

especially that in regard to taxing merchants engaged in retail trade on the amount of their annual turnover in business; this and another Bill were withdrawn.

An amendment to the Act became law in reference to taxation of financial corporations; its chief feature in application appears to be, that the Government now takes for its own use, by a direct tax, the greater portion of the amounts which were formerly levied annually by municipalities.

Increased Jurisdiction in the Division Courts. This Board caused representations to be made to the Attorney-General in regard to recommending the extension of the jurisdiction of Division Courts, in order that larger amounts, where practicable, may be dealt with by that Court and more speedy judgment be obtained and with less cost.

Workmen's Compensation Act. At the last Session of the Legislature, a new Act was introduced to provide compensation for injuries received by workmen; it appeared that suits brought under this proposed Act would result in interminable litigation, it being largely taken from recent legislation in Great Britain, which is now on trial there. A strong deputation waited upon the introducer of the Bill, Mr. Crawford, and his associates and the members of the Cabinet, asking them to defer action for the present until the whole question could be more fully discussed. The Bill was eventually withdrawn. The law as it exists at the present time cannot be said to be entirely satisfactory, and it is probable that some legislation will be sought for, with a view to improve present conditions. The greatest protection to workmen, consistent with all the conditions, should be granted; care should also be taken not to enact a law which would be so open to different interpretations that the main object would be defeated by costly litigation. Those interested in legislation of this kind would do well to be prepared for amendments to the present Act, and assist, as far as possible, in placing upon the Statute Books a fair and equitable law for all concerned.

The local railway projects to which this Board has lent its influence during the past year are as follows:—

New Railways. A line of railway from Toronto to Sudbury; an additional grant was made to this line during the last Session of the Dominion Government of \$3,200 for a distance of 20 miles from Parry Sound north. Haliburton, Whitney & Mattawa Railway—at the last Session of the Ontario Legislature, a subsidy was granted to this road of \$3,000 per mile for 48 miles. The Council favored the extension of the Toronto, Lindsay & Pembroke Railway by the construction of a link of less than 50 miles.

At a meeting of the Board held on March 21st the report of the Railway and Transportation Committee re the Ontario, Hudson's Bay & Western Railway; being a proposed railway from a point near Missanabie on the C.P.R., to Tidewater on James Bay, at the mouth of the Moose River—was adopted, and a deputation from this Board was appointed to wait upon the Ontario Government, with a view of pressing upon the Government the importance of the enterprise. At the last Session of the Legislature a cash subsidy was granted of \$2,000 a mile for 240 miles.

It seems a pity that we should continue to be for any considerable period without means of transportation to the waters of the vast inland sea to the north and the territory to the west of the Hudson's Bay, through which there are immense stretches of water communication. If this line of railway were once opened up, the trade of this territory would be largely tributary to this city.

In the early part of last year, the Council added to its **Freight Rates.** list of standing committees, one to deal specially with the question of freight rates. I have to report that this committee has been active during the year; one of its first duties was to