

trade, and at times they were by no means slow in using it.

The best way to do with a man who can get no one to serve him to his pleasing, is to let that man serve himself, and this is just what the farmers of the Manitoba Union have been trying during the past year. Their first start about a year ago was to run business in opposition to the millers and grain dealers who bought their wheat, and as matters now stand a pretty muddle they have made of it. They started as they thought with special circumstances in their favor, for the C.P.R. Company like the devil when he turned saint, started out with a system of philanthropy to assist the farmers, which the General Manager of the road gets credit for having invented for the occasion. A few incompetent parties were appointed by the Union to buy and grade; the railway company furnished the money to run the business and for a time all went swinging. There was but one point which did not entirely suit the farmer, and that was receiving only a part of the payment of his grain cash. But as he found plenty of credulous individuals among the country storekeepers, to accept his margin certificates instead of cash, when he made purchases of little necessities, his scruples were soon overcome. While the wheat kept pouring in all went smoothly, but as the season neared a close things began to get uncomfortable. There was a big shortage somewhere, and where to locate the same has been the bone of contention up to the present time. The secretary boldly accuses Mr. Dunsford who financed for the Union at Morden, of holding back nearly \$6,000 of the funds which passed through his hands, and Mr. Dunsford stoutly denies the charge, and blames the secretary and his assistants in the grain handling for the deficit. A shortage in wheat amounting to nearly 2,000 bushels has also to be accounted for, and until all these matters are cleared up, some of the friends of the Union are minus funds, which should be in their possession. Some of the members of the Union go so far as to hint, that the secretary knows more than he cares to tell, about where to locate the deficit, and the members generally have a fixed idea, that only crookedness can account for it, a belief that may be far from well founded, for assuredly there has been a reckless blundering in the management of the

Union's grain business, which without deliberate crookedness would furnish leakage for a deficit five times as large, as the one there is so much noise about.

But alas! how feeble has been the philanthropy of the great C.P.R. Syndicate. The purchase of wheat which was unsaleable in Canada, and which may be and probably is still smoking and rotting in the vicinity of Mark Lane, London, has brought upon them a wonderful reaction and philanthropy has been superseded by cold parsimony, just at a time when a few thousand dollars would free the syndicates agricultural proteges from a world of difficulties. But the Syndicate has doubtless lost enough in the grain business, and we hope has learned not to interfere again in what should not concern its members.

There is an old story of Friend Josiah a Quaker, who in one year cleared \$4,000 in a business location, where several seemingly able business men had previously reached bankruptcy. The inquisitive among the Society of Friends bothered and bored him, to discover the secret of his success, and at length he appointed a time and place, at which he would divulge it. There was a large gathering patiently waiting, when he made his appearance there, and when he had enjoined all to great secrecy, he informed them, that he had made \$2,000 by minding his own business and \$2,000 more by not interfering with any other persons.

We commend friend Josiah's great secret for the careful consideration of both the farmers of the Manitoba Union, and the great C.P.R. philanthropic Syndicate.

### HOLIDAY TRADE REPORTS.

If there is any man in existence to whom the holiday season is an annoyance instead of a pleasure, it is the trade journalists, for of all times in the year he has most reason to dread its coming. To him the holidays mean a week or two, in which the material for his daily work has to be drawn from a silent source of supply. He has, we might say, for the time being to make his bricks without straw, and still his duty to his patrons and the public compels the work of brick-making to be carried on.

The uninitiated can imagine, if he cannot comprehend the difficulties connected with obtaining the particulars about the sales and price range of barrel pork or smoked hams from a provision dealing *pater familias*, whose principal thought

are about the selection of trinkets and toys necessary to please an estimable wife and a group of laughing expectant little ones at home, or the pertinacity necessary to draw from a truantly inclined financier, whose mind is absorbed in the mysteries of a Christmas plum pudding, the tendencies of monetary affairs, or an estimate of the volume of trade discounts. One might as well expect to hear an essay read on "The uncertainty of human life," or, "The coldness of the world's friendship," at a full meeting of a bachelor convivial club, as look for the precise and unclouded reports of a trade journal from men in the frame of mind we speak of.

Persistent labor, galling as it may feel at the time, has usually results which are a reward or gratification afterwards, and in some measure repay the man who performs it. But there is no such hope for the trade journalist with his reports about holiday time. He has double or treble the usual trouble and annoyance to secure them, and yet he knows well, that not one in three of his ordinary readers will take the trouble to read them, and the few who will do so, will skim them over with a thoughtless glance. It is not to be wondered at therefore, that he should dread the holiday time, and heave a sigh of relief, once it is over.

But after all it is perhaps best that the trade journalist does find a time in which he ceases to have a hold upon his readers. Among the numerous tyrants of our social lives "Business" is no doubt the most exacting. Many a pleasure it compels us to forego, and not unfrequently it forces upon us duties and actions, which the gentler softer points in our natures do not relish. Its laws are justice, and it allows of very little mercy, to mingle with the same. Its demands are the essence of our duty to ourselves, with no allowance made for anything beyond our duty to our fellow-man. We admire justice, and we erect statutes to the blindfolded unbending goddess of the sword and scales. But somehow or other there are many circumstances under which we shrink from assuming her prerogatives, or imitating her stern example. No doubt the holiday time is one when least of all others we wish to be bound by her stern rules, and especially those of them, which we have incorporated into our every day business. The time is the annual reminder of the "Peace and good will" bestowed upon men, and it is well that overelement of the sternness of justice should give place to mercy. charity and gentler feelings towards our fellow-man. For a time we can do without our sordid trade report or monetary review, and the journalist who compiles them, can well afford to bear for the time the neglect he is subjected to. Therefore let good cheer reign, and all over the land let us hear the joyous greeting of "A merry Christmas" and "A Happy New Year."