

Bank of Montreal. But before describing the coinage of this bank, it will be well to describe one issued by the Quebec Bank.

In January, 1851, Noah Freer, cashier of the Quebec Bank, wrote to the Hon. James Leslie, provincial secretary, asking permission to import copper coin to the amount of £2,000 sterling, on the ground that it was urgently needed for change by the merchants and traders of Quebec.¹ This request remained under consideration until the 12th of March, when it was refused because the Bank of Upper Canada had been authorized to import £5,000 worth and that this should be sufficient for the requirements of the province, and further that the coins had actually been landed in the United States.² On the 21st of the same month the cashier replied urging more strongly the need for small change, enclosing at the same time a petition from a number of the principal merchants of Quebec setting forth the great trouble they were experiencing "for the want of a sufficient amount of copper coin for change."³ Those merchants, some twenty in number, contracted to take and pay for copper coin to the extent of £1,400, in amounts varying from £25 to £250. This second request was also refused for the same reasons as before, and because the Bank of Upper Canada had promised to land a portion of the coinage at Quebec. Still the cashier was encouraged by the promise that if the stringency should continue the request would be considered later on.⁴ Evidently the quantity landed at Quebec was insufficient, for the cashier in November of the same year sent in a third request. This was acceded to and the necessary authority by order-in-council, given to the Quebec Bank to import copper coin to the extent of £2,000 sterling.⁵ In September, 1852, the cashier again writes advising the government that coins had been received, but that through some mistake only £2,000 currency had been imported, whereas £2,000 sterling had been authorized. The latter asked for extension of time for importing the balance, some £500, and for authority to import a further quantity amounting to £1,000.⁶ This request was refused because the government intended to pass a bill favouring the adoption of the decimal system in Canada. This law, passed during the session 1852-3, was only a tentative measure which declared dollars, cents and mills to be legal forms of expressing money in Canada concurrent with pounds,

¹ Appendix F, No. 26.

² *Ibid.*, No. 27.

³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 28 and 29.

⁴ Appendix F, No. 50.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Nos. 31 and 32.

⁶ Appendix F, No. 37.