

sound of the bugle the volunteers paraded and after being served with pickaxes, shovels and wheelbarrows and a pound of hard tack each man, the first hard day's work of the campaign commenced.

(To be continued.)

## The Idol of Our Great Western Home.

BY C. M. GORDON.

OUR visitors whether, they come via the Great Lakes, or round the rock girt north shore of Lake Superior, will find Port Arthur fresh, smiling and rosy, always there to open the door and welcome them, and in due course pass them on, and into the front parlor, where sits Winnipeg blythly entertaining her many suitors. Those who come via Duluth, Chicago and St. Paul, find much to interest them on the way, and were our idol less fascinating, interesting and wealthy in nature's blessings than she is, her chances of retaining all her beaux would be considerably reduced. From the west they come too. The passes of the Rocky Mountains are being made to echo with the word Winnipeg, as her many old friends return to their first love.

And yet, it is not long since she made her debut, only ten years since the fame of her attractions was noised abroad, and the first carriage drawn by the snorting iron race horses of the age, came galloping up the valley of the Red, and pulled up at her door. Since then the virgin prairie has been made to tremble under the clattering footfalls and the thundering impetuosity of these ebony chargers hurrying with their living burdens, and loads of treasure to the home of this fair damsel. When she took up her abode on the rim of the wide, wide western world, of which she has ever since been and ever will be the champion, she was not without detractors. Sister towns, envious of her growing prestige, spoke unkindly of her. How clamorously they pointed to their own merits, and talked and talked among themselves, and to whoever would listen, about the flatness and nastiness and the impudence of this young thing

that had set up an establishment at the junction of the Red and the Assiniboine. But she had come to stay. Her friends and lovers flocked in thousands to her portals, till she was compelled to enlarge her domicile.

She began to appreciate her own greatness and call herself the "Gateway of the Great and Growing Granary of the Golden West," "The Heart City," "The Bull's Eye," etc., etc. In fact she now deems herself the unapproachable but unapproachable in one sense only, for her dozen railways render her approachable from every point of the compass. She is not put out by anything that may now be said of her. She thrives alike on calumny, persecution or praise. Like P. T. Barnum, she "does not care" what they say of her so long as they say something. How majestically she wears her coronet, and how gorgeous the gems that adorn the flashing corslet of Winnipeg.

In so far as she is dependent for her splendor on the development and wealth of the keystone province Manitoba, of which she is the capital, she has attained to it in spite of the dreamy do-nothingness of Canada's immigration department; in spite of the isolation of Manitoba with reference to all Eastern Canada; in spite of the imaginary line drawn across the American continent, shutting her people out from their wealthy, friendly and closest neighbors; in spite of the ridiculous and falacious opinions still tenaciously held by tenderfeet regarding the "strength" of the ozone charged prairie atmosphere. I say that in spite of these and unnamed disadvantages, Winnipeg has, by her innate power and by sheer force of favoring circumstances forged far ahead of all competitors in the race for prominence and power. The favoring circumstances that have in the past supported her, continue to exist and must multiply as the infant empire of which she is the head develops more and more towards a luscious maturity.

Her little sisters and cousins who were somewhat piqued at her in the commencement of her career, have sensibly subsided and some are graceful enough to join in the long and loud refrain of adulation that is now filling the world with her praises. Portage la Prairie long ago made up her mind that to be a suburb of Win-