

## BANK OPERATIONS IN THE FAR WEST.

The curious conditions of life in the far-distant Yukon region have been described more than once, and the feverishness of much of the life there dwelt upon. It is not easy to realize the state of things there, however, or the risks of life and health that are daily run. Dawson City is built virtually upon a marsh, and its appliances for drainage are *nil*. During the winter this does not so much matter, but in the warmer weather it is a menacing fact. With the fire of November 14th, and its effects, our readers have been made acquainted.

Some of the bank people who first went to Dawson sent home to Ontario accounts of things that were startling. They lived for a while in restaurants, where each meal for each person (mainly canned meats and beans), cost \$5. Potatoes were \$1.50 the pound, and coffee 50c. per cup. Shortly afterwards, the price of board came down to \$3 per meal. But the staff of the bank, of whose Dawson office we give an illustration to-day, get their cooking done on their own

He added that efforts were being made to get the town incorporated, and if that were done, Mr. Wills, manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, would be the first mayor.

Our second illustration is of a different character, representing a modern building in that city of remarkable growth, Vancouver. We were not successful in our efforts to get pictures of the billiard room and the restaurant offices, which the managers of the British Bank and the Canadian Bank of Commerce found it expedient to hire at Greenwood, in the now celebrated Boundary District of West Kootenay. But we are pleased to have an illustration of the present office of the Imperial Bank of Canada, situated on the corner of Hastings and Hamilton streets, in Vancouver. This they have occupied for the last three years. But a new and very handsome structure of granite, 50 feet by 100 feet, is being erected on Granville street in that city, most of the ground floor of which is to be occupied by the Imperial Bank. The site is an excellent one, for past it pours the stream of passengers from the Australia, Japan and China steamers.



OFFICE AT DAWSON CITY OF THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE.

premises now. At first another building was used as an office, but after some months they got into their own, which is situated close to the Government Buildings and the principal hotel, in the part of the town nearest the confluence of the Yukon and Klondyke rivers.

The building, as may be seen, is built of logs; its dimensions are 25 by 35 feet; it has a "mud roof," whatever this may mean, and we are told has no interior lining, but this log shanty cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000. When first the staff moved in, they had to cover the window-frames and door frames with canvas, pending the arrival of a ship from Vancouver, or elsewhere in "the South," with frames and window glass. At first all the transactions in the place were by means of gold dust, in buckskin bags, containing anywhere from 9 ounces up to 1,000 ounces each. Now, however, commerce and finance have made progress, and paper is to be seen.

A Canadian who left Dawson in October, said it contained 20,000 people, housed in tents and log buildings, and that not more than the one-fourth of these were Canadians.

## A COSTLY STORM.

One of our contributors, who was a witness of the results of the snow storm of early December in Ontario, thus writes: If I attempted to describe the effects of the December snow storm in Hamilton particularly, I could not do it half so well as the photographs I send you, for reproduction, if you see fit. One picture is of the telephone wires on Wellington street, and the other of the poles and wires of that, and other electric companies on Hughson street, near the Gore. When you see the thickness of soft snow upon each of these wires, and remember that it later turned to ice, you may fancy what tremendous weight wrecked the ponderous aerial structures, and how pretty a penny it cost each company to replace them. I have heard that the Bell Company's loss was \$30,000 to \$50,000 by this storm, and I know that one of the telegraph companies loses heavily.

Such a memorable crisis brought the heads of departments to the spot, and the "opposition" managers could be seen helping each other to mourn. L. W. Macfarlane, general