

# The Chronicle

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**Hamilton must Hearken.** The Canadian Board of Fire Underwriters are reported to have notified Hamilton that, unless the request of the Board for improved fire-fighting apparatus is complied with, the rates of insurance will be advanced.

It is stated that, in consequence of the city of Toronto having provided more perfect protection against fire in the business district of that city, there will now be a re-rating of the entire district and a reduction in the cost of insurance.

Hamilton cannot do better than listen to the voice of the C. B. F. U.

Insurance premiums form a big item in the yearly cost of conducting business, and Hamilton merchants can reduce their expenditure by improving the fire service.

**Bankers in the Yukon.** The officials of any large and enterprising bank are likely in the course of their service to have a wide and varied experience of life, and the reminiscences of an old bank manager, inspector or clerk, when told at the close of a long career, ought to be highly interesting reading.

Learning early the lesson of obedience, and subjected to discipline which makes of the majority of them good and useful citizens, bank officials become accustomed, like the soldier and sailor, to receiving marching orders without questioning same, and to changing quarters with a celerity admirable to witness. But it is seldom the lot even of the banker to receive instructions to join such an expedition as that of the Bank of British North America, which started on the 1st inst., and will probably occupy some sixty days in reaching Dawson city. The opening of the Bank for business will probably be quite an event in the history of the Yukon country, and Mr. David Doig and his companions ought to find much to interest them in the stories likely to be told by their first depositors.

The exposure, hardship and exile which the bank official in Canada is occasionally called upon to face is only equalled by the experiences of the men who were sent to open branch banks at the diggings in early Australian days.

Such energy and enterprise as that displayed by Canadian banks deserves to be rewarded, and we hope the business of the gold fields will prove profitable and permanent.

**A Romantic Blue Book.** Only to those who are fond of statistics will an ordinary so-called Ottawa blue book prove interesting. But the Report of the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police, for 1897, is not an ordinary volume, and it contains much that will please and instruct any one who is contemplating a journey to the Yukon, or who, having friends in that far away country, is eager to obtain reliable information.

The diary of Inspector Scarth, as published in the Government blue book, being the story of his trip from Regina to the Yukon, covers a period extending from the 8th April to the 12th June last; and yet the Inspector contrives in eleven pages of the Report to give an extremely graphic account of the journey of his party of mounted police to Fort Constantine. The Inspector's diary deserves reproduction in a newspaper, so that all might judge of the interest attaching to his official report. We have only space for two brief extracts from this romantic book of travel.

*"Man who was camped about 3 miles above us on Bennett has never been heard of since he stopped to dinner with us one day. His tent and outfit remain there untouched I have heard from parties who came down since."*

There is a certain grim suggestiveness about this brief reference to a nameless man who disappeared after dinner, and whose tent and outfit remain untouched, lest he return.

Again, we are surprised at the closing paragraph of this official report to the Government:

*"The whole trip has been a delightful one, and the scenery along this route is unsurpassed by anything I ever saw before. We were almost sorry when the trip was over."*

How are we to reconcile the story of this mounted policeman with the conflicting recitals of frightful hardship and suffering experienced by other well-equipped expeditions. Can discipline and physical fitness for a journey to the Klondike make all the difference, or does the disposition of every ordinary traveller lead him into exaggeration?