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**TO: R. S. Stevens**  
**FROM: Wm. H. Neilson**

*President's Office*

*of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Rail Road  
Co.*

*78 Broadway*

P. O. Box 2839 *New York* Dec<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 187 5

R. S. Stevens, Esq.  
Genl Manager, &c.  
Dr Sir:-

I have recd yours of 6<sup>th</sup> inst & carefully considered its contents, & am glad to learn that there will be no failure in the remittance promised. When you shall have returned from your inspection of the road I desire to have your report as to its condition. I am sorry that I am not able to be with you & have the benefit of ocular examination. Just at this moment it is important that we come under no larger expenditures of money than are demanded to make our road safe & enable us to handle the business that offers. We must keep down expenses to the minimum.

Early in the year we shall endeavor to place ourselves in funds to meet demands outside of current expenses, but until the means is assured & provided we must be content to keep within our means. But the road & bridges &c, as I have previously said, must be kept as safe as ordinary care & foresight will enable us. To that end our best wisdom & energy must be directed.

I trust that you are giving attention to the repairs upon our Kansas City Bridge, that they shall be done skillfully & substantially. The work to be done I understand is already paid for by as indebtedness of the Bridge Co to our R.R. for freight. I will repeat what I have already in substance said, that the more our earnings shall exceed our current expenses & necessary repairs, the more will redound to your credit & the greater will be the obligation of the Stock holders to you. As to the reforms which you

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<sup>1</sup>FROM: 1875 Book of Letters to R.S.S.

propose to inaugurate I would suggest that the road cannot permit any supernumeraries to be hanging on to it, & consuming its resources. It cannot permit any speculation to spoil it, or any enemies of its interests to be inside of it. A conspiracy on the part of any employee with other inside or outside of the Company to defraud the Co., by trading in contract or supplies, or in any other way, must at once work a forfeiture of his position. Let this be clearly understood by all holding any place in the Co. From this time out the road must be honestly managed, its true interest, & those we hire must be content with their wages, & not seek to make money out of the Co. in any other way.

In making changes in our force, let the removal be clearly for cause, or for the reason that we see it to be our interest to reduce our payroll. Let there be no just charge that changes are made from favoritism, or prejudice upon the part of directors or anybody else. No director must be allowed to force upon the road an improper appointment, or require the removal of an obnoxious, yet competent & faithful servant of the Co. & all of us must be governed by the same rule.

In doing what the real good of the road requires, you may rely upon my standing uncompromisingly by you. In removals of agents & high officials unless immediate action is demanded, it is best that you advise with me before final decision. But let me say emphatically that we must not have more names upon our payroll or any higher wages & salaries paid than we can avoid.

I cannot learn that any agreement has been made with Mr. Stone for right of way through our ground. It is the interest of our road that his road shall be completed as soon as possible, & we would not put any impediment in the way of its progress. You will of course see nothing is done to obstruct the road & that their line is so laid as to ensure for us a convenient connection.

I am happy to say that my son is convalescent & I hope in a week or two will be about again. I am going to Boston next week on important business for the road, & for some time after that my presence in this city will be required. As soon as I can conveniently leave I propose to pay you a visit.

Yours truly,

W<sup>m</sup> H. Neilson

President

P.S. Any open question with Mr. ?Howe's road we can adjust in the future.

