

Later in the year the Council met a deputation from St. John, N.B., which had urged upon the Government that St. John should be constituted a port of call for that line. The Council informed the delegates of its views regarding Montreal's claim to be the terminus, during season of navigation, of any subsidized line of steamers, but assured them, also, that, so far as might be practicable, it would give its assistance towards furthering their views.

The question of subsidized steamship lines has more recently attracted attention in connection with a change in the form inviting tenders for the postal service, and the impression which very generally prevailed, that the Government were about to accept tenders for the performance of the weekly mail service between Canada and the United Kingdom, from a company which proposed to make Quebec its terminus. The Council at once addressed a remonstrance to the Postmaster-General against the acceptance of any mail tender which did not stipulate that Montreal should be the Western terminal port during the season of navigation, and further that cargo-carrying capacity on the part of these steamers was a condition of the greatest importance. These views were afterwards represented to the Cabinet by a deputation from the Board, which was assured by the Premier that the Council's fears were groundless, and that whenever the question came before the Government the interests of Montreal would be fully considered.

#### RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES.

This subject has during the past year attracted general attention in Montreal, owing to the two sessions (held in the Council Chamber of your Board) of the Royal Commission on Railways, the first occupied in taking evidence from importers, shippers, etc., lasting from 12th to 25th January; the second, for the examination of the railway officials, from 9th to 22nd December. A large amount of interesting information was obtained during these sittings, which was printed and is now accessible to members.

In May complaint was made by some firms in this city regarding the increased freight charges on the Canadian Pacific Railway to British Columbia, which were stated to be prohibitory so far as their business with that province was concerned. The Council communicated the same to that Railway Company.

A petition, signed by many leading importing houses in this city, was received in November, asking the Council to use every effort to induce