

OLD Winter is once more upon us, and our inland seas are "dreary and inhospitable wastes" to the merchant and to the traveller;—our rivers are sealed fountains,—and an embargo which no human power can remove is laid on all our ports. Around our deserted wharves and warehouses are huddled the naked spars,—the blasted forest of trade,—from which the sails have fallen like the leaves of the autumn. The splashing wheels are silenced,—the roar of steam is hushed,—the gay saloon, so lately thronged with busy life, is now but an abandoned hall,—and the cold snow revels in solitary possession of the untrodden deck. The animation of business is suspended, the life blood of commerce is curdled and stagnant in the St. Lawrence—the great aorta of the North. On land, the heavy stage labours through mingled frost and mud in the West,—or struggles through drifted snow, and slides with uncertain track over the icy hills of Eastern Canada. Far away to the South is heard the daily scream of the steam-whistle,—but from Canada there is no escape : blockaded and imprisoned by Ice and Apathy, we have at least ample time for reflection—and if there be comfort in Philosophy may we not profitably consider the

## PHILOSOPHY OF RAILROADS.

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NEW commercial enterprises, however well supported by dry and accurate statistics, are not often undertaken upon imperfect information—through the representations of theorists or politico-economical writers—or even when supported by bright analogies, and the most authentic records of the success of similar undertakings amongst similar communities. It is true, that well-established systems become the subjects of stock-jobbing and speculation by parties ignorant of their uses or real value ; but their origin and maturity are the work of the well-informed few, whose foresight has been rewarded