OCEAN FREIGHT RATES ON FLOUR AND WHEAT.

It is to be hoped that something will result from the efforts being made by the Canadian millers to reduce the freight rates on ocean steamships. As it is at present, there seems to be a discrimination in ocean rates between wheat and flour. Not only were ocean freight rates increased during the past year from 50% to 100%, but the rates charged for the carriage on flour were further increased from 5c. to 12c. per 100 lbs. higher than on wheat. This discrimination undoubtedly favors the foreign and British millers who are enabled by means of it to import wheat and successfully compete with Canadian millers who ship their flour.

A few days ago, a delegation representing four of the largest milling companies in Canada waited upon the Hon. George E. Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce and urged that some action be taken to remove the discrimination which exists between the ocean freight rates on wheat and flour exported from Canada. The millers pointed out that the average difference between the rates on wheat and flour for the past ten years was a little more than 2c. The freight rates were then advanced to 23c. per 100 lbs. on both but were later reduced on wheat, but kept up on flour until the difference ranged from 5c. to 12c. in favor of the raw product.

This is a matter which affects not only the millers, but farmers and many others. It is to the advantage of Canada to grind our wheat into flour at home as, by so doing the Canadian farmer gets the by-products for feeding purposes. The manufacturing of the wheat into flour is also a part of the general policy advocated by good business men everywhere. It is much better for a country to manufacture her raw product at home than to ship them abroad in a manufactured condition. As there are 70 lbs. of offal for every barrel of flour manufactured, it is easy to see the advantages which would accrue to the farmers of Canada if more wheat could be ground into flour at home. However, just so long as Canadian millers find a discriminatory tariff against them their export business will be curtailed to just that extent. We admit that this question of ocean freight rates is a difficult one to solve as the control of rates does not come under any one particular country. It is to be hoped that the Canadian Government will co-operate with the British Government and with other interests and do everything in their power to remove the present discrimination against shipments of flour.

MONTREAL'S TREATMENT AT QUEBEC.

The suggestion made a short time ago that Montreal should separate from the Province of Quebec and establish a Government of her own was not a bad recommendation. The bungling and mismanagement carried on at Quebec in connection with Montreal's affairs is enough to drive this city to desperation. Apparently, the legislators at Quebec look upon Montreal as an easy mark. This city represents considerably over one-quarter of the population of the province but contributes in taxes by far the largest portion of the total revenues of the province. The city of Montreal has only a few representatives in the legislature and they are out-voted and out-generaled by the representatives from other parts of Quebec who look upon Montreal as specially ordained by Providence to provide the province with funds.

The latest example of injustice and stupidity has to do with the purchase of a library site. Some people with a 'pull' desired to dispose of an out of the way site for a library and the Private Bills Committee at Quebec is forcing the city to purchase for $700,000 a piece of property which is totally unsuited for the purpose. This is only one of the many examples of glaring interference. Montreal seems to find it particularly hard to get justice at Quebec.

It is quite true that Montreal is not famous for her civic purity. As a matter of fact, the city is notorious for her incompetent city government. This, however, is not an excuse for allowing the provincial legislature to plunder her coffers. If we are to be plundered at all, we would prefer to have our own City Fathers engage in this lucrative and pleasurable pastime. We do not want to pay the major part of the province's revenues and then be treated as a country village. What we should like to see is not only a larger measure of autonomy at Quebec, but to see our present city council abolished, root, stem and branch. What we need more than all else is a Board of Commissioners with absolute power to run the city. Montreal could well afford to pay a Board of three or five men salaries of $25,000 each and turn over the whole management of her civic affairs to them. The affairs of the city are miserably handled, the City Hall being filled with a lot of incompetents, who obtained their positions through 'pull.' In ordinary business life some of our civic officials would not be tolerated five minutes. Possibly, if Montreal governed herself a little better than she has been doing, we would obtain a larger measure of autonomy and respect from the legislators in Quebec. Certainly the situation both in Montreal and Quebec could be improved.

OTTAWA POWER.

A dividend of 2 per cent. and a bonus of 1 per cent. was declared by the directors of Ottawa Light, Heat & Power Co., this week, payable January 1st to record December 30. Seven thousand shares of new stock will be issued to holders of record March 1.

DOMINION TEXTILE.

The Dominion Textile Company will shortly erect a new mill and make a large extension to its present mill at Montmorency Falls, Quebec. The extension will cost three quarters of a million dollars.