

—An innovation in the matter of providing transportation facilities for a great city under public ownership and control was inaugurated at New Orleans on July 1, when the "first spike" was driven in the ties of the Public Belt Railroad. This railroad, which is to be twenty miles long, will encircle New Orleans, connecting all lines of railway and all docks and wharves, rendering the handling of that city's growing commerce a simpler and more economical problem than ever before, and apparently placing New Orleans on a par as regards freight handling with the best situated cities in this or any other country. The speakers at the ceremonies attending the formal beginning of this work all spoke hopefully and confidently of the great benefits to accrue to New Orleans trade and industry from the working of this railroad, which is looked upon as likely to cheapen the cost of handling of freight, open large areas of waste land to settlement, attract great numbers of manufacturing enterprises to the city, and give to New Orleans the absolute command and management of a large part of the vast incoming and outgoing commerce of the Mississippi valley.