

at any other place. The terminals of the aerial cables are thoroughly protected by both ground plates & fuse wires, so that no lightning or other heavy current can endanger any part of the apparatus in the office. The wires are brought from the railway to the office by cable.

On the second floor is the office of the Superintendent of Telegraphs for the Pacific division, a room for newspaper correspondents & the battery room. In the battery room there are 500 small cells of storage battery for working the main lines, & 8 cells of a much larger type for working the sounders. These batteries take up very little space, and replace some 1,200 chemical cells which were used in the old office. Their capacity is equivalent to 4,000 cells of the old style.

The architect of the building was C. R. Oldershaw & the contractor T. Tompkins. W. J. Camp, recently appointed Superintendent of the Co.'s eastern telegraph lines, planned out the whole work of fitting the office while he held the position of Electrician of the Co., & went out to Vancouver in Jan. to superintend the work, in which he was assisted by J. Fletcher, chief operator at Vancouver, who is an expert electrician & has become thoroughly familiar with the new appliances. It may be added that in future all messages received in the Vancouver office will be written on typewriter machines.

Superintendent Wilson, of the Pacific Division, says the telegraph line recently opened along the line of railway from West Robson to Midway, B.C., is one of the best constructed in Canada & that a large business is already being done on it.

The Co. has purchased the building which it has for some years occupied as telegraph headquarters at the corner of Hospital & St. Francois Xavier streets, Montreal. The building will be replaced by an up-to-date structure, the erection of which will probably be commenced in the spring. Temporary quarters will have to be found, but where these will be has not yet been decided upon. It is too early to say what the plans of the new structure will be like, but it is safe to assume that the building will be a credit alike to the Co. & to the city.

On the lines west of Lake Superior a large amount of work will be done during the coming summer. The work of strengthening & renewing the pole line, which has been in progress for the past three years, will be continued. The main line on the Western Division will be finished to Laggan. The line from Fort William will be first class throughout in every respect, & second to none on the continent. To provide adequate facilities, additional wires will be strung in Manitoba, between Winnipeg, Napinka, & Estevan, & on the main line west of Moosomin. On the Pacific Division considerable work will be done on the pole line on the main & branch lines. Additional wires will be strung in the Kootenay district.

### The Pacific Cable Question.

In the British House of Commons, Feb. 1, J. F. Hogan, M.P., questioned Colonial Secretary Chamberlain in regard to the Pacific cable scheme, & elicited the following reply:—

"I am making enquiries with a view to a settlement of some definite scheme with regard to the Pacific cable. These enquiries relating to technical questions necessarily take time. There is no doubt but that there will be no avoidable delay."

Mr. Hogan also had an enquiry in regard to the concessions to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Co., by the Government of New South Wales, & Mr. Chamberlain, in reply, said that he understood that the application was under the consideration of the Australian Government, but he had not yet been informed

whether they had arrived at a decision. The bearing of the application on the prospects of the Pacific cable would no doubt have been fully considered by them.

The Colonial Office is in receipt of a number of communications from Canada and the Australian colonies regarding the pending danger to the scheme for an all-British cable from Canada to Australia through the grasping methods of the Eastern Telegraph Co. Lord Strathcona pointed out that the concessions to the Eastern Telegraph Co., in New South Wales, sanctioned by the Colonial Office, but not yet put into effect, are likely to be inimical to the scheme, & it is now learned that land line facilities asked for by the cable company in Australia are not likely to be granted until the matter is thoroughly sifted. The board elected to go into the question of the cost of constructing the Imperial cable is continuing its labors, & the calls for tenders are to be sent out shortly. Its hands are strengthened by the British Empire League, which has passed a resolution in favor of refusing assent to the concessions asked for, & recording its opinion that the Pacific cable scheme is of vital strategic & commercial importance to the Empire.

### Montreal Telegraph Company.

At the 53rd annual meeting in Montreal, Jan. 11, the following balance sheet was presented to Dec. 31, 1899:

ASSETS.	
Telegraph lines.....	\$1,625,890.00
Telegraph cables.....	33,487.39
Offices & equipment.....	212,500.00
Real estate, in Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec & Toronto.....	279,946.46
Cash, other real estate (old telegraph building, St. Sacrament St., Montreal), accounts receivable, &c.....	115,988.13
	\$2,267,811.98
LIABILITIES.	
Shareholders' capital.....	\$2,000,000.00
Dividend 142, payable Jan. 15, 1900.....	40,000.00
Unclaimed dividends.....	586.20
	\$2,040,586.20
Excess of assets over shareholder's capital.....	151,823.85
Contingent fund.....	75,401.93
	\$2,267,811.98

Since the presentation of the last annual report, 4 quarterly payments of the dividend of 8% per annum, guaranteed by the Western Union Telegraph Co., have been made. The Co. continues free from debt or encumbrance of any kind.

