

It remains to be seen if Parliament will pander to his epicurean tastes in legislation.

It is to be regretted that the C.P.R. General Manager should set his face so firmly against the arrangements made for inspection at Winnipeg, as their workings cannot in any way injure the interests of the C.P.R., but on the contrary will be an advantage to the Company. Until the inspection act is amended there is an insuperable barrier to inspection of hard wheat anywhere outside of Manitoba, and the sooner Mr. Van Horne realizes and acts upon this fact, the sooner will the difficulties of his company cease. The Winnipeg Board of Trade consulted the C.P.R. Superintendent before attempting to perfect their arrangements thus showing their anxiety to avoid inconvenience to the company as much as possible. Although their overtures were not taken advantage of, there is no doubt but the Board are still willing to act in the same spirit, and about the best course the C.P.R. managers could adopt, would be to apply to the Board, and through its prerogatives have matters so arranged for this season, that their inspection difficulties can be overcome. Where there is a will there is a way, and with the C.P.R. managers and the Board both willing and anxious to make interests mutual, there are no difficulties about inspection that cannot be arranged to the satisfaction of all concerned.

### THE SICK LUMBER TRADE.

There is such a thing as being killed by kindness and pampering and when death is evaded, dangerous sickness may result from similar treatment. This theory applies to an industry just as much as an individual, and we have a notable instance of this in the present state of the lumber trade of the Northwest. No business in this country has been more pampered and protected than lumber, and to-day it is in a more demoralized state than any other branch of commerce.

In the first place pampering commences in the lumber business, when the Dominion Government grants timber permits, or leases. These are in almost every case granted not to men anxious to develop the lumber resources of the country, but to political blowers and strikers and their relations and friends. Let a legitimate lumber manufacturer without any political influence (that is to say if such a specimen of humanity exists in Canada), apply for one of these timber

limits, and he will soon find out how foolish it is for him to make his application. What he asks for he will soon find out is reserved as a reward for some political trickster, or some friend of an Ottawa official, and when either one or the other of them secure it, the terms are of such a character, that the Dominion Treasury is never much benefited by the transaction. Even the settler on the prairie may suffer for want of fuel in sight of the timber limit thus granted to a political barnacle, who may never take the trouble to visit the locality in which it is situated.

Having been thus pampered from the first, the lumber interest cannot survive without a continuation of the treatment. The manufacturer, it seems, is not able to compete with his United States competitor, even when his timber costs him nothing to commence with, and a protective duty is resorted to to bolster him up. Besides having the advantage of timber free of cost, our lumber manufacturers are so far distant from lumber markets of the United States, that freights are to them equal to another protective tariff, and still the trade cannot prosper. Today lumbermen in Manitoba will admit, that not one institution in their line has been paying for the past year, and the outlook does not give promise of their paying during the coming year. At present banks have more money locked up in lumbering concerns in Manitoba, than would be sufficient to meet half of the discount wants of the mercantile community in the city of Winnipeg, and as matters look at present, they have made in this respect a number of permanent investments. But with all this financial and legislative bolstering, the lumber trade continues in a very weak condition, and has been in the same now for nearly two years. Other branches of trade have had their time of trouble, but many of them have now completely recovered, and with the exception of the lumber business, there are none that do not give signs of early convalescence. Truly the lumber trade of the Northwest furnishes a notable instance of how pampering has permanently crippled, if it has not crushed an industry, which if left to fight its way in a field of open competition, would soon recover and regain vitality. At present those engaged in it have been accustomed to rest upon artificial props, and no sooner do they discover the rottenness of one,

than they look around for another to rest upon. Yet this country furnishes an ever widening field for the trade to develop in, and one in which any unbolstered industry could not fail to be blessed with prosperity.

### FREIGHT COMPETITION.

The announcement made by the St.P.-M. & M. Railway Company, to the effect that freight rates between St. Paul and this city will be the same during winter as they were last spring, and that we are not going to have the extortionate rates of last winter, must have given general satisfaction to the mercantile community of Manitoba. Merchants here know how burdensome freights between the two cities have been in past years, and how in some classes of heavy goods they compelled consumers here to pay prices for goods unheard of in almost any other portion of this continent. When we hear of this reduction in freights, we must not conclude that the managers of that road have been seized with a fit of philanthropy and commiseration for the poor oppressed Canucks of Manitoba. We must rather accept the notice of reduced freights as a result of the presence of competition, and not merely of immediate competition, but of what is shadowed for the near future. Railways are not guilty of philanthropy, and past experience has shown, that the St.P.M.&M. is not a generous exception. It is now almost a certainty that the C.P.R. line north of Lake Superior will be finished before the close of lake navigation next year, and the St.P.M.&M. managers are only taking time a little by the forelock, in thus trying to hold friendly relations with the Manitobians. Another reason for this reduction of freights is to be found in the fact, that other wealthy railway corporations in the United States are heading for the prairie province, with the very reasonable hope, that the days of the C.P.R. monopoly are pretty nearly at an end. Competition from such a source is most to be dreaded by the St.P.M.&M., and most to be wished by people here. Let them all come we say. There has been enough of suffering here from extortionate freight rates, and competition is what we want to cure the evil. With three or four different routes to the east smashing into each other, the people of Manitoba have a chance to pick up some of the pieces.