

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 1909

TEACHERS' SALARIES—WHAT IS REALLY THE MATTER.

The Patriot gave up large space on its editorial page the other day to a letter from the west, deploring the fact that school teachers are so inadequately paid in Prince Edward Island and that they are fast leaving us for the better paying positions in new Provinces. The writer of the letter assumes that if the Island would pay its teachers a fair salary all would be well.

The letter is suggestive of several things outside the immediate object and argument of its writer. One of these is that it costs a round sum of money to travel to the Northwest of British Columbia, and another thing is that it costs much more to live there than here. Still another point is that a large number of the school districts there are peopled by men and women from many different countries living under primitive or pioneer conditions such as would be by no means desirable to one of our teachers.

We have a letter from a New Brunswick teacher located in Alberta telling of the half dozen different nationalities represented in his school of twenty five pupils and giving glimpses of his boardinghouse life in the winter season out there. It is written in no complaining mood—in fact the writer likes the West—but the average teacher in Prince Edward Island has a much easier time in teaching and much more advanced and agreeable surroundings than some have found in the west. Not in one year or two could the average Island teacher, unless he gets into some city school, better himself by going to the Northwest to follow teaching there.

But if it were only teachers who are going away from the Province the Island's troubles would be easier of solution than they are. Thousands of farmers, mechanics, fishermen, clerks, business and professional men have gone and hundreds are going from year to year. The teachers who have gone or are going are but a small percentage of the total. How is it possible to increase the pay or improve the emoluments or chances of all these?

Obviously the one thing which militates against one and all classes

here is the want of constant and reasonable transportation at all seasons of the year, such as the other Provinces enjoy. In other words, our winter disabilities are the great impediment to our progress, and after that the high protectionist tariff which merely represents high taxation to be paid without any return. We cannot have factories here till we get constant and reasonable transportation.

The Tunnel would give us the required transportation facilities. With it factories would spring up, giving winter employment and all-year employment. With these would come a better home market, more population, better returns for all our farmers and fishermen have to sell abroad, intensive farming and largely increased production. Trade would expand, mechanics would find employment, and the more prosperous community would cheerfully pay better salaries to teachers and preachers, and better remuneration to all who work with muscle or brain.

Yes, our teachers ought to be paid better than they are even now. But while three fourths of our people have to live by farming under present handicaps, we should be satisfied with nothing that will not give better chances and better returns for this large class as well as for the numerous other classes. Our teachers are mainly farmers' sons and daughters. They have a community of interest in and with each other. All would like to see the teachers better paid, but if their pay were doubled it would not stop the exodus from our farms and homes so long as the problem of winter transportation remains unsolved.

And a new steamer, or a new route for steamers will not solve it. There is no hope that the airship of the present or future will carry the farmer's potatoes and oats to market across the Straits. In fact there is no reasonable solution but the Tunnel. For that our farmers and traders, preachers and teachers should work and pray as for their greatest earthly good. And once our people become really in earnest and unitedly demand it they will get it.

THE GLACE BAY COAL MINERS' STRIKE COLLAPSING.

Evidently the back bone of the strike in the Dominion Coal Company's mines is broken. Production is going on and increasing. The general feeling here is that the men had little to complain of. They were well and promptly paid, well housed and cared for and had constant employment. No coal company in the world took better care of its men. Their pay would average about \$2.50 each per day. The houses leased to men of families at \$4 to \$5 per month, with free water supply therein, were well-built and

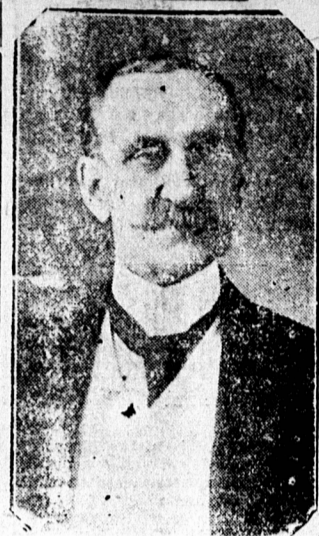
comfortable, and with a cemented cellar beneath. Coal was supplied them, put in the coal bin at \$2 per ton. It was open to every miner to buy his own house and lot from the company at a fair rate and pay for it by degrees out of his earnings. Foreign agitators seem to have been at the bottom of the strike, and the men have been so well paid that they could easily afford to remain idle for a time. They lost the sympathy of the public when they attempted to prevent those who desired to work from working.

The Government of Nova Scotia derives a royalty of 10 cents per ton on the products of the Springhill mines and 12 1/2 cents per ton on the coal mined at Glace Bay. The strike at Springhill has closed the mines there which had produced an average of 2,000 tons daily. By this the Government loses \$200 a day in royalty, and by the reduction of about 4,000 tons a day at Glace Bay it loses a further \$500 daily. So in royalties alone the Nova Scotia treasury is losing \$700 daily from its usual receipts. The monthly loss at this rate, reckoning 26 working days would be \$18,200.

New Brunswick Templars want prohibition. And if they can succeed in making this the main issue at the polls at the next election, prohibition will win.

There is a good deal of interest in the Bedeque election which comes off on Tuesday of this week. At the general election the contest was very close, and so far as we can learn there has been no sweeping change in the political sentiment of the District since that date. The very fact that the last contest was close and somewhat exciting tends to keep the electors of the same mind as before.

The Baddeck airship had a bad fall on its second flight. There may be something in a name. But we have a confidence and hope that the plucky Canadian aviators will yet fly swiftly and well.



DR. A. D. SMITH, Grand Warden I. O. O. F., St. John.

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