

We go on record here as doubting the advisability of aiding or assisting any new or existing railroad company in the manner described above by Canada or her provinces, as according to the greatest (acknowledged we believe) railroad magnate in the world to-day, no legitimate railroad needs such aid, because if there is business to be done the railroad worth having will go in without bonus, grants or assistance of any sort.

#### Competitors Under One Roof.

In these days of investigations of the business of large corporations the people of the West would like to see the operations of the shingle manufacturers at the coast laid bare. At a meeting of shingle manufacturers recently held in Seattle it was voluntarily agreed to curtail the production of shingles for a time. This action concerns Canadians for it is an admitted fact that, whatever may be their relative positions in the lumber trade, the Canadian mills control the shingle industry. The curtailing of production has not the slightest justification in economic conditions but is rather a deliberate attempt to maintain high prices. The volume of trade offering is larger this season than it ever was before. The Northwest is prepared to buy in enormous quantities, San Francisco alone will be an insatiable consumer and the trade on the Eastern coast is enlarging all the time. Why do not some of our mighty political Nimrods go gunning for the shingle octopus?

#### Do Not be Stampeded into Commercial Enterprises.

Within the last few years an idea regarding the marketing of wheat was hatched in the fertile brain of a western Canadian farmer, and from that a big scheme outlined to put the idea into effect; and in so describing it, we mean thereby no disrespect to the originator, in fact we admire the boldness of his conception.

The lack of success of many farmers' elevators should cause those about to take stock in the big grain marketing venture to ponder well before doing so. We believe it would be a good thing if a farmer's elevator could be successfully operated in every town from which quantities of grain are shipped; but until the farmers generally are successful in the smaller enterprises, we think it better to go slow on the bigger ones.

Unfortunately, whether by accident or design, those great farmers' organizations the Grain Growers', in the eyes of the public, have been made, as it were, sponsors for the above scheme. The Grain Growers Associations have distinctly declared that they are not behind this scheme, and the use of their name looks as if some parties are anxious to trade on the success of an institution gotten up for an entirely different purpose. Such methods may be dubbed 'sharp practice' and is not in accord with the well known standards of commercial honesty, which unless lived up to means eventual failure.

In the country to the south of us, the Rockwell system of farmers' elevators was tried and, we believe, successfully, but it started in a small way.

We confess to having very grave doubts of the ultimate success of the new company; not because of an idea that farmers are in any way lacking in business acumen or commercial perceptions, but because in its very inception the company has, perhaps accidentally, and in spite of the discussions and protests at the G. G.'s convention, elected to sail under colors belonging to another organization.

It will be remembered that the promoter, before the Saskatchewan and Manitoba G. G.'s, admitted that, after a few weeks spent on the ground among the grain men at Winnipeg, he was very little wiser or unable to get behind the scheme, hence in the name of common sense a big thing, such as the new scheme looks to be, will not work at a reasonable price to the patron. It remains to be shown. "Experience" of the farmer's teacher is commonly accepted as a guide. Experience is worth having, provided the teacher is not steep. If a farmer chooses to put his money in a sort of gamble all well and good, but he should consider that the men at the head of the concern are not men of experience in commercial enterprises unless in a very small way.

There are some men in the community, placed in the front, who are not half as good as they are made out to be, and are not good enough for an enterprise of this kind.

tude of the one mentioned. It has been at times our duty to criticize in a friendly way the Grain Growers' because this paper has noted the success of that organization, and desires that success continued, yea increased, but we would repeat to our readers among the Grain Growers, 'go slow before you tie yourself up to this big scheme,' which may be feasible enough, may be just the thing that is needed but which is not endorsed by the Grain Growers' associations. The invariable rule among men in business and commercial life is to invest in companies which have at their head safe men, successful in their respective walks of life and of known commercial ability; and unless a company is made up largely of such men it is bound to come to grief; even though the cause be a righteous one and intended to remove irksome conditions.

For advising caution by our readers in this matter, we expect to be accused by some people, as being unduly solicitous for the welfare of the grain companies now doing business, and charged by some others, with working against the farmers' best interests, both ideas false and untrue; but we believe there are instances yet fresh in the minds of our readers of companies formed ostensibly to benefit the farmers, which have gone down to graves, unhonored and unsung, without even a "requiescat in pace"! Appreciating then the great responsibility on our shoulders, we feel we should be recreant to the trust reposed in us by the great family of our readers, did we not advise—Caution!

#### The Attitude of the Teacher to the Community.

The discussion regarding "Educational Reconstruction" brings forth some interesting facts and valuable ideas even if somewhat obscured by severe criticism and unnecessary verbiage. In this issue the debate is continued and the one taking the dominion's side is quite characteristic of the profession with regard to criticism by the laity. In as much as it is assumed that lack of knowledge is nearly always to be charged solely to the parent, trustee or ratepayer. Criticism, if fair and honest, is quite allowable and justifiable and is one evidence of interest being taken in the work, that such interest is evinced in the form of criticism cannot be justly charged as a fault against the ratepayer, the parent or the trustees.

