

products from the West Indies an advantage over Canadians. Between New York and Cuba, and Porto Rico, there is constant communication by lines of steamers who call at British ports with and for freight.

To meet such conditions, there needs to be more frequent, more regular and more rapid steamship services between Canada and the West Indies. The matter has been under consideration by the Council of the Board of Trade of the city before whom a resolution had been laid, passed by the management committee of the Corn Exchange Association. This resolution alludes to the steamship lines plying between American and West Indian ports, securing so much freight as evidence that Montreal would secure enough business to warrant the establishment of a new service from this port to Jamaica, Barbadoes, Trinidad, and British Guiana, the Maritime Province ports to be used in the winter.

The extent of the trade of Canada with the West Indies and British Guiana may be judged by the following returns:

	1903.	1901.	1899.
	\$	\$	\$
Imports.....	2,415,608	1,406,480	954,471
Exports.....	2,699,167	2,297,804	1,990,865
Total trade with West Indies.	\$5,114,775	\$3,704,284	\$2,945,336

These figures are encouraging and indicating a growth in recent years, but, when compared with some previous years, the present trade with the West Indies shows a heavy falling off as is seen by the following:

	1893.	1892.	1891.
	\$	\$	\$
Imports.....	4,241,669	4,092,287	3,238,156
Exports.....	3,143,708	3,546,559	3,122,770
Total trade with West Indies.	\$7,390,377	\$7,638,846	\$6,360,926

From 1873 to 1898, twenty-six years, the average yearly aggregate of the trade of Canada with the West Indies was about \$6,000,000. The average exports in that period, 1873 to 1898, were \$3,100,000, so that there has been a very serious falling off in recent years, which is all the more noticeable, because our foreign trade has increased so enormously in the years during which the trade, with the West Indies, both exports and imports, has been decreasing. Had the trade with the West Indies expanded proportionately with our other foreign trade, it would have been more than double what it now is.

Surely Canada has enterprise, resources and energy sufficient to recover this lost ground, and make our trade with the West Indies a very valuable and steadily expanding section of our foreign trade.

QUERIES COLUMN.

In order to furnish our readers with information we propose to devote this column to replies to correspondents. Letters should be addressed to "THE CHRONICLE, Enquiry Department, Montreal."

Answers will only be given to such communications as bear the writer's name, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and only to questions referring to matters of general interest in regard to which the Editor of Queries' Column will exercise his own discretion.

1404.—E. Z. M., Quebec.—The Montreal Cotton Company does not issue annual statements to its shareholders, nor does the Dominion Cotton Mills Company, the syndicate that is carrying out the merger of the Dominion Cotton, the Montmorency Cotton, the Merchants Cotton and the Colonial Bleaching companies into the Dominion Textile Company is putting a million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) new money into the amalgamation. For this they will take, it is said, \$500,000 in preferred stock at par and \$4,000,000 common stock at 12½c in the New Company.

1405.—J. T. McN.—The gross revenue of the Montreal Light Heat and Power Co., for the year ending 30th April, 1904, was \$2,589,446.50, this year it is stated, the company will earn over \$3,000,000.

CANADIAN FIRE UNDERWRITERS' ASSOCIATION.

The usual monthly meeting of the above association was held in this city on the 11th inst., with a large attendance of members. Messrs. Waugh & Brydges of the Winnipeg board attended the meeting to make some representations about Winnipeg matters. The German American Insurance Co. of New York was admitted into the association.

Mr. Alfred Wright, president of the C.F.U.A., occupied the Chair.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

MONTREAL'S REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.—The estimated revenue available for appropriation for the year 1905 is as follows:

Amount of 1904, Assessment Roll.....	\$2,127,274 32
" " Water Rates Roll.....	713,612 52
" " Business Tax Roll.....	327,826 39
	\$3,168,713 23

All other revenues to 30th November, 1904.....	\$665,028 33
Estimated "other revenues" for December average last three years, 1901-2-3.....	41,034 66
	709,062 99

Estimated revenue for 1905..... \$3,877,776 22

The chief appropriations for the current year are:—Interest and sinking fund, \$1,165,251; School