

From J. BELL FORSYTH, Esquire, Quebec.

QUEBEC, 5th March, 1855.

SIR :—In answer to your circular of the 1st instant, I am of opinion that the change from the present mode of keeping accounts into one having its parts in decimals is not desired by the great bulk of the mercantile community of Lower Canada, no inconvenience whatever having ever arisen from the present system, which harmonizes so well with that of the mother country.

The difference between sterling and currency would be the same in one as the other, and until a change is made in England to a decimal coinage, I think it would be ill judged to introduce it here, for I am one of those who think the less we needlessly assimilate to the usages and customs of the Americans the better.

I have, &c.

J. BELL FORSYTH.

W. L. Mackenzie, Junr., Esq.,
Clerk of Committee.

From JOHN GEORGE BOWES, Esquire, M. P., Toronto.

QUEBEC, 12th April, 1855.

To the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

SIR :—I this moment received your circular requesting my opinion on the expediency of adopting a decimal currency for Canada : as I understand your Committee meet in half an hour I hasten to forward you a very brief reply.

I have no doubt any attempt to change the currency in which accounts are kept in this country will meet with strong opposition, from the prejudice acquired by long formed habit both in England and Canada. The great reluctance felt by merchants to the introduction of any change in the manner of keeping their accounts, however useful such change may be, will also stand in your way.

Exception will also be taken in some quarters to the introduction of any improvement copied from the United States, but I trust such prejudices will not weigh with the Committee in making their report.

I fearlessly assert that no good reason can be urged against the decimal system.

It is true that in England the emporium of the commercial world accounts are kept in pounds, shillings and pence, and so far as the transactions of Canada with that country are concerned it would be more convenient for Canada merchants to keep their accounts in the currency of their English correspondents, but in the present state of the exchanges with Great Britain this is impossible, it would consequently be as convenient for the Canada merchant to keep his accounts with his European correspondents in dollars and cents as in Halifax currency, and his accounts with the United States would be greatly simplified thereby.

The increasing magnitude of the commercial transactions between the United States and Canada as well as their close proximity, render it in my opinion very desirable to have the currency of these countries assimilated.

The banking institutions of this country have recognized the decimal principle in the issue of their paper money, adopting the dollar as the unit ; so far no change would be required. The application of the decimal principle to weights and measures would in my opinion be a marked improvement.

I have, &c.

J. G. BOWES.