

Winnipeg, Dec. 9th, 1897.

"The Hon., The Finance Minister,

Ottawa, Ont.

SIR,—

We have the honor, by direction of the Winnipeg Board of Trade, to submit the following for your consideration :

1. The oat crop of Manitoba and the Territories in 1897 was a short one, and prices, which last year ranged from 13c to 20c per bushel, are now from 26c to 28c at country points.

2. The Customs import duty on oats is 10c per bushel, and on oatmeal 20 per cent., and in consequence, oatmeal millers are required to pay 45c duty on the $4\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of oats necessary to manufacture one 80 lb. sack of oatmeal; while the duty payable on a sack of oatmeal of 80 lbs, is, on present prices in Iowa, from where we import, from 22c to 22½c. In other words, the duty imposed on the raw material is double that imposed on the manufactured article.

3. In consequence of the situation thus created, the oatmeal mills of Manitoba, the Territories and British Columbia are either closed, or in process of closing.

4. A large quantity of oatmeal is being imported into this city from the United States, and as the freight rates from Iowa points average about 34c per hundred pounds, and from Ontario points about 46c, the Ontario millers are practically blocked from supplying this market, while our own mills are closed.

5. This Board, after receiving a deputation of oat meal millers from Manitoba, the Territories and British Columbia