

**NOTE:** The original of this document is in the Stevens Family Papers, #1210, at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York 14853.

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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*

*New York* Dec<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 187 5

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

I am in recpt of yours dated 2<sup>d</sup> & am pleased to learn that our prospects are brightening. I can well appreciate the embarrassments you have to encounter in entering upon your position after so many years of unfortunate administration. You have now our entire confidence & I trust that the results of your management will abundantly confirm & establish our reliance on your ability & fidelity.

Our valuable property must be fully developed & placed firmly upon its feet. You may depend upon being sustained in thoroughly doing your duty with vigor & good judgment. Good discipline & thorough subordination must be maintained. The track & bridges must be continually & carefully examined, as also the equipment, in order to ensure safety for all accidents. Courtesy & a spirit of accommodation must be insisted on from all our employees toward those using our road & towards all persons residing on our line. Every sinecure & unnecessary expense must be lopped off, & all travelers & shippers made to see comfort, convenience & interest in using our road.

I have faith in the ultimate value of the property if it is used for the legitimate purpose of its construction & great credit will inure to those who shall succeed in making it a paying property.

I would advise caution in the discharge of our agents &c unless they are incompetent or unfaithful, or unwilling to render services for a

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

reasonable compensation, or are not required. I would avoid making enemies if possible but wish not to be misunderstood. The road cannot afford to retain in its service those who are useless, or hostile to its interests. Want of fidelity, speculating & trading in its supplies or contracts, or otherwise, upon the party of our officers or employees is not to be tolerated, & must be instantly & firmly met.

Your letters & telegrams are very assuring & I hope will continue to give confidence in its prospects of our road. I would like you to ~~telegraph~~ ~~me weekly~~ write me daily the recpts.

Yours truly,

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

President