

SILVER AS A COMMODITY.

THE New York *Engineering and Mining Journal* says that about two weeks ago the price of silver reached the lowest point ever recorded. The London quotation was 39 d. per troy ounce, and in New York 85.6 cents, making the gold value of the silver in a dollar piece about 65.7 cents.

The authority quoted above looks upon silver as purely a commodity, and contends that it is absurd to talk of "injustice," "demonetization" and "crime" in relation to it. Its value like that of all commodities is governed by the law of supply and demand. Statistics show that its production during the past ten years has gradually increased, but so has its consumption both for coinage and industrial purposes.

In relation to silver as a metal the following extract from the *Journal* contains some instructive particulars:

"The future course of the silver market may be predicted with as much certainty as that of any other metal, whether the United States government continues to buy 54,000,000 ounces per annum or not. The price will decline until the output is restricted, by the weaker mines closing down, and production more nearly approximates consumption. How much of a decline will be possible cannot be foretold, because there are no figures in existence of the average cost of producing an ounce of silver. Already many of the least favorably situated mines and some with low-grade ores, like those of Butte, Mont., are closing down. But such a great producer as the Granite Mountain Mining Company, of Montana (which yielded 2,905,158 ounces of silver in 1891), produces it, according to the reports of its directors, at a cost of 51c. per ounce, while it is well known that the rich mines of Aspen and the San Juan district of Colorado, and the Park City mines of Utah, produce silver for less than 50c. per ounce."

It must be understood that all this comes from a paper that favors the monometallic policy and refuses to recognize silver in any other light than as so much iron or copper. It is the degradation of silver to this level after it had been used as money for so long that has depreciated its intrinsic value and given rise to the complaints which the *Journal* treats as "absurd."

UTAH WEATHER FOR MARCH.

THE monthly review of the Utah Weather Service for March has just been issued by Mr. George N. Salisbury of this city. The heavy rains and snows of the last days of March were caused by "low pressure areas of decided intensity passing over Utah from the Pacific coast."

The month was remarkable for its abnormal distribution of temperature, it being warmer during the forepart than the latter. As a whole, the monthly mean, 40 degrees, was slightly below normal. The highest temperature at all stations occurred on the 12th, the lowest on the 29th. St. George had the greatest monthly mean, 51.9 degrees, as well as the maximum, 83 degrees on the 12th. Park City had the lowest mean, 24.9 degrees, and Loa the minimum, 4 degrees on the 31st. This

gives a range of 79 degrees for the month.

The total rainfall for the month averaged 1.52 inches for all stations. At Park City 29 inches of snow fell, 21½ at Parowan, 20 at Scofield, and 17½ at Levan.

After the stormy days of the 1st and 2nd the weather was for the most part pleasant until the 14th; after that time it was generally stormy or cloudy. Sleet and hail were frequent. Light thunderstorms occurred in various localities on the 2nd, 19th, 23rd, 25th, and 30th. At Loa the severest snowstorms of the season occurred on the 28th and 30th, when 8 and 6 inches of snow fell respectively.

Mr. Brown of Levan says the storms have been beneficial to spring grain, which is all in except corn.

Alex Matheson of Parowan says that enough of moisture fell during the month to enable farmers to dispense with irrigation so far.

ANCIENT RELICS IN MEXICO.

THE Chicago *Inter-Ocean* publishes the following brief account of ancient ruins in Mexico, describing some of the works of the former inhabitants of the land, further particulars of which may be found exclusively in the Book of Mormon:

"According to the stories told by a traveler who comes from Nogales, Ariz., the mountains of Los Trincheras, Mex. are worth scientific exploration. The traveler is stopping at the Leland and tells of the wonders of Los Trincheras country. The mountain is situated in the Senora Plains, about one hundred and fifty miles from the Gulf of California and twenty-five miles from the town of Altar. It is near the placer gold fields, which have been worked since 1804 and are still rich in ore. The mountain of Los Trincheras is 300 feet high and 700 yards across. Large stone terraces, from six to ten feet high, have been built on all sides, from the base of the hill to its summit. "It must have taken 100,000 men a year to build these terraces," said the traveler. "Several theories are advanced for the construction of these terraces. Some think they were part of a tremendous amphitheatre, where the people gathered to witness games. Others believe they were fortifications of Aztec origin, but they seem older than that. At any rate the district seems worthy of a thorough exploration by scientific men. Many unique and valuable relics can be found around the curious Los Trincheras mountain, and for hundreds of miles in all directions, showing that the country was once populous and rich."

WONDERFUL INVENTIONS.

WHERE invention and scientific progress are to stop is beyond the power of human capacity to determine. We have the submarine torpedo boat which is likely to revolutionize naval warfare. In Europe the Germans have made successful experiments with war balloons over Russian cities to prove that in the event of war these cities could be destroyed from above. The airship in this country is still talked of as a possibility.

The following is from a New York paper:

"The New York Steam Company is arranging to grind coal in the Councilsville coke regions to a fine powder and mix it sufficiently with water to make it semi-liquid, and then force it in pipes to New York. There it will be allowed to settle in great tanks and a large proportion of the water drained off. It will then be pressed into bricks and used for fuel."

It will be forced through the pipes at the rate of five miles per hour. The company has the whole process on a small scale in successful operation in New York City, with the exception of the pulverizing process."

This is something which if successful will settle effectually the transportation problem so far as fuel is concerned for New York City. The Reading coal combine is thus likely to have opposition from an unexpected quarter.

CHURCH AND STATE AMENDMENT.

SEVERAL public journals are commenting on the proposition for an Amendment to the Constitution, forbidding any State to make a law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or to make any appropriation of public funds for religious purposes. Among them the *Philadelphia Record* supports the proposition, answers some objections to it and touches on its relation to the "Mormon" question. The *Record* says:

"In regard to the Mormons, it is argued that should Utah be erected into a State they could pass such laws as might please them for maintaining their ecclesiastical establishment. So long as Utah shall remain a Territory the Mormons must submit to the laws of Congress, which effectually forbid any interference with the religious liberties of the Gentiles. But once admitted into the Union the Mormon Priests, Elders and rulers could set the United States government at defiance.

"On the other hand, it is urged that an amendment designed for the Mormons might seriously interfere with State support of benevolent institutions and hospitals that are more or less under the control of religious denominations. Such prohibition would hardly be in the public interest. But the argument does not appear to be well-founded. While the provision of the Constitution of Pennsylvania in regard to Church and State permits no appropriation of money for religious purposes, it has not been so construed as to prohibit appropriations of public money to charities that are managed by religious denominations."

The difficulty here suggested might easily be overcome by adding a proviso that this protection shall not be construed as affecting public institutions for benevolent and charitable purposes. The connection between religion and benevolence is so intimate that a division is almost impossible. But a religious establishment and a benevolent institution may be entirely distinct, and public funds might properly be devoted to the latter which ought not to be expended for the former. The maintenance of a particular church, directly or indirectly by the State, should be forbidden. But the State may properly aid in the support of a hospital or house of charity, providing it is not used in any way to promote the interests or tenets of a religious body.

The attempt to divert the funds