

United States. While this week's quarterly report of the United States Steel Corporation. Steel Corporation gave ample evidence of the growing strength of the steel trade's position, careful examination scarcely finds in it justification for the unprecedented price-advance of Steel common to nearly 95 early in October.

Following the giving-out of the report and the announcement of the dividend being raised from a 3 per cent. to a 4 per cent. basis, the stock advanced somewhat over Tuesday's quotations. Yesterday's close was 89½. The fact was, to quote the New York Evening Post, "the market had for weeks been educated to expect something which it did not get, and which there was not the slightest reasonable ground to expect that it would get."

Not but what the earnings shown were highly satisfactory—and much beyond what could have been anticipated six months ago.

Net earnings monthly during the quarter compared as follows with the net earnings the same months for three years past:

	THIRD QUARTER, 1909.		
	1909	1908	1907
September.....	\$13,278,383	\$9,354,333	\$14,720,945
August.....	12,437,754	9,152,311	15,279,173
July.....	12,530,770	8,599,630	13,804,167

Third Quarter.....\$38,246,907 \$27,106,274 \$43,804,285

Unfilled orders aggregate 4,796,833 tons as compared with 4,057,939 three months ago, and 3,421,977 a year ago.

Out of the \$12,155,000 surplus for the quarter there was appropriated for additions and improvements \$10,000,000. This was the first special appropriation since 1907, and left a balance of \$2,155,000 to carry over to the accumulated surplus.

Profit-Sharing and Loss-Sharing.

Profit-sharing is one thing, loss-sharing another. So have found the workmen of the Miners' Mine, in the Loire coal basin, France. Some years ago the Miners' Union acquired this property, with the help of government and municipal grants and private subscriptions, and began to work it along socialistic lines. Dissensions and difficulties were not long in appearing, and lately the mine has closed down.

According to a London correspondent of the New York Sun, one difficulty arose from the fact that soon after the opening of the mine the regular members of the society began to get in outside men to help. These auxiliaries gradually grew to consider themselves just as much shareholders as the original members, and, therefore, equally entitled to share in the profits. Moreover, it not infrequently happened that when funds were low an all-round

pro rata reduction had to be made in wages—an arrangement which caused great dissatisfaction among many of the men, who, being unable apparently, to grasp the principle of co-operation, demanded their full wage.

Steel Situation Industrially. United States Steel Corporation net earnings during the past quarter were about \$38,250,000. Steel producers are of the opinion that earnings for the fourth quarter of this year will exceed those of the third quarter by at least \$5,000,000. In Canada too, activity in the steel trade is manifest, and plans are announced for large extensions of plant. The marked revival in building and in general industries throughout America has sharply reduced the visible supply of iron and steel in semi-manufactured form, and prices have risen considerably. Such conditions on previous occasions have led to a checking of general business activity. Prospects of iron imports into the United States are now checking price advances, however.

In this connection a financial writer in the Toronto Globe points out that a remedy for excessive price changes might be found in free trading in iron and steel on the exchanges. If it were bought and sold for future delivery, if there was a long interest and a short interest, future needs would be more carefully scrutinized and more intelligently estimated. Smelters throughout the United States would be moved to activity, not when the sudden demand was felt, but when it was barely above the commercial horizon. Larger surplus stocks would be profitable. "The evil of stock exchange trading in necessities is occasionally emphasized and sometimes exaggerated. In the case of iron, we have an instance of the evil of the absence of such trading as a steadying influence in forecasting and providing for varying demands."

Loss of a Writer on Fire Insurance Economics. Readers of THE CHRONICLE will learn with regret of the death of Prof. Lester W. Zartman, of Yale University,

references to whose writings on insurance economics have frequently appeared in these columns. As The Weekly Underwriter remarks, probably there were few of the many who have been attracted to his writings who have not supposed that he was a man of much riper age. The death of such a publicist in his youth is a disappointment and a calamity. Only this month fire underwriters have been discussing with active interest Professor Zartman's recent pamphlet on "Fire Insurance Rating," a summary of which was recently given in these pages.