

he succeeded in inducing the farmer to postpone his intention of going into business for the present at least.

This is only one instance of many similar cases in which farmers have decided to give up farming in favor of a store business. It does seem strange that men who are doing well as they are, will thus risk their means in a calling which they know nothing at all about. In giving up a farm to embark in business, they throw away a certainty for a very great uncertainty. This farmer in question might possibly succeed in business, but the chances are greatly against him. In less time than it took to place him in his present independent position, he would not unlikely lose his savings and his farm property as well. Competition in store trade is keen nearly all over Manitoba. There are now altogether too many stores in the country, in proportion to population, and desirable openings for additional stores are difficult to find. What chance, then, would our farmer have, with his inexperience, to compete with those who were posted in the business? An occasional merchant here and there has done surprisingly well, but many have hardly held their own. The record of failures during the past year should convince impatient farmers of the folly of giving up a paying farm, to engage in a risky business enterprise. As a class, few merchants have done as well as this farmer during the past few years, especially considering the capital invested. Besides, the independence, and safety, and general immunity from anxiety, have all been on the side of the farmer. How many merchants who embarked in business a few years ago, with from \$3,000 to \$10,000, would now gladly change places with this prosperous farmer?

It is seldom that a farmer absolutely fails, though owing to lack of knowledge of farming, he may for a while find it uphill work. Still, perseverance almost invariably brings its reward. The record in Manitoba shows that the farmers as a class are steadily advancing in prosperity, although very few of them started with any considerable amount of cash. In the older sections, they are now able to indulge freely in luxuries, such as expensive carriages and musical instruments, etc., which a few years ago had very little sale in the province. On the other hand, men who started in business with some capital, a few years ago, have failed in not a few instances. Of course many failures are brought about by lack

of knowledge of the business, but this is just one of the reasons why the farmer should stick to his farm. Very few men who have followed farming long, and who have not had considerable previous experience in business, are competent to successfully conduct a store trade.

Fifty-two is the record of assignments in Manitoba and the Territories during 1888. The number of business institutions of all kinds in this region is estimated at about 4,000. This would make one failure for, say, every seventy-seven business institutions. But it must be remembered that the failures were nearly all in store lines, and the number of stores would be but a fraction of the total number of business institutions of all kinds—probably less than one-quarter of the whole. This would give us one failure in every eighteen or twenty stores.

Again, the assignments do not represent the total number of failures in business. Many men see that they are running behind and losing their capital, and they sell out. Others sink their own capital and perhaps borrowed money as well, and then the business is turned over, by the creditors, with the consent of the proprietor, to another party. Others get away behind, and arrange a private settlement with their creditors, on a basis of paying or agreeing to pay a certain percentage of their indebtedness. All these cases are practically failures, just as much so as the cases of assignment, but they are not publicly known as such. The assignments probably represent less than one-half the actual failures to conduct business profitably, and this would give us, say, one failure in every ten store establishments. It is asserted by persons who have made a study of the question, that only one man in ten fully succeeds in business. Why then should a farmer wish to give up a profitable calling to engage in such a risky experiment? Occasionally whole salers who are anxious to work up connections, may encourage farmers or other inexperienced persons, especially those having some ready cash, to embark in business, but in the long run such accounts generally turn out unsatisfactory. The better plan would seem to be to discourage such undertakings, except perhaps in a very few instances.

THE RAILWAY SITUATION.

The railway situation in Manitoba is again becoming interesting. Feeling con-

fident that the province was bound to triumph in the crossing difficulty, the people have watched the proceedings at Ottawa in that connection with apparently less interest than might have been expected, considering the importance of the interests involved. Of late, however, certain rumors have been in circulation regarding proposed changes in the route of the lines to be built by the Northern Pacific and Manitoba company next summer, and this has renewed interest in the situation. It has also been intimated that the Local Government has made a new arrangement with the N. P. & M. Co., and N. P. Co., regarding freight rates. It is expected that the Government will have some new announcements to make to the Legislature, regarding its railway policy, and now that the Local House has met, the expectation of some further developments being made known, has increased interest in the question.

It has been supposed all along, that the extension of the N. P. & M. system to Portage la Prairie, was for the purpose of forming a connection with the Manitoba Northwestern at the Portage, and that some agreement to that effect existed between the two roads. Recent developments, however, would seem to indicate that no such agreement exists, and that the Northwestern railway does not intend to work in connection with the N. P. & M. road. It is now hinted that the road may be extended on from Portage la Prairie to Rapid City and Brandon, possibly with a view of connecting with the Northwest Central, now under construction, at or near Rapid City. The extension of the road from Portage la Prairie to Brandon, would very likely involve some changes in the route of the Morris-Brandon branch. At any rate, there seems to be a good deal of uncertainty as to the route to be taken by the proposed branch westward from Morris. Indeed, there is a good deal of uncertainty in the public mind, as to what may be done with any of the proposed lines; but perhaps the Government may enlighten us very shortly as to its intentions.

The latest move on the part of the C. P. R. Co., namely, the filing of a bill in chancery to restrain the N. P. & M. Co. from further operating and constructing its roads in Manitoba, excites very little comment. It is quietly regarded as the last kick of a dying monopoly, and as such, is considered unworthy of much attention.