

Great Fire at Dawson.

Information was received on Monday last that the new city of Dawson, the centre of the Yukon gold country, had been visited by a most disastrous conflagration, almost the entire business portion of the place having been consumed. The first reports of the fire were undoubtedly greatly exaggerated. For instance, it was said that the Bank of British North America had lost \$1,000,000 in gold and notes. This, of course, was absurd, as the burning of the notes of the bank would only represent a loss equal to the cost of printing the notes, while the bullion could be gathered up after the fire and would not represent a serious loss. It was said that the vaults of the bank had proved worthless. This, however, was later denied by the bank officials, who reported that the only loss was the loss of the building, the vaults and safes being all right. The total loss was placed at \$4,000,000, but this is

Awnless Brome Grass.

Hungarian brome grass has proven, after experimenting with it in all portions of the Northwest, to be the solution of the problem as to the growing of a grass in the arid and semi-arid sections of the country that will surpass timothy for pasture and hay. It had become a very serious question what would be raised as a substitute for timothy, and now come reports from Iowa, Minnesota, Canada and different sections of North Dakota all confirmatory. This grass does not kill out by drought nor is it in danger from rather a moist condition of the soil.

It grows from two to five feet high, is a fine straw with heavy foliage, producing an average of two and a half tons of hay to the acre, ranging as high as four tons, and yielding about 500 pounds of seed to the acre weighing 1½ pounds to the bushel. The nutritious properties are superior to those of timothy, live stock preferring it to other grasses after becoming accustomed to it.—Alert, Jamestown, North Dakota.

Manitoba has even more need than Minnesota of encouraging forestry. If our people could be induced to take a practical interest in this work, the whole face of the country could be changed in a few years, and very much for the better at that.

Debt-Dodging Employees.

The following circular has been issued by the United States treasury department:

"In all cases brought to the attention of this office where clerks or employees of this department neglect to pay their bills for necessary family supplies, and creditors seek to enforce their claims by appeals to the department, the following rules will be applied:

"The secretary will not make the department an agency for the collection of debts contracted by its employees, but where a clerk receiving a stated salary neglects or pleads inability to pay debts contracted after this date for the necessary support of himself



VIEW IN DAWSON BEFORE THE FIRE.

reduced by the \$1,000,000 attributed to the Bank of British North America, and probably the actual loss will be found to be considerably less than half—possibly less than a quarter of the amount stated.

The fire of course, will be very disastrous, owing to the fact that no insurance was carried in Dawson, as the insurance companies have not yet undertaken to accept risks in the Yukon metropolis. The great cost of getting in supplies to this remote and comparatively inaccessible place, will also make the fire the cause of great loss and suffering. Fortunately the large stock of provisions and general merchandise carried by the Commercial company, was outside the burned district, and this will enable the residents to obtain the necessities of life until new supplies are in.

The fire occurred on April 26 last, but in the absence of telegraphic communication the news could only be carried to the outside world by couriers, hence the delay. Stocks of goods in Dawson would not be large, as no supplies have been taken in since last year.

Forestry Ideas.

In his inaugural address Governor Lind, of Minnesota, announces himself a firm believer in forestry reform. He says: "So long as nine-tenths of our people would rather cut a tree than plant one time devoted to the discussion of scientific forestry is usually wasted." He proposes that a plot of land be set apart at each school house in the state, on which land the children shall be taught to plant trees in a practical way, care for them and love them.

The governor recommends legislation strengthening still further the hands of the fire warden; the extension of Itasca Park as recommended by the game warden, and the prohibition of the alienation by the state of the fee in the public lands which are clearly within the permanent forestry area of the state. He would also have the state regain title to as much of such land as can be recovered on lapsed taxes and otherwise, for the purpose of adding to the tracts that shall in time be devoted to the raising of timber because unfit for farming,

and his family, without presenting satisfactory reasons for such action, the department will regard such clerk as guilty of improper practice, and one who ought not to be retained in public service.

"When charges of such nature are made and sustained by proper evidence, the secretary will take action looking to the removal of the offending person.

"This order does not apply to debts contracted by parties at a time when they were not employed in this department.

This is setting a good example for employers of all kinds of labor. Clerks or other persons receiving fair salaries, should be made to pay their debts, and employers should see to it that they do pay their honest obligations, or know the reason why. The man who tries to escape paying his honest debts is not honest himself and therefore he is not a desirable employee. Merchants, therefore, have an interest in knowing whether or not their clerks are of the class who try to escape paying their bills.