

POINTS FOR INVESTORS.

SPECULATIVE and financial circles have had a foretaste during the past week of what the course of share trading will be if the restraint now imposed by the money market is later on removed. But, though the advance in prices made considerable headway it proceeded on conservative lines, and the discussion of the situation at the present juncture turns to a great extent upon the validity of the reasoning for higher prices in the standard issues. Even in Pacific there is a pronounced tendency to discriminate, though its earnings continue one of the remarkable features of the market. During September, the gross earnings of the system were \$2,649,785, and the working expenses \$1,502,899, showing a net profit of \$1,146,885. This is an increase of \$54,372, or about 5 per cent, in the net for the month as compared with 1898. For the nine months ending September, the gross earnings this year were \$20,197,810, and the working expenses \$12,036,878, leaving a net profit for the period of \$8,160,932. This is an increase of \$1,301,025 over the net for the nine months in 1898. Everything seems to indicate that these remarkable earnings will continue, and, providing they do, an increase in the coming half yearly dividend is not an unreasonable expectation.

From this point of view, should the business situation continue equally favorable, and there is no reason to doubt that it will not, it is not so illogical to assume that the value of this representative security will have an opportunity for enhancement scarcely inferior to that of the year 1897, when the price rose from 46 to 82½. This conclusion is probably far in advance of what the average financial judgment is willing to accept at the moment, but it serves, nevertheless, to explain some of the impulses which have actuated trading. With railways generally, great encouragement is to be derived from the evidence that the steady decline in traffic rates during the last few years has, at length, been checked, and that a reaction to a more profitable level has now set in. This is a result, first, of the extraordinary traffic all over this continent, which has almost nullified competition, and, secondly, of the equally remarkable rise in commercial prices, which allows the transportation interests to successfully claim a fraction of the increased profits which all lines of business are enjoying. Its importance to the future earnings of the railways is not easy to estimate yet, for the improvement in rates is only in its infancy. But that the movement, if continued, means further augmentation, even of the present unrivalled traffic receipts, is clearly a reasonable presumption. It is easy to understand, therefore, how largely this new development, when put beside the brilliant trade outlook, and its assurance of a continued enormous railway tonnage, must color the views of traders in regard to all standard railway shares.

The annual statement of the Montreal Street Railway recently issued shows a net profit of \$630,870, as compared with \$601,704 for the previous year. This shows a percentage of net income, on a largely increased capital, of 13.19 per cent., as compared with only 12 per cent. on a smaller capital in 1898. These figures are certainly the reverse of unfavorable, yet the price of the stock fell during the week 3¾ points, to 310¼. It carried down with it the price of its allied security, Toronto Street, 3 points, to 109, and it seems to be generally believed on the street that powerful interests, short of the latter, prevented a rise in Montreal, because of their short commitments.

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THE mining market is rather disappointing. During the latter part of last week prices were strong, and it looked as if we were bound for a higher range all around, but the situation has changed in the last few days, and another period of weak prices set in. This is due more to existing local conditions than from any disappointing news from the mining

centres; stocks have been depressed all around, owing to the tightness of the money market, and the uneasy feeling caused by unfavorable news from the seat of war in Africa. Business is fairly active, and, notably on Saturday last, the trading was considerable for a short session. The only stock that shows any real strength is Virtue, which seems to be bound for higher prices. On the other hand, Big Three is weak, and touched the lowest price to-day recorded for a long time. As far as one can judge, the selling comes from Western holders, who are probably compelled to unload. Deer Trail has moved up somewhat, and there is now no pressure to sell stock. The boom in Rambler Cariboo seems to have culminated; there is a little stock in the market for sale, but no buyers. In the Western Ontario stocks there is nothing doing.

Outside of the conditions we have noted, there is every reason for an advance in stocks. From Rossland comes the news that one of the properties of the Montreal Gold Fields



LIEUT.-COL. SAM HUGHES, M.P.

Prominent on account of his trouble with Major-General Hutton over the Transvaal Contingent.

has commenced to ship ore, and the output for the past week from the leading mines is in excess of the record for some time back. The labor difficulty is still unsettled, but it is only a question of time before some arrangement will have to be come to. There are only two solutions: The mine-owners will have to give in, or the British Columbia Legislature will have to repeal its law. There is no question of freezing out the miners, because there are but few of them left in the country. There is plenty of work for them across the lines, and they have gone. Two of the directors of the Payne mine have gone out to size up the situation, and some news will probably be forthcoming before a great while.

November 1.

ROBERT MEREDITH.

IT IS stated by a United States paper that Mr. Charles Laurier, a brother of the Canadian Premier, is a traveling salesman for a cigar firm in Calumet, Mich. This is obviously a mistake, as Sir Wilfrid is the only child of the late Carolus Laurier, by his first wife, Mareelle Martineau. The gentleman referred to is a half-brother of the Premier's. But the fact that such a near relative of Canada's first citizen is a resident of the United States, occupying a not exalted position, is worth referring to, as showing not only that representatives of our most talented families leave their native soil, but also that there are, occasionally, instances in which power and influence are not used to provide places at the public crib for every relative, however distant, of the man with good things to give away.