acres of parks. It has a bonded debt of \$217,000,000.

—Dr. Crawford, of St. John, last week recovered through the courts \$100 damages from the city for depriving him of his franchise at the last civic election by accidentally omitting his name from the list of qualified electors. Mr. Crawford paid his taxes but was not properly credited on the city books.

## Debentures.

Municipal Debentures bought and sold, also Government and Railway Bonds. Securities suitable for Investment by Trustees and Insurance Companies and for Deposit with the Government, always on hand.

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**SEALED TENDERS** addressed to the undersigned and endorsed "Tender for Electric Elevators, Public Building, Victoria, B.C.", will be received until Monday, December 20, next, for the construction of two elevators at the Public Building, Victoria, B.C.

Plans and Specification can be seen and form of tender and all necessary information obtained at this Department, and at the Public Works Office, Victoria, B.C.

Persons are notified that tenders will not be considered unless made on the printed form supplied, and signed with their actual signatures.

Each tender must be accompanied by an accepted bank cheque, made payable to the order of the Honourable the Minister of Public Works, equal to five per cent. of the amount of the tender, which will be forfeited if the party decline to enter into a contract when called upon to do so, or if he fail to complete the work contracted for. If the tender be not accepted the cheque will be returned.

The Department does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.

By order,

E. F. E. ROY,  
Secretary.

Department of Public Works,  
Ottawa, Nov. 28, 1897.

Newspapers inserting this advertisement without authority from the Department will not be paid for it.



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