

The transportation facilities furnished to western cattle shippers have, for long, been declared altogether inadequate. It is charged that the supply of stock cars is irregular, uncertain and inefficient, their construction faulty, their equipment defective, that engines are overloaded and the speed of trains thereby greatly lessened and that as a consequence of these conditions cattle in transit undergo much needless suffering and their owners serious financial loss. While there is doubtless good ground for these complaints much of the trouble unquestionably arises from the fact that until within the last year or two, export shipments have been confined to a period, little, if any, exceeding three months during which one railway company has had, in addition to meeting the demands of ordinary live stock traffic, to do its best to move from 50,000 to 80,000 head of cattle over an average distance of 2,000 miles. The cattle shipping season in each year also overlaps the great eastward grain movement during which every effort must be made to get the crop to the terminal elevators before the close of navigation. In spite of these extenuating circumstances, however, there is both need and room for improvement, and although the adoption of winter feeding which will change and extend the shipping period and the near advent of railway competition will doubtless greatly better existing conditions, the reasonable demands of the present day trade must be given reasonable consideration.

At the National Live Stock convention held here last year, the western cattlemen present declared that without prompt and radical reforms in transportation methods their export trade could not, under the altered conditions of beef production, be any longer profitably carried on. As a result of the statements made by these gentlemen, the convention passed unanimously a resolution that the matter should be referred to the Railway Commission for action and it is very gratifying to know that, on the request of the western stock growers, that Board is, with characteristic promptitude, now actively engaged in remedying as far as possible the faulty conditions which have caused so much dissatisfaction and given rise to so many complaints.

#### SHIPPING HINTS.

In shipping cattle practical experience is of immense value and if the shipper himself is lacking in this qualification, he should endeavour to secure the services of a reliable and trustworthy man, especially if he intends doing business on an extensive scale. By following this course he will save himself much time, worry and money. This is particularly true in the case of shipments to distant and above all to foreign markets. Unless one knows the ropes, he is certain to find himself often at a loss and so driven into the hands of commission men and others who, whatever they may do for their regular customers, seldom show much compassion or consideration for the chance wayfarer, who is trying to do business on his own account. Loading must be carefully watched—overcrowding in a single car of a train load may mean a heavy loss. Cars should be clean and well bedded or sanded to prevent slipping; they should be in good, sound condition, and each should be closely examined inside to ensure that there are no projections such as splinters, bolts or nails likely to injure the stock.

Where hay is fed in transit, its distribution should be carefully supervised and at any time when car doors have been opened they should be properly closed before the train moves.

At feeding points the shipper must insist on ample time and space being allowed for rest, and must see that the feed and water supplied are of good quality and that each animal has an opportunity to get its reasonable share of both.

Undue delays in furnishing cars or in the movement of trains as well as all cases of injury to stock through rough handling, violent shunting, or otherwise should be promptly reported to the proper railway officials, who are generally more interested than their subordinates in seeing that satisfactory treatment is afforded to shippers. By looking sharply after their own interests in matters of this kind shippers will avoid much annoyance as well as financial loss.

It is almost superfluous to say that cattle ship much better when dehorned. This should, however, be done some time beforehand, preferably when close feeding begins.