

parative inertia alternating with days of excitement and energy. The extraordinary performances of the Yankee market are the star turn of the week; but in the act the public here are merely spectators, Thursday's rush up of Unions, Steels and one or two more being purely the result of manipulation by "pros" together with a squeeze of bears, who, by now, are in a sad plight. The London Yankee market is now almost entirely a professional one, financial editors having been warning the public off for some time past.

It is to professional influence also that this week's rises in the Kaffir market have been due. Business is of very small dimensions, the public being more intent upon holidays at the moment than upon mines. But the weak bulls, who got in during the Kaffir boom of some months back, have by now been carefully shaken out, so that the market position has made a campaign for the rise easy.

Trade and Banking.

The moral of the July trade returns is that we may continue to be modestly hopeful of the future. Our exports are up to £35,487,240, an increase on July, 1908, of £1,781,515 or 5.2 per cent. This after June had given us the first increase in our exports this year with a shy 2.3 per cent. is very welcome. Imports at £50,316,588 show an advance of £3,547,573 upon last year or 7.6 per cent. The figures for the whole of the present year are, of course, still very poor, exports being down £11,277,530 at £212,421,500 while there is an increase of £6,800,550 in imports to £351,053,480. There is one hopeful feature about our July exports, viz. that increases are recorded in such inherently different articles as iron and steel, cotton and woollen goods and chemicals, which suggests that the present rise is not merely a spasmodic movement, but the herald of an allround improvement in our trade. As regards iron and steel, cheerful reports are to hand from the Scottish centres, where, it appears, some works are now running night shifts, while in the Midlands also, things would seem to be looking up, judging by the fact that some iron masters are talking of agitating for a State bank. The complaint appears to be that as a result of recent amalgamations, bankers' requirements regarding security for loans are more stringent than they used to be. It may possibly be that in some instances our large banking companies will not take security which would have been taken by the smaller country banks now absorbed, but since Birmingham, the centre of the Midland iron trade, is notorious for the keen competition among its banks, the call for State intervention seems a little premature.

Importing Capital.

We hear a good deal from time to time, politically and otherwise, of the amount of British capital which goes abroad, but remarkably little of the foreign capital coming into this country. Yet, the aggregate of British securities held abroad must be very considerable. Gossip credits every crowned head whose throne is not exactly like a rock for firmness with a holding of Consols or a nest egg in one of the London banks, and, no doubt, similar precautions against a day of disaster are taken by others whose heads are less illustrious. Of another movement of capital into Great Britain, made under somewhat different circumstances, we have now some

particulars. Mr. Lloyd George's Patent Act, which requires that all firms manufacturing articles patented in Great Britain, shall do so in this country, has, it is estimated, brought half a million of capital into the country during the twelve months it has been in operation, for the purchase of land, and the erection of buildings, plant and machinery. The amount, of course, is not large, but since it is regarded as merely an advance guard of a much larger amount of capital which will, in due course, be invested here by foreign manufacturers, of patented articles, who wish to have this market for their goods, its significance is altogether out of proportion to its size. The foreign firms, who have invested this capital here are chiefly from Germany and the United States though several are from France and Holland. These figures, of course, take no account of numerous other arrangements which have been made with British firms to manufacture on the royalty system.

A Cotton Amalgamation.

Lancashire ring spinning companies, having become discontented with recent trade conditions, are organizing an association to keep up prices. About one-third of the ring-spinners have united to start the association and it is expected that many more will come in, seeing that spinners have been losing money since the beginning of the year, and present prices do not leave a margin of profit. Lancashire is somewhat disquieted at the news of large additions to cotton mill spindleage in the United States.

Shipping News and Gossip.

The idea of the Cunard line's use of Fishguard on the South Wales coast as a port of call has been so thoroughly canvassed of late that the official announcement regarding it has caused little discussion and no surprise. A Cunard reply to the White Star call at Holyhead was considered inevitable; and Liverpool is contented with the new arrangement, because the Cunard has not gone to the English Channel, but will retain the Northern part as its base. On this side, the people most interested in the development are the Great Western Railway, who have spent a couple of millions or so in making Fishguard harbour suitable for the largest steamers. A South American line has been calling at Fishguard regularly for some time past, and there are now confident expectations that others will follow where the Cunard leads.

Despite the fact that Mr. Hays before his recent return to Canada denied that any Grand Trunk Pacific steamship arrangements are being made, there is a good deal of newspaper gossip going on about the relations of the Allan Line and the Grand Trunk. One circumstantial story is to the effect that the three concerns, who now divide the mail contract subsidy from the British Government—the Allans, the Canadiana Pacific and the Dominion line—are not on friendly terms, and that each of them has determined on the expiration of the contract in July next to handle the mails themselves, or give up the contract altogether. The story proceeds that the Grand Trunk is anxious to join forces with the Allan Line, build sufficient ships and handle all the mails. Those who are in close touch with developments that are now in progress, we are told, "will not be at all surprised if the Allan line becomes an integral part of the Grand Trunk system."