

So far, while general business shows very considerable contraction, there is no evidence whatever, of any special trouble in the mercantile community, the returns as to failures showing only a very slight increase.

One of the most disquieting factors is the strike of freight handlers now in progress in this city. If this should spread and become a general sympathetic strike, the consequences would be very serious. There is no question whatever, but that sooner or later every State in the Union will have to take the stand which Colorado has done, and rid itself of the walking delegate and boss of the Unions.

The returns of earnings now being made by the railroad show the heavy expenses of the past winter, and that a very considerable portion of the business, which they did not then get was not held back, but was actually lost.

Some of the larger systems are calculating that the great increase in passenger traffic induced somewhat by the St. Louis Exposition will, to a large extent, offset the loss in freight.

Last returns from the Wabash system show that the decrease for the third week of May is something over \$12,000, but it also shows that the increase from July 1. to date, is over \$1,500,000. The Pennsylvania is reported to have laid off a large number of men, and the Erie has not only laid off many hands, but is cutting down expenses wherever it is possible to do so; in fact, this is true of all the roads, but after an extensive trip in the Southwest, by Mr. Loree, of the Rock Island, and a wide knowledge of the Northwestern situation, Mr. J. J. Hill and Mr. Loree, both, look for a continuance of good business by the railroads in the different territories.

The closing of the Conversion syndicate in the United States Steel Corporation matter marks an epoch in the history of that company, and to the great credit of the manager of that syndicate, it has been closed up with a profit to those interested in it. The credit for this will become more apparent as time goes on. While this conversion was going on the greater the difference between the market price of the bonds and the price of the Preferred Stock, the greater would be the profit in purchasing the latter and selling the former, and this is undoubtedly one of the reasons why the Steel stocks have been depressed, and now that this reason no longer exists, and with the removal of the pressure from this quarter, the stocks should, with any general improvement in the markets have their full share of any advance.

The anthracite coal trade tonnage is far beyond that of last year and the returns to the roads handling this class of business is very satisfactory. What the investigation now going on before the Inter-State commerce commission in the complaint of W. R. Hearst, against the various coal carrying railroads charging them with a violation of the Sherman Act, will amount to it is hard to tell, but, so far, it has had little or no effect upon the stocks of the various corporations. In this connection it must be remembered that the position of the coal-carrying roads has greatly improved during the past three or four years in that the local business and general merchandise traffic has so increased that a curtailment of the coal traffic would not be as seriously felt as it would have been some years ago.

The cotton market has been active and looks as if it would continue to hold a very considerable share of speculative attention. Reports regarding this staple are that the outlook for a large crop is good. It is thought, however, that, owing to the lateness of the season the first bale will not be received before the second week in June.

Exports of gold still continue, but it looks as if the movement was very nearly over. That we have been able to send out such an amount, nearly \$60,000,000, with no dis-

turbance whatever of the money market attests at once the wisdom and skill of the firm handling the Panama payments and the great financial strength of the country. The market has been very dull all day, but closes at about the best figures.

T. C. DELAVAN.

20 Broad Street, New York City.

STOCK EXCHANGE NOTES.

Wednesday, p.m., May 25, 1904.

The local Exchange was closed on Monday and Tuesday of this week, in connection with Victoria Day, and the week was, therefore, a short one, but even allowing for this, transactions are the smallest in any week this year. In no stock did the transactions run over 400 shares and, several were not traded in at all. Quotations have, however, held firm in spite of the extreme dullness, and in some cases the closing to-day is at a higher level than last week. While trading continues in its limited and apathetic condition, it is almost impossible to express an opinion as to its probable course, beyond repeating the fact that the dividend paying stocks in the local market are selling at prices which make them apparently absolutely safe purchases. As far as developments affecting the Stock Market this week are concerned, they are for the most part satisfactory. Sterling exchange rates are lower, and in consequence the gold shipments have slackened, and for another matter the bank statement on Saturday last in New York was a very satisfactory one.

The Mackay Company stocks, once the market commences to become active, will, no doubt, figure largely in the trading, and the Preferred Stock around 67 should be a fair investment, as it is likely to continue a 4 per cent. stock. Recently, a demand for the Commercial Cable Company Bonds sprang up, and a small block sold some days ago at 92¾. Enquiry for them continues, but there are very few of them offering in this market at present.

While the Stock Markets generally continue in the doldrums, the Bond Market and the demand for bonds is improving. The manner in which several of the offerings, which have recently been put out, were subscribed for, is encouraging, and the evident inclination for investment to follow this channel has been taken advantage of by those who have the intention of floating bonds.

There is no change in the local money market, and supplies are ample with the rate for call loans remaining at 5 per cent. In New York the rate for call money to-day was 1¼ per cent., while the quotation in London was 1¼ to 1½ per cent.

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

| | Market. | Bank. |
|----------------|---------|-------|
| Paris..... | 2½ | 3 |
| Berlin..... | 3½ | 4 |
| Amsterdam..... | 2½ | 3½ |
| Vienna..... | 5½ | 3½ |
| Brussels..... | 2½ | 3½ |

* * *

C. P. R. closed with 117¼ bid, a gain of ¾ of a point over last week. The trading was very small and only 185 shares changed hands during the week. The earnings for the third week of May show an increase of \$84,000.

* * *

The Grand Trunk Railway Company's earnings for the third week of May show an increase of \$47,905. The stock quotations as compared with a week ago are as follows:—