

navigators. A new feature was the dispatch of the Allan liner *Ontarian* to South Africa, and the *Elder-Dempster* liner, *Melville*, both with full cargoes of Canadian produce. The ocean passenger traffic in the past season was satisfactory, the Montreal steamers being much favoured by American travellers.

The Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company did an exceptionally good business. The excellent service they provide for tourists being well appreciated.

The harbour and its frontage have each undergone considerable improvements this year. The railway tracks have been more commodiously graded; the King Edward pier has been finished. There is now a street railway track all along the harbour front which is part of the city's electric car system; the improvement of a portion of the harbour will probably cause permanent sheds to be built on the wharves. Work on the elevator is progressing and is regarded as promising to be one of the finest structures of this class.

The Customs receipts have been larger than ever before, as compared with 1901, they were \$6,486,744 against \$5,485,767, an increase of \$1,000,977 this year. It is pleasant to record the kindly attentions paid to seamen who visit this port. When sick they were cared for medically and visited, in case of death they were given Christian burial with every token of respect. Local artists, amateur and professional, gave 32 concerts for the sailors, indeed, everything was done to minister to their comfort, their pleasure, their protection and general welfare. From the vice-regal party down to S.S. stokers Montreal receives praises for hospitality.

THE ETERNAL SNOW QUESTION.

POTTERING WITH A BIG PROBLEM.

The Charter Revision Committee of the City Council on Wednesday resolved to ask the Legislature for power to pass a by-law authorizing the city to clear the snow from sidewalks and charge the cost to the proprietors. The civic authorities have always dealt with the snow problem timidly, and as though snow were in Montreal an occasional phenomena and a mischievous contingency more or less remote. It is pretty well known that we may reckon with what amounts to positive certainty upon a snow-fall of nearer ten than five feet every winter. It is thoroughly realized that this snowfall may occasion the greatest discomfort and may be a great and costly obstruction to business. Our methods of dealing with it are worthy of a backwoods village. During the present year the management of the Street Railway Company displayed a willingness to undertake the removal of the snow from the streets

upon which the Company has its tracks. There is not the slightest doubt that the Company could do the work for a small fraction of the cost incurred by the city in doing it, and do the work much more effectively. Unfortunately, the Council took so long in preparing specifications and inviting tenders for doing the work on a patch work system, that a whole season has been lost. The matter is one that might very properly have been arranged by direct negotiation between the city and the Street Railway Company. The work is now done by the city and half the cost charged to the Company. The Company can and the Company alone can do the work at less than half the present cost. Common sense would seem to suggest that no red tape should stand in the way of an arrangement so mutually beneficial.

The power now asked from the Legislature for dealing with the question of the snow on the sidewalks will be of some service in providing for the removal of snow in front of vacant lots. But what is needed is a comprehensive scheme for clearing the sidewalks generally by united action. The work will never be done satisfactorily or economically by individual effort. It seems a pity to ask the Legislature for such pottering powers. Every householder in the city has to expend, either in money or in labour, an appreciable sum for clearing sidewalks in winter. This sum could be greatly reduced if the problem were vigorously tackled by the aldermen. The city pays enough for broken legs now to go a great way towards clearing the sidewalks.

EASTERN TRUST CO. A STATE DEPOSITARY.

The Eastern Trust Co., of New York, has been appointed one of the State depositaries of State funds by the State Banking Department. This company is already a city depositary, and also a depositary for margin accounts of the Cotton, Produce and Coffee Exchanges.

FIRE AT RAT PORTAGE LUMBER CO.

The following companies are interested in the above fire which occurred on the 27th ult:—

<i>Etna</i>	\$5,000	<i>North America</i>	\$5,000
<i>Atlas</i>	7,500	<i>North West</i>	1,000
<i>Caledonian</i>	7,500	<i>North Brit. and Merc.</i>	10,000
<i>Commercial Union</i>	10,000	<i>Northern</i>	6,000
<i>Connecticut</i>	2,500	<i>Norwich Union</i>	7,500
<i>Guardian</i>	12,500	<i>Phoenix of Brooklyn</i> ...	3,000
<i>Hartford</i>	4,000	<i>Phoenix of London</i> ...	12,500
<i>Hull</i>	7,500	<i>Quebec</i>	5,000
<i>Law Union and Crown</i> ...	5,500	<i>Royal</i>	32,000
<i>Liv. & Lon. & Globe</i> ...	7,500	<i>Scot. Union & Nation'l</i>	13,500
<i>London & Lancashire</i> ...	7,500	<i>Sun</i>	5,000
<i>London Assurance</i>	5,000	<i>Union</i>	7,500
<i>Manchester</i>	5,000	<i>Western</i>	5,000
<i>Mercuriale</i>	5,000		
<i>National of Ireland</i> ...	10,000		
		Total	\$215,000

Loss about 80 per cent.