

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED).

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WINNIPEG, MAN.

LONDON (ENGLAND) OFFICE:

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London, W. C., England.

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2. It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.
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through thick stone walls, even though there be no exchange of air whatever. At last we have realized the unwisdom of attempting, in ordinary circumstances, at least, to maintain stables always above freezing-point, and the modern idea is for free ventilation without unpleasant drafts. We shall be disappointed if the extensive use of muslin curtain in doors, windows, and perhaps wall spaces, does not conduce greatly to this desirable end. Those who have installed stable waterworks systems may have to take them out, but that will not be a bad thing if it leads to the provision of suitable troughs in sheltered sheds, where the stock may receive a noon-day feed and exercise at will.

NEARLY 3,000 INQUIRIES.

During the twelve months, from November 1st, 1906, to October 31st, 1907, there were, by actual count, 2,200 questions answered through the columns of "The Farmer's Advocate," besides several hundred discussed in the "Home Magazine," making a total of well on to 3,000. All these were questions actually asked by bona-fide subscribers. Some papers are in the habit of "faking" inquiries, to maintain an appearance of interest in their query departments. "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine" has no temptation to manufacture questions, even were it so disposed, for the immense number actually submitted by subscribers tax the limits of our space and the energy of our editorial staff. And yet there are no bars put up. We are bound to handle all the sensible questions that come to hand from subscribers in good standing, but the amount of work entailed by this volume of correspondence explains an occasional delay in replies, and is one of several reasons why we cannot extend the service to non-subscribers or to inquirers who forget to sign their names.

Some of our friends might lighten our task considerably by refraining from sending trivial

inquiries, the answers to which are of no practical value. Foolish questions are often the hardest to answer accurately. Sometimes, it seems, too, that the more information we publish on a given topic, the more interrogations it draws out. After a subject has been fully treated by editorials and contributions, it is of the nature of supererogation to ask questions on the identical points covered, yet this is repeatedly done. It would save us unnecessary work, and do far more good to the individual if he would keep his files of the paper indexed and in order, read up what is published, and, in the light of the knowledge and variety of viewpoints thus obtained, work out his own particular problem for himself. It would lead to something like mastery of the subject, whereas the spoon-feeding system, which so many desire, militates against the development of self-reliant thinking. But, despite the foolishness of some inquirers and the thoughtlessness of others, we believe our Questions and Answers Department is an invaluable feature, worth far more than the yearly subscription price to every thoughtful reader. Thoughtfulness on the part of our readers can help to make it better.

RAILROADS AND THE PUBLIC RIGHTS.

One way or another, our hustling contemporary, the Toronto World, manages to maintain its reputation for battling on behalf of public rights. Lately it has taken up the cudgels for an improved Ontario railway service, especially for the towns and rural districts. The World's contention is, in substance, that the two great trunk railway companies which serve this Province, having their headquarters at Montreal, habitually neglect the Province from which they each draw an immense proportion of their revenue; that they have no executive officers in Ontario with any authority of consequence; that the patrons who have a grievance of any kind, whether it be a ticket to be refunded or difficulty in securing an ordered freight car, have to appeal to Montreal, where scant consideration is manifested and costly delay often experienced; that many of the best passenger cars are used for American through traffic at 2 cents per mile, while the people of Ontario who subsidized the roads and who largely support them, are charged 3 cents for a comparatively slow and mean service; that the small cities, towns, villages and country shipping points are shamefully neglected as to character of service and fulfilment of orders for rolling stock, to such a degree, in fact, that the dissatisfaction of customers, owing to delayed shipment of goods, is in many instances forcing manufacturing establishments to move away from the small center or go out of business; that the railroads have most of the press muzzled by special transportation rates and by advertising patronage, and that a large number of members of Parliament are little more than retainers of the transportation companies.

In support of this formidable indictment, the World invited communications giving instances of injustice and neglect. Immediately the evidence poured in, was seized upon, published, and the companies fearlessly upbraided, while local Parliamentary representatives were shamed into spasmodic activity; and it begins to look as though the World has done more already to secure a decent railway service for this Province, and, incidentally, the rest of Canada as well, than the Ontario Government's stillborn Railway and Municipal Board bids fair to accomplish in a century at its present gait.