First with regard to the salaries—the teachers themselves have been largely responsible for the low salaries, so we are informed by an inspector of experience in Ontario. They started bidding against one another. The salary (\$40 to \$50) is a pretty fair remuneration during the training period of the teacher because after all, that is what the first few years of teaching really are, although we know it is assumed by many teachers that their training ended the day they filed out of the Normal; but surely a teacher has ambitions to get to be more than a one-roomed pedagogue.

It is quite a common occurrence, almost the rule for the Canadian village bred youth or miss, who may happen to wear a teacher's certificate, to sniff at or speak disparagingly of the profession of agriculture; are such likely to get sympathy from the people they effect to despise? If there is work to do in the way of bringing more culture into the community, why not attempt that work as tactfully as possible. The teacher is a servant to the community, just as a doctor, a lawyer, a minister and other members of the community are servants for the general good. As to the lack of sympathy from the parents and the neighborhood, the bond rarely exists in any walk of life unless both parties make an effort to fasten it on themselves. The self-imposed isolation of many a teacher destroys all chance of happiness or good work in a community. There is many a farmer whom it would profit the youth to visit at eventide and get the wisdom and experience of years, and there are many sweet-faced farmers' wives who can help the girl away from home, but one must get close to them! How many teachers were ever known to take an interest in improving their surroundings, the school grounds, or how many ever betray the slightest interest in the farmer's work, or if a woman teacher, how many ever interested themselves in the bringing of the latest ideas in domestic science to the farmers' wives and daughters in the neighborhood. Farmers' and farmers' wives are as a rule busy people and unfriendly advances are made few will repulse such, the hospitality of the farmer is proverbial

and if the teacher fails to benefit by it the blame cannot justifiably be laid altogether at the farmer's door. Occasionally a boor is to be found in the profession of agriculture and he may even get on to a school board, but the majority of trustees mean well, and because they are not certificated, are not necessarily lacking in knowledge—one can be educated without even being conversant with Carlyle, Kant, Jevon or Pestalozzi.

For work to be done successfully, the worker must love that work or at least show more interest in it than the salary earned stipulated for. We know school districts to-day where the memory of former teachers some married, others dead and gone, is revered and loved. They visited around in their parish but did not gossip.

The building of houses for teachers is not a new idea but it is a good one, provided a garden of fair size is attached. The Scotch system is unsurpassed in that respect. It is open to question if our school system is not distinctly inferior to that of the Old Country; we are ahead, in that we have free public schools all under one authority, the state, and undenominational, but in every other way we are behind them.

We think the cause given for the frequent change of teachers is not the right one unless in very exceptional cases; undoubtedly there are some foolish parents and trustees, who would interfere with school discipline. Recently we met two janitors of schools in two fair-sized Manitoba towns, one accused the teachers of inability to enforce discipline, and pointed out the rough way the pupils handled the school property, the other lauded the pupils for their orderliness and for the care taken by them of the school, theirs and their parents' property, and so it goes!

The confession by our correspondent, that hardly any two teachers have the same methods, does not speak well for those engaged in the training of the teachers.

And as to conventions, the time might well be set so as to avoid cutting down the school term in country districts, even if there were fewer conventions held. The individuality of a teacher will count no matter what his or her environment, if a mere timeserver the treatment usually accorded such, he or she will fall heir to, but if on the other hand they are animated by a desire to give of themselves to the community more than the mere salary calls for, the community can be depended upon to respond in a fitting and appreciative manner.

#### Weak Spots in the Ottawa Department of Agriculture.

It has been our pleasure to refer at times to the good work done by the above department, in the way of assisting in the improvement of seed grain, in the improvement of agricultural products and especially in the work of stamping out diseases of animals. It is only to be regretted that occasions are afforded by the department and its head for the opposite attitude to be taken by this paper in the interests of the agriculture of Canada, particularly of western Canada.

The dilatoriness shown in providing experimental farms for Alberta and northern Saskatchewan is hard to explain; had the need been in Quebec or the Maritime provinces how quickly it would have been attended to.

Then again with regard to appointments, the Minister states in *Hansard* his difficulty in securing good men, and yet seems to lack the necessary backbone to withstand political pull, the result of which is that he loses tried men and takes on old and untried men. Years ago we believe he approved of civil service reform, and yet flaunts it at the first opportunity to appease a political comrade. Again with regard to the poultry interests, neglect of those interests in western Canada must be charged to him, probably due to the fact that, those provinces nearest his official heart or ear, get more attention. Then again it is common knowledge that an ex-official who left the department months ago, and has been engaged in other work is to be permitted to draw a salary months after he quit the government service. The minister does not seem to have good command of the reins, for we notice two bulletins issued from his department on swine raising within a few months, both good, but necessarily very much alike; one would have done and the country been saved the expense, if coordination of the various branches was insisted upon. For years he permitted an official to exercise such