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FRIDAY, SEPT. 4, 1896.

BUSINESS IMPROVING.

The railroads afford about the best test of the condition of general business. An increase in travel and transportation indicates an improvement in commerce.

It is therefore gratifying to know that the gross earnings of 233 principal railroads in the United States for the first half of this year were 5.01 per cent. greater than they were for the first six months of 1895.

Commenting on this showing the New York World says:

"Nothing could be more significant than this fact taken in connection with the heavy increase in our exports. It shows that whatever depression exists in some lines of business is temporary and due to causes which it is not the purpose of this article to discuss. In spite of all drawbacks the country is increasing in productive power and also in power to distribute its products.

"The increase in railroad earnings is closely connected with the growing export movement. We are making every year more of what the world needs than we ever did before, and although the greatest part of this comes from the farm and the mine, the products of our factories are also increasing in volume and in the ratio of their exported surplus to the total.

"There is no room for pessimism about the future of America. The transition period through which we are now passing will but bring us to the time when the steady growth of our products will force us to take control of the markets of the world."

A FINE SHOWING.

The report of the Southern railway for the year ended June 30 makes a very fine showing in spite of the unfavorable business conditions which obtained during the period.

The gross earnings were \$19,082,247, an increase of \$1,967,456; the net earnings \$5,630,799, an increase of \$578,862. Including other income the entire revenue was \$5,819,307, and after meeting fixed charges there was a surplus for the year of \$566,478. These are evidences of conservative management. There is no floating debt; the excess of current assets is about one million; the roadbed and equipment are being improved out of current receipts, and the percentage of operating expenses is declining. Needed terminals have been acquired and the mileage has grown to 4,654 miles. Most important points in the gulf states are now reached. The changed conditions of Southern industry are illustrated in the fact that but 15 per cent of the Southern railway's business is in agricultural products, while 25 per cent is in manufactured products, and over 40 per cent is in mining products.

The report shows that the railroads which have been welded into the Southern system are being well managed. Improvements have been made on all the lines of the system

during the past year and they are in excellent condition.

Baron Colville, of Cutcross, chairman of the Great Northern Railway Company, has addressed a letter to the newspapers protesting against the risk to life and property resulting from the high rate of speed maintained by the American liners in narrow waters of the Solent. In the course of his letter Lord Colville gives a number of instances of the danger attending the running of big ships at great speed through the Solent, one of which involves the American line steamer St. Paul, a wave from which vessel, Lord Colville asserts, nearly swamped a small steamer off Cowes, as the liner passing out on Saturday last.

Upon another recent occasion, he declares, a wave from the steamer Spree dashed upon shore and overthrew and severely injured a woman who was walking on the foot-path of the Cowes road. A representative of the United Associated Presses made inquiry in regard to Lord Colville's statements at the office of the American Line Steamship Company, where it was denied that the ships of that company run at a high rate of speed in the Solent. The speed record of the outgoing American liners, the officials declare, begins at the Needles.

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All the time? This condition is a sure indication that your blood is not rich and nourishing as it ought to be and as it may be if you will take a few bottles of the great blood purifier, Hood's Sarsaparilla. Thousands write that Hood's Sarsaparilla has cured them of that tired feeling by giving them rich, red blood.

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The eyes of the people are upon us. We invite an inspection of the stock and abide the criticisms.

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FALL WORK.

Housekeepers' Bargain Week, Monday, August 31, to Saturday, September 5. Special sales of Housekeeping Goods.

For the convenience of our customers these sales of housekeeping goods will be made from a special department on 1st floor, just as you enter our store from Fayetteville street. In these sales of housekeeping goods will be included lace curtains, heavy curtains, draperies, blankets, quilts, comfortables, counterpanes, table linens, towels, crashes, etc., all marked in plain figures at prices less than manufacturers' and importers' prices. Most of these housekeeping goods in this week's sale were bought below value specially for these sales and are given to our customers at the smallest margins of profit.

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