"The Farmer's Advocate" sympathizes heartily with the World's campaign. High-handed disregard of public interest by the beneficiaries of Canadian money grants and franchises has reached a point where the intelligent Canadian public will stand for it no longer. A powerful weight of opinion is accumulating in favor of demanding that Canada require from her transportation companies a service at least as good as that offered the United States customers in the competition for American traffic. It is time for a change.

Out on the Ontario branch lines of the Grand Trunk Railway to-day, what do we find? A slow, dilatory passenger service, handled not infrequently by surly, underpaid employees; inferior locomotive power, and disreputable stations in which to wait for dilapidated old cars, furnished with

wooden-rimmed, shabby-plush-covered seats, hardly fit for second-class service. Yet, when it comes to buying a ticket, it is a plump, first-class fare, and always the fraction of the nickel to the good. We are supposed to be pleased with this service, because our grandfathers trod the blazed trail. And if a train is late, do you find out how late? Not if the station agent can help it. Retice appears to be their established policy. As a case in point: On Saturday evening, Oct. 12th, the writer was passenger on a G. T. R. train for Toronto. One hour and fifty minutes it waited in Hamilton. Why? None of the passengers seemed to know. Some said there was no crew to take the train, others vaguely alluded to a wreck. No one knew, and no one inquired at the ticket office. They knew from past experience it was useless. So they sat and fumed and put in the uncertain vigil as best they could, trusting for deliverance to Providence and the Grand Trunk! The delay may have been unavoidable, but no official came through the train to announce the cause or give any information as to the probable length of the wait. How much longer will the travelling public stand for deceit and reticence where frankness is their first due?

The freight service is worse than the passenger, because the abuses are more exasperating and costly. It will do good to have these cases reported. Our columns are open for the ventilation of authenticated grievances experienced by Canadian shippers of live stock and agricultural produce, also the losses and annoyances of farmers who have suffered long and driven far looking for freight that lingered by the way.

The feasibility of an improved service is proven by the invariable smartening up that follows the advent of a competing line, and it is reasonable to suppose the companies, as well as the patrons, are benefited by the increased promptness, consideration and civility that results from the stimulus. Where competition is lacking, publicity through press and Parliament is the only alternative. It is, therefore, in no spirit of hostility that this matter is aired, but merely a sense of need and public duty; and, in the end, we believe it will pay the railroads to accede to the popular demand and spruce up.

WHY TEACHERS' SALARIES ARE LOW AND DISCIPLINE LAX.

Although entirely aside from the crucial point emphasized repeatedly this past summer in our editorials on the question of education, the contribution by Mr. H. S. Berlanguet, B. A., headed "Defective Discipline in the Schools," touches a further and important weakness in modern schooling, a weakness which is, moreover, as pointed out by Mr. Berlanguet, common to our home life. It certainly is true that, from the extreme of iron-clad Puritanic legalism, sentiment has swung to the opposite extreme of laxness, until the child has become, in many cases, not exactly the father, but almost the master of father and mother. There is need for more general inculcation of the fine grace of obedience on the part of American youth, of respect for authority, and of civility both in public and private. This duty begins in the home.

With regard to the old, familiar complaint that teachers' salaries are too low to insure pedagogic efficiency, we have no objection to offer. Salaries of school teachers are ridiculously small, and we shall never have a proper standard of rural education until ratepayers become more generally seized with the importance of it and realize that parsimony in public-school education is a huge blunder. Whether or not it is well to raise salaries by legislative enactment, as some advocate, is, however, a question in which there is wide room for difference of opinion.

Before loading onto the humble ratepayer all responsibility for the meagre salaries of teachers, it might be well to inquire why, in view of this long-prevalent condition, there has repeatedly been a superabundance of Model and Normal candidates. Is it not because the trend of our educational system has been to draw away from agriculture and other productive industries into the overcrowded professions? Teaching, being a very accessible one, and a convenient stepping-stone to others, was chosen by many young men and women, and