

then is it that the greatest care and assistance should be given the newly-arrived immigrant until he is regularly located in the country. A large number of the people coming here are foreigners, unacquainted with the language and customs of the country, and they are consequently at a great disadvantage in settling themselves in our midst. Any person who has taken up Government land knows what a difficult and expensive operation it is to select a claim, even when the land regulations are understood and a fair knowledge of the country is possessed. Foreigners who have not this knowledge are practically lost on their arrival here. A little more attention given these people in assisting them at the outset, would go a great way toward reconciling them to the changed conditions under which foreigners must labor in coming into a strange country. The scanty information to be obtained at the land offices is often anything but satisfactory to those wishing to take up lands. In fact, these institutions are little more than offices for registering claims. Settlers who wish to take up Government land, frequently find that in the end it has cost them more in travelling expenses, for guides and other outlays in securing a suitable homestead, than they could have purchased the land for in a settled district. A great deal more should be undertaken at the land offices in furnishing information to intending settlers, and a regular staff of guides should be provided, whose business it would be to locate settlers, free of extra charge. A party of young men who lately arrived here, informed the writer that in passing through Dakota they were urged to remain in that territory and were offered free conveyance to examine lands. A little more manifestation of this desire to retain settlers here would be greatly in the interest of the country, and would prevent many from drifting to the States after a brief sojourn in the province. In the older districts a great deal could be accomplished by an organization of the settlers, for the purpose of furnishing immigrants with information as to vacant lands and other matters. At Rapid City a move of this kind has been made, which will undoubtedly prove a great benefit to that district. At a public meeting a committee was appointed to prepare a list of the vacant lands in the district, with the prices at which they could be purchased, look after incoming settlers and in every way assist in locating

immigrants in that district. An effort will be made to locate a batch of 100 immigrants, now on the road, in the vicinity of Rapid City. Action of this kind is commendable, and if generally followed, could not but prove beneficial. Already immigrants have commenced to arrive in considerable numbers, with every prospect of a more favorable season than last year. It is to be hoped that every effort will be at once put forth, for there is no time to be lost, in making these people as much at home as possible and rendering them every assistance in selecting locations for immediate settlement.

### EARLY CLOSING BY LEGISLATION.

The movement in Toronto to secure the shortening of the hours of labor in stores, is still being agitated with considerable vigor. The female clerks and shop assistants have now taken the matter up, and have arranged for the holding of a series of public meetings, for the full discussion of the question. The young ladies, who are always favorites with the clergy, have pressed the Toronto Ministerial Association into line with their movement, and have secured the preaching of special sermons in the interest of their cause, as well as the presence of the clergy on the platforms at the public meetings. The city aldermen have also been made to do duty for the benefit of the shop girls, and at the first public meeting Mayor Howland presided, whilst several aldermen were on the programme for speeches. Hon. S. H. Blake, one of the speakers on the occasion, stated that if the dry goods men did not respond to the movement, he would undertake to apply to the Legislature to compel early closing. This last sentiment expresses the correct line of action upon which this question should be agitated. Factory Acts, for the purpose of regulating labor in manufactories, and providing for the health of employes in such institutions, have been frequently provided. Then why should not the regulation of both male and female labor in shops, be fixed by law, as well as the health of employes in such places looked after? There is no class of employment more enervating than the labor which many young women are subjected to in the cities and towns all over the country. Sitting at some close employment for long hours, in badly ventilated apartments, or standing behind a counter from morning until late in the evening, without an opportunity of sitting down, is more trying upon the constitution than the work of the average mechanic, whilst the latter has several hours less each day to labor. It is almost impossible to secure the early closing of stores by mutual agreement

among the merchants. Some refractory ones will always be found who will not keep such an agreement, even if they could be induced to make it. It is manifestly unfair to ask one dealer to close his store a few hours earlier than a competitor will do, and so a general system of early closing of stores is seldom successfully carried out. Legislation for the regulation of the closing of stores, and the hours of labor which shop assistants might be required to work, would be received with favor by the majority of the better class of merchants in the largest towns and cities, who would thus be enabled to carry out their desire for early closing, without losing trade through their customers patronizing their long-hours competitors. The movement in Toronto might indicate a line of action for those in Winnipeg, who have so long agitated in favor of early closing. The attempt to educate public opinion so as to induce the citizens not to purchase after certain hours, has not resulted very successfully and there is little hope of accomplishing much in that direction.

### RAILWAY MATTERS.

The burning question of disallowance, which has been less actively discussed since the elections and pending the meeting of Parliament, was again brought forcibly to the front last week through the publication of a letter directed by the Minister of Railways to the Brandon city council. The letter was in reply to a communication from the council, inquiring as to the probability of the Government disallowing any charter which might be granted for a railway running from Brandon in a southerly direction to the United States boundary. The letter read:

"I am instructed to say that the minister is not aware that any change has taken place in the policy of the Government with reference to such railway projects. Moreover, he does not see how the Government could depart from its agreement with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company in that regard."

The publication of the letter created quite a commotion in the city for a time, but when it was pointed out that Brandon is situated in the territory added to the province (and not within the old boundary of Manitoba), which comes under the monopoly agreement with the C.P.R., the public mind was somewhat quieted. It was contended this letter could not be taken as foreshadowing the policy of the Government regarding the continuation of disallowance within the old province of Manitoba. Nevertheless, the letter has created great dissatisfaction, and the public belief which a short time ago was almost general that disallowance had ceased, has now been considerably shaken. Mr. Van Horne's utterances, as showing that the C.P.R. is working to continue disallowance, has also created an unfavorable impression. However, with Parliament called for the 13th prox., and the Legislature for the 14th, the future of disallowance will soon be made known.