

Manager J. J. Guile, of the Sun Insurance Company, has just returned from a prolonged trip to the Pacific Coast.

All his friends will learn with pleasure of the approaching return of Captain A. W. Masters, United States Manager of the London Guarantee and Accident Company. Captain Masters, it is reported, is much improved in health, and all will be glad to see him once more at the helm.

NEW YORK STOCK LETTER.

New York, May 4, 1904.

For some time it has been a common expression that there was a lack of buying power in the market, the inference being that the cash was so tied up in various ways that there was little or nothing left for stock market, or investment purposes. The refutation of this statement was found in the tremendous over-subscription of the New York City bonds, for which bids were opened yesterday. The offer was \$37,000,000 of 3½ per cent. bonds, of which \$32,000,000 were to run for 50 years, and \$10,000,000 for 10 years. One hundred bids were received on these bonds, aggregating £200,071,950. The successful bids being 101.53 maximum and 101 the minimum. Certainly such a showing as this does not denote any lack of buying power, but does emphasize the fact that there is a lack of disposition to buy anything except absolutely gilt edged securities, and further, that the funds available are not temporary balances, which are likely to be drawn against at any moment, but are funds for permanent investment. The comptroller has stated that it is not likely that there will be any further sales of bonds this year for city purposes, and, therefore, those who have failed to secure any part of this issue must, of necessity, look for other investments in order to keep their funds actively employed, and the question naturally arises as to what they will take for this purpose. Such funds cannot be profitably used for call loans as the rate for these is now down to from ½ to 1 per cent., and mercantile demands are much lighter than they have been before in many months.

About the only thing left is to purchase railroad bonds, and the better grades of stocks and this, we believe, is what will happen. Not only is this true of this centre, but it is also true of London and Berlin where the evidence of recuperation from the depression of the past two years is very great, and where there is a growing tendency to increase their interest in American securities. It is true that the depression which has existed at this centre for some time is gradually making itself felt further west every month, but with a diminishing intensity as it nears those portions of the West, Southwest and South, where the high prices obtained for last year's crops has made the people wealthy to an extent undreamed of a few years ago. This also is the natural course of recuperation, though choicest investments are absorbed first, and in due time the movement extends to other classes until the general run of stocks is reached. As has been stated before, there is an improving investment demand, but the principal thing which is lacking at the present time is—confidence.

The continuance of regular dividends will have a very reassuring effect, and that these may reasonably be expected is shown by the estimated disbursements for May of dividends and interest. These are said to be \$74,577,803, as compared with \$67,973,323 for 1903, and \$58,643,000 for 1902.

Notice has been received to-day that the Panama Canal has been transferred to representatives of this Government and is now legally a part of the United States. Gold for the payment of this property has been going forward and is still being shipped, \$1,175,000 having been engaged for shipment by to-morrow's steamer; but the matter is so far concluded that it can be considered as one of the things of the past, and no further apprehension regarding its effect upon the money market need be feared. Many persons have an idea that the \$40,000,000 is being paid out for something, of, to say the least, very doubtful, if not actually of very little value, but we think that the day is not distant when events will prove that this Government has made a very good bargain, and one which judged by dollars and cents will be a profitable one.

The consummation of this transaction removes another one of the disturbing factors, which have been hanging over the market. The two most important factors remaining, which have to be reckoned with, being the contraction in general business and the Presidential Election. In a measure, one of these is somewhat dependent upon the other, but the reports from those best able to judge, regarding this matter is that after the Conventions are held, and it has been definitely decided who the candidates will be, that the general trade of the country will show a marked improvement. One of the best posted men in the dry goods trade says, "there has never been a time in the history of the dry goods trade when collections have been as good as they are now. Retailers are doing wealthy conservative business; all that this trade needs is a week or two of good weather, and the stores throughout the country will be taxed to their utmost capacity." Reports from other lines of trade, while not quite so glowing, are still good, and the outlook is certainly one of great encouragement.

While the market has been very dull, it exhibits a certain amount of strength, and transactions are on a somewhat larger scale than they have been for some time past. Being so completely in the hands of professionals as it is at the present time, it is not unlikely that drives will be made at it from time to time, but aside from such operations the market has a distinct tendency upwards.

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STOCK EXCHANGE NOTES.

Wednesday, p.m., May 4, 1904.

After a week of dullness the market showed some signs of improvement to-day in point of activity, and the trading took on more life. Throughout the early part of the week, when trading was at its lowest, prices sagged slightly, but even at the worst a firm feeling was evident throughout, and at the close to-day, a stronger feeling was apparent, and in one or two cases reasonably notable advances have taken place. The statement that general buying from the public is absent from the market, is now worn threadbare. Nevertheless it continues to be the main reason for the conditions prevailing. A gradual improvement in this respect is being noted now, and a great part of the buying is coming from what is practically investment sources. As before stated, those who postpone their purchases too long will, no doubt, pay for the delay in the higher prices they will have to give for their securities. Such stocks as Toronto Railway, Montreal Street, Richelieu and Montreal Power, to say nothing of Halifax Tram and Nova Scotia Steel Common, which are purely Canadian securities and all paying dividends well warranted by their earnings, are ridiculously cheap to-day. A decided improvement took place in the price of Dominion Steel Bonds, and this advance was made under a comparatively small volume of business. The demand that has sprung up for these Bonds does not yet seem to have been satisfied. In a small way the sale of 14 shares of Montreal Steel Company Common, vulgarly known as "Switch Common," at 30, was interesting. This is the first sale since the dividend on the Common Stock of this Company was discontinued. Previously the stock sold around 50.

There is no change in the money situation, and call money is easy in Montreal at 5 per cent. The rate for call money in New York to-day was 1¼ per cent., and in London the rate was 1¼ to 1½ per cent.

The quotations for money at continental points are as follows:—

	Market.	Bank.
Paris.....	2½	3
Berlin.....	3	4
Amsterdam.....	3½	34
Vienna.....	2½	34
Brussels.....	2½	34

C. P. R. closed with 117½ bid, a fractional decline from the price prevailing a week ago, and \$50 shares in all changed hands. The earnings for the last ten days of April show an increase of \$71,000.

The Grand Trunk Railway Company's earnings for the last ten days of April show an increase of \$19,533. The stock quotations as compared with a week ago are as follows:—