

the doughty official, but it had the effect of raising a mild hurricane among his fellow-citizens. The Springfield *Republican*, which discusses the subject at some length, asserts that while the people went to work and gave the visitors the warmest kind of a reception, they also took occasion to vote their mayor a small-minded bigot. Still, the Italian admiral came very near sailing off in anger, over the mere matter of a salute. His vessel fired a salute to the city when she came to anchor, but the city did not reply, the reason given being because of red tape. Technically Montreal is not a saluting port. Ships coming by Quebec are saluted, and the gunpowder thus burned is expected to last them until they come down the river again. Unfortunately for this excuse for ignoring the vessel's salute, it has been the practice for Montreal to salute every vessel when there was any pretext for so honoring. The Italian admiral found this out, and notified the acting mayor and the local military authorities that if his bombardment was not returned before sunset of the following night, he should sail away from Montreal and let his government settle the matter with the government at London. The consequence was that he got his salute, and all became serene. These being all the facts, it appears that if there was some bigotry, there was also a good deal of ceremonial nonsense in the incident.

SUNSPOT OR COMET?

And now from scientific circles outside comes the announcement that our sunspot is a comet. Very well; comet or the other thing makes no difference so far as the discovery is concerned, that honor and its giving out to the world belonging to Mr. Hesse and the *News* jointly. It has been claimed in astronomical circles a good many times that the sun was hit by the brilliant tramps who infest the planetary regions, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that among the many meteoric minnows he now and then captures a cometary whale. If the great spot now visible on the sun's countenance be a comet which he is in the act of devouring, and this shall be fully established, it only goes to show that the less we pretend to know about what goes on outside our sphere the less we will have to account for.

FREE COINAGE, ETC.

Referring to a recent article in the *News* showing that the talk regarding silver was engaged in by many who knew nothing whatever of the merits or demerits of the subject—who had a vague idea, perhaps, that it meant "more money" and that many of those who spoke so glibly of "free silver" had no comprehension of its significance—we are asked by one who wants to know to cease criticism and ourselves give the information. It has been done in these columns many times, but as the subject is an important one and there are evidently many who honestly desire information that they

may be on the right side, it will not be improper to speak of it again.

"Free coinage" and "free silver" are not necessarily synonymous terms; the former includes the latter while the latter stands by and for itself. "Free coinage" unqualified is the conversion of bullion or ingots of either gold or silver into coins of the realm with no charge or seigniorage by the government upon the owner; it also has reference to there being no restriction as to amount or limit, the one who presents either metal at a mint having the right to receive in return therefor as many dollars as are represented by the metal's weight, fineness and value. It is something like taking grain to a mill and receiving back the product of the grain, except that in the case of the government no toll is to be taken out. When this is applied to silver bullion only we have a full and expressive definition of what is meant by "free silver."

It is asked how the government is to be "made even" by such proceedings, working up metals into coins and returning the full quantity to the "customer" without deduction or charge. This question is easily answered—would answer itself if the ones who ask it would only stop to think for a short time. In this country the government has no separate existence from the people; it is simply an agency which they establish and support for their own convenience and safety. It has nothing but what they give it and pays out or does not pay out in accordance with their directions. If they elect to have a mint to reform the coinage of the country without a direct charge upon themselves therefor, there is no power on earth to prevent that thing being done. The government being sustained by them in any event, even if it were a distinct and separate entity it would have no right to complain; but as it is not, there is no place or function from which a complaint could emanate. Besides, the government, without being invidious or discriminating, must foster certain industries if not enterprises. It has to aid the Pacific railway because it had become a necessity to the country and demanded too much of an investment for private capital unaided to make the venture; and agriculture is made its special watchcare—seeds, plants, documents, etc., being free to all applicants—and having a special executive department. So let it be with mining and coinage. Utah has done a full share in the cause by exempting mines and the products thereof, now let Uncle Sam do the rest by granting the petition of his fellow laborers in the national vineyard and establishing such aids in the way of free coinage or unrestricted coinage or both and just ratios as from his vantage ground may be deemed equitable, just and proper.

A DESERVING DEED UNREWARDED

All the trials, vicissitudes and adventures connected with the undying name of Abraham Lincoln will probably never be told, as voluminous as such recitals are and have been. Now and then one comes to the surface that had lain in the depths of past events ever since its occurrence and our

minds are again turned to the remarkable man and those who were associated with him, with a freshly-awakened interest. A story is now told which if true—as it seems to be—should cause attention to be diverted for a time from the man himself to the one who rendered him an inestimable service. We are told that Col. W. A. H. Silloway in May, 1863, rescued President Lincoln from a disabled steamer on the Potomac under fire from a Confederate battery, and rowed him to the Maryland shore. This adventure of President Lincoln is not generally known, but if the tale be true, Mr. Silloway should not be allowed to be in want of money to pay his rent in a poor room in Boston, where he is now said to be and in imminent danger of the Tewksbury almshouse. It is conceded to be a shame that such a situation should even be taken of; this relief and his future support should be immediately provided for. It is said that Silloway has a personal letter of thanks from the great President. We hardly think a special pension in this case would meet with much objection in or out of Congress; certainly, it would be a very peculiar kind of man who would offer one.

WOMAN OFFICE-SEEKERS.

The San Francisco mint underwent a change of superintendency on the 31st ult., ex-Lieutenant Governor John Daggett succeeding General Dimond. It sounds like a simple enough matter, but it was attended with a good deal of ceremony nevertheless. The mint is no small affair and the amount of wealth which it contains is always very large, of course much more so at some times than at others. On this occasion the coin had all been counted up and everything placed in readiness for the new management, which at once gave a receipt in full. It was found that in coin and bullion there was the immense sum of \$58,126,514.91 in the vaults of the mint. Of this amount \$36,116,336.90 was in silver coin; \$9,707,760 in gold coin; \$3479.90 in currency, and the rest in bullion, principally silver, of which there was 11,360,000 ounces purchased under the Sherman act.

We are advised by a San Francisco paper that the ceremony of sealing the vaults took place in the afternoon of the previous day. In one vault was piled \$21,000,000 in silver dollars, or 630 tons of coin. A paper setting forth the contents of the vault was pasted over the door and the facing so that it can never be opened without tearing the paper. This was signed by the new superintendent and W. E. Morgan and A. A. Haysens, agents of the treasury department, representing the bureau of the mint at Washington. In one corner Lyman H. Clement, the cashier, placed the seal of General Dimond, and in another Superintendent Daggett placed his seal. In each of the other corners the treasury agents placed their seals. The next vault sealed up contains \$11,000,000 in silver dollars, and the third, 11,360,000 ounces of uncoined silver in bars. In all, there is nearly 1350 tons of silver stowed in the mint vaults. The