

could not be said of those shipped by the home growers.

While there was a good deal of truth in the contention of the railway companies, still there was no doubt that the local freight rates, like those in this country, were out of all proportion to the through rates. The agitation has been so far successful that one railway company, the Great Eastern, is experimenting with the carrying of parcels of produce at a cheap rate, whereby it is hoped to put the producer and the consumer into as close contact as possible.

The company has a large number of stations on its line, and there are at least eighty rural centres in Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, from any one of which a package of twenty pounds weight can be forwarded to London for fourpence. This includes delivery within the London limits. A package of 60 lbs. can be sent for a shilling. The company, if the shippers wish, provides boxes at a charge varying from 1½d. to 5d., so that the carriage and delivery of a package weighing 20 lbs. will not cost more than 5½d., or about a farthing per pound. There are thousands of persons in London who will be only too ready to place themselves in direct business contact with the producers, and if the latter only carry out their part well, and ship only first-class produce, a very difficult problem will have been solved. Other railways are following suit, the latest to lower rates being the Great Western, which company has made considerable reductions in its tariff on milk shipped from certain distances, the rates being now as follows:

Distance.	Per imperial gallon at owner's risk.
Up to 20 miles.....	½d.
Above 20 miles and up to 40 miles.....	¾d.
" 40 " 100 " .....	1d.
" 100 " 150 " .....	1¼d.
" 150 miles " .....	1½d.

As regards the old rates, there is a reduction of 20 per cent. in some cases.

It is only a question of time when all of the railways will have to fall into line. When will our railways begin to show some consideration in their dealings with the local producer and cease to tax him in order to give cheaper rates to those living further west?

### The Winnipeg Immigration Convention.

It is a recognized fact that one of the most serious obstacles to the progress of Canada to-day is the great lack of population. We have a splendid country, rich in resources of nearly every

kind, lying practically undeveloped, waiting for settlers. The great republic to the south of us has hitherto absorbed the greater flow of emigration every year; but, with the practical absorption of free lands in that country, settlers must seek homes elsewhere. South Africa has been the favorite ground for emigrants of late, owing to the discoveries and development of the gold mines there; but, owing to the unsettled state of affairs there and the fact that as regards agriculture, it is not a particularly suitable country, the tide of emigration, especially for the desirable class of emigrants, will have to turn in another direction.

Cannot we attract it hither? Here we have large quantities of fertile, vacant lands, a goodly proportion of which are free lands, waiting for the settler, and it would be hard, indeed, to find a country in which the conditions are more favorable to the settler, provided he is made of the right material. He can, if he wishes, and has the means, invest in a home in the older sections of the country; he can take up land in the north-western part of Ontario, where there are large tracts of excellent soil; or he can go further west, and secure free lands in Manitoba and the Northwest, while the fertile soils in the valleys of British Columbia will attract many more.

There have not been wanting efforts in the past to induce settlers to come to Canada, but they have been rather spasmodic and ill-directed. The various provinces had agents, the Dominion Government maintained other agencies, and so did the Canadian Pacific Railway. The literature circulated through these mediums was considerably rose-colored, and, probably, did more harm than good; and, besides this, these agencies overlapped one another, and lacked the authority that they would have possessed had they all been directed from one central executive.

It was to try to remedy the mistakes made in previous years and to start an energetic immigration crusade on behalf of the great Northwest that the important Immigration Convention held at Winnipeg during the last few days of February was held. The meeting was well attended by delegates from all over Manitoba, the Northwest, and British Columbia, while Algoma was also well represented. There was great enthusiasm shown; but, what is more important, there was a determination all through to run things on a common-sense basis. Thus, every one who spoke insisted on the need of careful selection of immigrants. "Quality, not quantity," was their theme. The aim of the association that was formed at the meeting, under the title of the Western Canada Immigration Association, is to