

Saskatchewan also are strong in wheat and agriculture. Ranching and coal mining have considerable importance, and railroad construction is much in evidence, and will be for many years.

All three provinces are quickly filling up with settlers. Their arrival, purchases of land, and farming operations, have an important influence on the banking business of the West. British Columbia has mining, fisheries, fruit, lumbering and Oriental and Antipodean trade. And, far to the north, the Yukon finds its sustenance altogether in gold mining. How the banks deal with these interests, how they give their assistance, the terms they exact, and the conditions they impose will be taken up after a few of the features of Canadian banking that contrast sharply with banking in other countries have been lightly touched upon.

United States Similarity.

Taking the United States first, it will be observed that in the northern half the people are engaged in pretty much the same forms of activity as they are in the Dominion. The greater density of the population introduces some additional occupations, and varies the form of some others; and there is, of course, a greater concentration of financial, transportation, and other business in New York and Chicago. But, taken on the whole, there is a great similarity in the occupations of the two peoples. Also, they are of the same blood, and their numbers are being recruited from much the same sources. But their banking business is transacted on widely different lines. The main difference is in the form of the banks, the United States banks being single-office concerns, each office having its president, directorate, and complete paraphernalia of independent existence. There were in the United States, according to the 1907 report of the Comptroller of the Currency, a total of 23,937 banks, of which 6,429 were national banks. At the same time in Canada there were but 34 chartered banks, with about 1,800 branches. In the one case, 1,800 banking offices were operated by 34 executives; in the other, some 24,000 executives were necessary to operate a like number of offices.

Wide Distribution of Control.

Besides the differences in the form of the banks in the two countries there are some sharp contrasts in the manner of their operations and control. A noticeable