

mind upon the fact that we have in Winnipeg too many loafers. The city is not likely to be selected as a residence for opulent idlers, and when a merchant decides that a man here without a fixed occupation is a loafer and a dead beat, he may in rare instances err, but he will in every case err on the safe side. Credit cannot be abolished in this city, but a large proportion of its evils can be avoided, if traders will only refuse to credit this class, and once the sources of existence are cut off from loafers, it will be astonishing how quickly their number will decrease. Such individuals are, we suppose, relics of the late boom, but they belong to a peculiar kind of relics that it does not pay to preserve.

THE RAILWAY AGE.

During the last fifty years there have been wonderful strides of progress made in all branches of scientific knowledge and industrial art. Could any one of those who passed over to the majority about that length of time ago, Rip Van Winkle-like arouse from his sleep of death, the condition of things that would meet his gaze would be such as to make it appear almost incredible that it was the same old earth that he had been accustomed to. In no department has there been greater or more rapid advancement than in the modes of rapid transit between distant points. Where formerly old fashioned sailing vessels weathered their way across the Atlantic and reached their objective points after six or seven weeks of hard toiling, magnificently appointed steamships, fitted up in the most luxurious manner, make the voyage in almost as many days. The stage coach with its paraphernalia of guards and driver has been superseded by the railway system, the wonderful development of which forms one of the most wonderful features of the present century. For scarcely half a century has the strength of the concealed grant stream been known, and yet within that short period he has transformed the earth. Every civilized country in the world has become a network of railways. The ancient temples of India echo to the shriek of the locomotive, and even in the Holy Lands itself the same sound is heard within sight of the sacred city of Jerusalem. Amid the classic ruins of Greece, in historic Italy, and in the distant isles of the sea, the same shrill greeting meets the ear. The world has been regenerated

and like some of the creations of fabled fancy is given a new vigor and a fresh lease of life. The ends of the earth have been brought into close connection by the parallel rails along which darts the railway train bearing its cargo of living and precious freight. In no country is this more noticeable than Canada and the United States. Already three lines of railway have been built across the Rockies and connected the Atlantic with the Pacific ocean. Before two years more have passed the Canadian Pacific will have been completed, and Canadians will be able to boast of a transcontinental line entirely over their own soil. The benefit that will accrue from such a system of railway communication cannot be estimated. Commerce has been thereby enabled to extend its ramification into the remotest points; and vast areas of territory which must of necessity have remained untilled and non-productive are made accessible to civilization, and in obedience to the hand of the cultivator yield up their latent treasure of golden grain. Not only that, but the mineral and timber resources of the land have been brought near, and riches, such as King Croesus himself never dreamed of, have been created as if by the magic spell of a sorcerer's wand. If one age is greater and more glorious than any other as shown in its attainments, possessions and achievements, it must attribute the splendid results chiefly to the railways, which are magnificent in their works and abilities. If this has been accomplished in such a short period, what will the close of another century bring forth. Truly in the words of scripture we can only say: "old things have passed away, behold all things have become new."

THE PROGRESS OF WINNIPEG.

Maligned and slandered as Winnipeg has been by certain classes of the community, she comes nobly to the front with a record of building operations for this season so far, which will, it is hoped, be an effectual bar to the loud mouthed slanderers who have never lost an opportunity to speak disparagingly of her present condition and future prospects. The *Free Press* of last Saturday contained a very elaborate and carefully compiled record of building operations in the city for the present season, which should be of itself sufficient to disabuse every intelligent mind of the idea which has obtained cre-

dence in some parts that the growth and progress of Winnipeg had stopped short with the boom. The record given proves that the total of building operations shows an expenditure this season already of nearly a million and three-quarters of dollars. The season has not yet more than half gone by, and the indications are that between now and winter building will be carried on with greater vigor than it was in the earlier part of the year. There are now several large contracts on the eve of being let, and as regards smaller buildings a large number will be put up. A walk along Main street gives the visitor to the city no idea of what is going on. It would take a pedestrian several days to fully inspect every part of it; and it is only by doing this that any one can form an accurate idea of the progress that is being made. No city in Canada, and very few in the United States, can to-day point to a rate of progress equal to that which has been going on—and which has not abated in its vigor—than what has been witnessed in Winnipeg, and will be witnessed between now and the time the snow flies. True, the aggregate is not so large in amount as that of last year, but what man of sense and judgment ever expected that the "boom" would continue unabated for ever. Such could not be under the most favorable circumstances. Still the figures given for this year, compared not unfavorably with those of 1882. During that year, when the blood of the country ran at fever height, the total of expenditure in building was less than four millions of dollars. That was a record unparalleled in the history of any city of the age of Winnipeg. Before this year closes the total will we have no doubt run up close on three millions, and that progress we also say is without a parallel, or anything approaching a parallel in any Canadian or American city similarly circumstanced.

That the North-west has not collapsed, that Manitoba has not flattened out, nor that the bottom has fallen out of Winnipeg is amply evidenced by the record we speak of. There are some disappointed speculators, and greedy persons, who love to classify themselves as "gentlemen" who have not been so successful as their avarice had led them to expect. These are the parties who are responsible for the foul slanders that have been sent forth to the world in regard to the financial and commercial position of the country. Their utterances meet with a severe denial when brought face to face with the stern facts of the case, as presented in figures not "jumped at," but as our contemporary says, "reached by adding item to item named and visible, the amount in every case being determined by a practical contractor."