

however, be admitted that the management of this corporation is by no means all that could be desired, and that some of the leases and guarantees made within the past few years are proving somewhat burdensome.

Further than this, compared with other stocks of the same class, this one has been selling a good deal above the parity at which it should; consequently, it is not surprising that it should suffer something of a decline.

The surprising part, however, of the week's business has been the tremendous dealings in and the severe decline of the so-called "Gilt-Edged," or Investment Securities. In these there has been a steady pressure, many of them selling at prices which have not been touched in years.

How much of this decline is natural, and how much is manipulation it is hard to say. It is a fact that prices have been too high; it is a fact that many parties have been over-extended and have gone too deeply into ventures which they have had to sacrifice good securities to protect; it is a fact that many institutions have made loans which they regret; it is a fact that money is quite likely to be in sharp demand in the fall; but it is also a fact that the shrinkage has been tremendous; it is also a fact that the outlook for the crops at the present time is most encouraging for a good average yield, even if it is not a record crop; it is also a fact that the general business of the country shows no sign but what it is on a good solid foundation; and it is also a fact that railroad earnings continue to show very handsome increases upon the enormous returns of last year.

Carefully weighing both of the above sets of facts, it is found that at the present time the second set exert little if any influence, upon the former; but if they continue to make the same favourable showing, they are bound in time to make themselves felt, but in the meantime it behooves every one to move with the utmost caution.

The Bank statement of Saturday was of a negative character, the most important change being a decrease of \$7,915,200 in the loan account.

The first payment of the Pennsylvania Company, on account of its maturing loans of \$40,000,000, is, we understand, to be made to-day, and between now and the end of the month the account will be liquidated entirely. This, of itself should largely reduce the loan account in the forthcoming Bank statements, and it would not be at all surprising if the settlement of these loans would bring the total amount of loans very nearly to, if not below the total amount of deposits held by the banks; should such be the case, the appearance of the statement would be materially improved. In this connection, the remarks of Mr. W. B. Ridgely, the controller of the currency, are of special interest; he says: "In view of the contraction in securities in the last year, and the absence of important failures, the banking situation has been much improved."

The reports of failures in June bear out this statement and show that in only one June in ten years, have the number of failures been less than in June of this year.

The statement of the H. B. Clafin Company for the six months ending June 30, while not quite equal to that of the same period last year still make a good showing, and shows a total surplus of \$1240,761. In his report the President says: "Our sales of woollens for autumn delivery are much larger than a year ago, and the outlook for general business is quite as good."

The preliminary statement of the Baltimore & Ohio for the year makes a very handsome exhibit and shows the earnings from traffic to be the largest in the history of the property, while the June statement makes a new high-water mark for monthly earnings, the gross receipts

being \$5,835,800, an increase of \$747,564, and net \$2,389,949, an increase of \$559,254. For the year the total revenue from traffic was \$63,449,633, an increase of \$5,500,022, and the net \$23,878,674, an increase of \$2,906,047. From Bonds and Stock held in the Treasury, and from other sources there was an income of \$1,500,000, making the net earnings \$25,378,674 for the system.

During the past few days the market has been utterly demoralized, the craze to sell everything is only equalled by the buying craze which was obtained in last August and September.

Since last Wednesday the declines have been as follows:—New York Central 13%; Pennsylvania 7%; Consolidated Gas 9½; Missouri Pacific 7; St. Paul 13¼; Reading 5%; Union Pacific 6%; Atchafson 6; Steel 5½; Copper 5%, and Canadian Pacific 5¼. It is stated, and with a fair degree of authority, that not a few large holders of high grade stocks and low interest bonds have disposed of them and reinvested the proceeds in what they consider to be the bargains of the lower priced issues. Whether to-day marks the low limit or not remains to be seen, but certain it is that some improvement is now due. The market has been under heavy pressure all day, but closes with something of a recovery.

TORONTO LETTER.

A Steamer Fire—A Needed Fire Boat—The Homecomers' Festival a Success—Pleasant Memories—No disasters or Accidents.

DEAR EDITOR,—The burning of one of our excursion steamers, the "White Star," at her dock a few nights ago, was an accident that nearly cost the lives of those on board her. These were the officers and crew and some others. As it was, all had to escape in their night clothes. No explanation is given as to how the fire originated. The steamer had just been refitted and improved, and was to have commenced running on her route the next day. The sum of \$25,000, the amount of the insurance on her, is to be paid by companies carrying the risk, which insurance, so far as I can learn, was placed outside Toronto agencies. The Captain and his wife lost many personal belongings, such as clothing, furniture and jewellery, upon which no insurance had been effected. This disaster has revived consideration of the question of placing a fire boat upon our water front. The fire chief has had the matter looked into and will likely make a report to the City authorities. Possibly that will prove the end of the matter until the next loss occurs. The Toronto Board of Fire Underwriters have never insisted on the city giving this kind of protection to properties along the water front, members, perhaps not being unanimous in their views about it.

Opinions are divided as to the necessity of a fire boat in the harbour. The cost, it has been estimated, would reach \$100,000, for the installation of a first-class boat, and perhaps \$10,000 annually would suffice for maintenance of the outfit.

Too large an outlay, objectors say, for the services of the craft during eight months or so of each year, as she would be frozen in for the winter months. It is also urged that in most large cities, Detroit and the like, such protection is necessary, on account of the greater vessel and cargo values there, with many large elevators and storehouses as well of which latter named risks we have in comparison none to speak of. Our fire Chief is of opinion that there may be some, equally if not more important, projects in his department upon which money, if procurable, might be advantageously spent. The admitted existing hazard might be lessened if water mains in