

be sent in in sterling at the specified rate of 4s. 4d. for the dollar. Bills of exchange might be issued at the rate of 103 for 100 payable in London. But the very fact that the British silver when paid out in the colonies could be used to purchase exchange on Britain resulted in its being immediately returned to the Military Chest, or the vaults of the banks, while the actual currency of the colonies remained paper bank notes and the over-rated Pistareens and French silver, together with the American and Mexican silver dollars. But the chief currency used to buy up the British silver were the local Canadian Bank notes and these were all expressed in dollars. The very efforts therefore of the Imperial authorities to put British coinage in circulation, proved to be the most effective method of excluding it from circulation, and of insuring the use of the American medium of exchange. The fact was that though the dollar was the nominal standard the metallic currency in circulation consisted of the odds and ends of the coinage of all commercial nations, most of it too highly over-rated or too much worn and defaced to be profitably exported.

For fractional currency the Spanish Pistareen became the most common silver coin in the English sections of Canada. It was being discarded in the United States owing to the reformation of their currency, and passed over to Canada where it was accepted as a shilling piece, i.e. 20 cents, while in the United States it was worth only 17c. or 18c. As a matter of fact the Pistareens and their halves were among the most worn and defaced coins in circulation.

Copper coinage in the early days was also very scarce though considerably over-rated. About 1825 it consisted of discarded and worn British half-pence, farthings, various private tokens, native and foreign, and even brass buttons hammered smooth. As indicating the manner in which the Canadian copper currency was regarded, we may take the following extract from a letter of one of the Dorking immigrants. "Tell John to bring as many farthings as he can get, and old halfpence, as they go for as much as a penny piece; they call them coppers." In Upper Canada the enterprising firm of Ed. Leslie and Sons imported a considerable number of tokens for their own use, and the demand for them became so great that in 1831 they applied to the Government to either furnish a supply itself or sanction importations to meet the public need.

There was an increasing demand on the part of the mercantile element in the country for a Canadian silver and gold coinage, on the basis of the decimal system of dollars and cents. But in 1830, under Sir James Kemp, another effort was made to have the British standard adopted. A Bill was introduced providing for the sterling standard and the rating of the dollar at 4s. 4d. It provided also for calling in the