The directors were unanimously re-elected as follows:—President, A. Allan; other directors, H. Mackenzie, J. Joseph, W. Wainwright, H. Archbald, H. A. Allan, W. McMaster.

### Dominion Government Telegraph Lines.

J. B. Charleson left Ottawa Jan. 31, with 25 men, to construct the branch telegraph line between Bennett & Atlin, B.C.

Some information about the Kamloops Nicola, B.C., telegraph line will be found under the head of General Telephone Matters on this page.

The Dawson Board of Trade has petitioned the Yukon Council to consider the advisability of extending the telegraph service down the river as far as Forty Mile, the boundary settlement to the north. The large U.S. population in Dawson are discussing the possibility and usefulness of a service from Forty Mile to St. Michael's.

Dominion Commissioner Ogilvie, in discussing the question of Alaska and Yukon Territory telegraph service, asserts his belief that that country is especially adapted for the Marconi system, on account of the succession of mountain peaks & the rarefied condition of the atmosphere. He would like to see the system tried there.

The Northern Commercial Telegraph Co., gives notice of an application to the Dominion Parliament for an act extending the time for commencing & completing the lines authorized to be constructed by the Co., to increase its capital stock, & for other purposes.

Nearly 200 skilled telegraph operators from the British Post-Telegraph Department have gone to the seat of war in South Africa, & have been rendering splendid service. The Wheatstone automatic system is used on the field of battle, & probably for the first time in the history of warfare. It was worked duplex. Telegraphers were under fire for a whole day at Modder River, & still sent their messages. Both official despatches & press messages, numbering 100,000 words, were sent at this time. After the Magersfontein battle the operator sent despatches at the rate of 200 words a minute. A tape, of course, was prepared by punchers in advance.

It is said that the Ann Arbor Ry. has closed a contract with the Marconi people for apparatus to operate a system of wireless telegraphy in connection with the car ferry business of that road across Lake Michigan. One office is to be at Frankfort, Mich., on the east side of the lake, & the other at Menominee, Mich., on the west side, the distance between the two points being 83 miles. A direct line between the two points passes across the peninsula to the east of Green Bay. At present the railway company must depend for telegraphic communication, upon a line around the lake, through Chicago, & quite frequently, during stormy weather, the company is put to a good deal of inconvenience by the interruption of such communication. It is said that if this system fails to operate satisfactorily a cable will be laid across the lake.

### General Telephone Matters.

It is said that the Nova Scotia Telephone Co. will extend its lines to Sydney, which will include cable connection across the Strait of Canso.

The Columbia Telephone & Telegraph Co. & the Spokane Falls & B.C. Telephone Co. have amalgamated. Their lines run through the various mining camps & towns of West Kootenay.

It is announced that the Dominion Minister of Public Works has arranged for the telegraph line recently completed between Kamloops & Nicola, B.C., to be changed to a telephone system.

J. R. Brown, solicitor, gives notice that application will be made to the B.C. Legislature to incorporate a company to construct & operate telephone & telegraph lines within that province & with other powers.

The People's Telephone Co. gives notice of application to the Quebec Legislature for the confirmation of powers already given by its letters patent, for an increase of its capital stock, & for the issuing of bonds.

The Pontiac Telephone Co., with headquarters at Bryson, Que., has sold its plant, &c., to the Rev. G. A. Picotte, of Calumet Island, & the Rev. V. Ferrarie, of Vinton. It is said to be their intention to extend the line to Pembroke, Ont.

The New Westminster & Burrard Inlet Telephone Co., which operates in Vancouver & New Westminster, connects by its long distance lines with 15 other offices in British Columbia, most of which are in the delta of the Fraser. It also has long distance connection with 31 points in Idaho, 56 in Oregon, & 127 in Washington.

A Toronto broker has issued a prospectus of the Dodge Telephone Co. of Canada, Ltd., the capital being stated as \$3,000,000, divided into 1,500,000 8% fixed cumulative preference shares of \$1 each and \$1,500,000 ordinary shares of \$1 each, for the former of which