The postal arrangements in Canada do not appear to have been in a satisfactory condition, although the post office authorities maintained that everything practicable was done to facilitate the transmission of mails and that any deficiency in the quality of the service arose from the paucity of funds, it being the rule to establish no mail route that did not at least pay expenses. Whatever were the defects of the administration, there can be no doubt that the resident postmasters, charged with the superintendence and management of the mail routes had many difficulties to contend with and that owing to the cost of postage every sort of evasion was made use of to avoid payment. Passengers by the steamers had the task thrust on them of conveying letters to their destination causing, there can be no doubt, both trouble and annoyance to the unwilling carriers, who did not wish to refuse to act in that capacity, probably with a view to the obligation being returned on a future occasion. The postal authorities tried to put a stop to the practice (Q 154 p. 198), but apparently in vain, the steamboat officers and even the military departments openly setting the law at defiance. In Upper Canada, the people refused to pay postage on letters at all, on the ground that the charge was illegal. An attempt was made to enforce the collection, but for some reason it was abandoned, apparently, as the letter from Freeling to Goulburn says, from the question of enforcing penalties being one of great delicacy.

There is nothing in the documents to show what was the financial result of the establishment of steamers on the St. Lawrence, (which took place in 1809) nor was any special account of the affairs of a commercial company likely to be found there, but whatever the result was, the steamboat owners apparently required assistance to meet their liabilities, or to extend their business, for some time in 1819,—the document is undated—a recommendation was ordered to be drawn up for the Treasury that it should grant assistance to the steamboats in the manner previously recommended by the Duke of Richmond. The memorandum was, there can be little doubt from the date of the answer, drawn up by the Duke's secretary, as the answer was dated 9th June, some time before the Duke's death. So far as the answer shows, the recommendation by the Duke was to take shares in the steamers, which the Treasury declined it not being considered expedient to do so, but the Lords of the Treasury authorised the commissariat to advance from £1,500 to £2,000 to the steamboat owners, to be repaid by instalments, the steamers to have the preference for freight, the amount of which would no doubt go a long way to extinguish the debt constituted by the advance.

From a financial point of view the incorporation of the Bank of Montreal was a matter of consequence to Canada. The Act to incorporate that institution had for one reason or another been reserved by the Governor for the consideration of His Majesty and it was not till 1822, some years after the Act had passed both branches of the legislature, that the Order-in-Council on the 18th May of that year confirmed the Act of incorporation, thus putting an end to doubt and uncertainty on the subject.

Letters and papers relating to Robert Gourlay, author of a statistical account of Upper Canada, are to be found noted in the calendar of the State Papers of Upper Canada contained in this report. Diverse opinions are entertained of Gourlay, who at one time filled a large space in the public mind of Canada, being on the one hand