tated at $150,000, and the amount at risk $4,000,000—while the facts are that, according to the last official returns, the income for the year ended April 3, 1870, was $274,000, and it has now expanded to about $350,000, or a good deal more than double the amount stated by the *Spectator!* So of the amount at risk; this is stated at $4,000,000, whereas it is about $8,000,000. According to the Government returns, made up to April, 1870, it was then $6,400,000. It should be scarcely necessary to follow such unreliable authorities any further when they charge the Company with "outrageous extravagance and dangerous debility." Whether it is in a condition of "dangerous debility" or not is a question fully answered by the fact that for the year ended the 30th ult., 1,488 new policies were issued, insuring the sum of $2,230,623—a business largely in excess of that done in Canada by any other life insurace company in the same year.

This correspondent charges that the Company have "lost heavily in depreciation of city, town, county, and township debentures taken at par, and now almost worthless." These losses have their existence only in the wilful fabrications of Mr. "X." So far as we can learn, the Company have lost nothing whatever by these debentures, but, on the contrary, have found them a source of large gains. Nearly all of our securities are at a premium, and bear a good rate of interest.

In order to impair the value of Hon. Elizur Wright's certificate, as to the valuation of the Company's assets, it is stated that Mr. Wright was tied up to a 5 per cent. rate as the basis and that "he protested in order to clear himself of the responsibility, and then gave them the valuation they wanted." Mr. Wright is not capable of doing anything so absurd. Five per cent. may be a high rate, but it is only one-half of one per cent. above that adopted by the Insurance Department of the State of New York; and is quite below the very lowest rate of interest realizable on the best class of securities in Canada. Whether 4, 4½ or 5 per cent. should be adopted as a basis of life insurance tables in Canada is a subject on which there are differences of opinion; certainly any one of them may be adopted, *ceterus paribus*, with safety.

It is insinuated also that the Company's rates are too low. So long as they are above those of the National, the Travelers and others of the American Companies declared by all the American authorities to be doing a safe and prosperous business, this objection will not lie against the Canada.

We regret that our usually well-informed cotemporary has been misled into giving currency to the fictions of this correspondent—for it would be impossible to account for their publication in that journal in any other way—since they have been reprinted in this country by their author, and circulated for purposes of mischief. And it is for this reason, too, that we have been at so much pains to refute a story which is, perhaps, none the less likely to gain currency, and do harm, because it is entirely erroneous from beginning to end, and contrary to the facts of the case.

A PRETENDED DISCOVERY.

We find the following in the Boston correspondence of the St. John, N. B., *Globe*, under the heading, "a remarkable scientific discovery."

"I am enabled to communicate to you in advance of publication here, the very important fact that it has been discovered by an American chemist (a Boston man,) that there is a very large quantity of gold in a mineral which the very best chemists have repeatedly pronounced to be worthless for useful purposes—I mean iron pyrites. This gentleman has just returned from Europe, where he has demonstrated his discovery; but as he will not reveal his process the chemists take their revenge by refusing to believe him. He claims to be able to extract from the pyrites, gold to the amount of $1,000 and upwards. This gentleman, in company with Mr. N. J. Brown's agent in Boston, Mr. Kirwan, and another gentleman who is about to open a branch of industry in connection with the marble discovery, is going to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, and perhaps New Brunswick, in April. This discovery of itself, however, only shows how broad and widening are the possibilities which scientific researches are every day opening up to us."

This paragraph contains as many errors as can well exist in the same quantity of letterpress. In the first place, it is no new discovery that gold exists in some iron pyrites, varying in value from a few cents to hundreds of dollars per ton. The ore of the Cook mine, in Marmora, consists of arsenical iron pyrites, or mispickel, as it is called and the gold which is taken out by amalgamation at that mine, is only about one-fourth part of the quantity contained in the ore, being $10 per ton, while the tailings, consisting mainly of pyrites, contain by assay over $30 per ton, all of which is lost by the present mode of working.

In the next place, it is not true that iron pyrites is "worthless for useful purposes," or that any chemist, worthy the name, will pronounce it so. Iron pyrites is extensively used in chemical manufacture, as a source of sulphuric acid, and the demand for it, for that purpose, is daily increasing; many manufacturers, who formerly made their their acid from Sicilian sulphur, having altered their apparatus so as to use pyrites instead of the more expensive material.

A hard, compact variety of pyrites is also used, under the name of Marcasite, in the manufacture of buttons, and other ornamental appendages to apparel; though of late years to a very small extent.

If the "American chemist" of the Boston correspondent has succeeded in discovering what has hitherto remained a grand desideratum in quartz mining, viz: an easy and cheap process for separating gold from sulphuret of iron, he will have conferred an inestimable benefit on all engaged in that pursuit, besides largely increasing the wealth of the world, by securing and rendering available a large quantity of a most valuable material which is now lost to commerce.

But the studied mystery of the announcement; the assertion that he has demonstrated his discovery in Europe, without revealing his process, and that the chemists, in revenge, refuse to believe him; his claim "to be able to extract from the pyrites gold to the amount of $1,000 and upwards," (per ton, we suppose)—all this savours very much of charlatanism, and until the "claim" is substantiated, and the discovery demonstrated on this side of the Atlantic by its practical working, we shall rank ourselves among the chemists who refuse to believe him, and shall class his "discovery" with the notorious Stevens flux, and other memorable examples of Boston ingenuity.

London, Huron & Bruce Railway.—London the less, has taken hold of this enterprise in good earnest. The promoters have arrived at the sensible resolve to build the line on the 3 foot 6 inch gauge, on which basis the undertaking is no doubt feasible. London is asked for $100,000 by way of bonus, and will most likely grant it, proper guarantees being given in reference to the carriage of wood into the city. The government subsidy under the Act of last session, is placed at $300,000, which if large is no doubt sure, since London is represented by a popular and influential cabinet minister; $250,000 will be asked from Huron County, $150,000 from Bruce, and $25,000 from townships in Middlesex county; $400,000 will be raised by stock subscriptions, and $100,000 by mortgages on the property. London would be certain to benefit largely by this railway, and the country through which it is to run still more; but the programme here sketched calls for great exertion and energy before it is finished; $400,000 is a large sum to raise in the shape of stock, and this is probably the weakest point in the scheme above laid down.

Financial.

TORONTO STOCK MARKET.

Reported by Blaikie & Alexander, Brokers.

Toronto, May, 10, 1871.

The market has ruled somewhat more active than during the previous week, at prices that generally indicate a fair demand and no disposition on the part of holders to realize or force sales, higher figures being mostly looked for.

Banks.—With a good demand Commerce ruled throughout the week at 140½ to 141¼, closing with sales at 142. Sellers of Toronto refuse to accept less than 185, buyers offering 180. Large sales of Royal were made at 108¼ and 109, closing rather easier and offering at 108, without buyers over 107½. Ontario changed hands freely at 122 to 122¼, the latter figure being now asked. British continues to be enquired for at 113, without any offering. In early part of week, Montreal shewed a rapid advance from 259 to 278, at which rate the last sales were made. Merchants' remains firm at 137¼ to 138¼, with large sales at these figures. The latest transactions in City are reported at 98.