THE NEWS IN A NUTSHELL.

THE VERY LATEST FROM ALL THE WORLD OVER.

Interesting Items About Our Own Country, Great Britain, the United States, and All Parts of the Globe, Condensed and Assorted for Easy Reading

CANADA.

Sir David Macpherson died on board the steamer Labrador in midocean.

The electric light and waterworks by-law was carried in Listowel by a small majority.

Bancroft, Ont., is negotiating for the construction of iron smelting works.

The present assessment returns will give Hamilton a population of over 50,000.

Harry Farewell, late of Oshawa, was burned to death in a fire which destroyed his house, near Innisfail, N. W. T.

Forty employees of the Grand Trunk car works at Brantford have been discharged.

An effort is now being made to amalgamate the Toronto Public and High School Boards.

Mr. George E. Suffell of St. Thomas left an estate of $100,000 divided between relatives.

The Bank of Montreal now refuses to accept United States bills as well as silver at its head office in Montreal.

The Niagara Fruit-Growers' Association has decided to stop doing business with commission men who refuse to remit weekly.

By the explosion of a charge of dynamite at Parry Island two men, James Smith and Arthur Hill, were blown to pieces.

The owners of the steamship Vancouver are taking action against the Lake Ontario for damages arising out of the recent collision.

It is reported that President Beckley, who is in England negotiating for the sale of Toronto, Hamilton, and Buffalo railway bonds, is meeting with great success.

Senator Ferguson, who for the past few months has been confined to his home in Rosedale, Toronto, suffering from Bright's disease, is in a very critical condition.

GREAT BRITAIN.

John Daly, the Irish dynamiter, has been released from Portland Prison.

The funeral of Sir. John Millais took place in St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

The steamer Fort Salisbury returned to London after the crew fighting a fire on board the vessel for ten days.

The egg season is opening early in England this year. Already 2,250 cases of Canadian eggs have been received at Liverpool, against 75 cases at the same period last year.

It is officially announced that Sir Edmund Monson, British Ambassador at Vienna, has been appointed British Ambassador at Paris in succession to the Marquis of Dufferin.

The Queen has had a special medal struck at the royal mint for presentation to the people of Ushant for their generosity and kindness in connection with the loss of the Drummond Castle.

It is probable that Dr. Gallagher, the Irish dynamiter, upon his release from Portland prison, will proceed at once to the United States, and make his home in Buffalo with his cousin, Mrs. George H. Rose.

The London Sun says that John Daly, the dynamiter, released on Thursday from Portland prison, will be able to prove that the Irish dynamiters have been subjected to indignities and punishments that the vilest prisoners in her Majesty's prisons have escaped.

Mr. Chamberlain has invited Mr. Cecil Rhodes to come to England next January for the purpose of testifying before the Committee of Enquiry into the British South Africa Company. He has also requested President Kruger to submit to the committee any evidence which he may possess relative to the origin and execution of the raids conducted by Dr. Jameson and his associates.

UNITED STATES.

A freight rate war has been begun in Chicago.

Another advance in freights on anthracite coal is announced.

Quakers of the United States and Canada are in biennial conference in Philadelphia.

The next annual convention of American Florists will be held in Providence, R. I.

Mrs. Eunice Beecher, widow of the late Henry Ward Beecher, is very ill in Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Western Union Telegraph Company has secured a controlling interest in the American Bell Telephone Company.

The Whitten Cycle Co., of Providence, R. I., has assigned with liabilities and assets nominally $50,000.

Great destruction and loss of life is reported from St. Louis County, Mo., as the result of Saturday's cyclone.

A locomotive plant capable of building 200 engines in a year is to be shipped from Philadelphia to Russia.

Flora Finlayson, who was at one time one of the best known singers in the United States, died in San Francisco.

An elaborate programme for the reception and entertainment of Li Hung Chang has been prepared at Philadelphia.

George Ellwell, a Philadelphia boy, smoked twenty cigarettes in half an hour for a wager. He died a few hours afterwards.

A Waltham, Mass., man, who was initiated into an Orange lodge, took legal action against the officers for assault during the ceremony. Six of the officers were fined $35 each.

Mrs. Fannie Pollock, after a 16-months' search, found her runaway husband, Alex. Pollock, in Chicago, and had him jailed for bigamy and desertion. Pollock deserted his wife and two children while they were changing cars in Ottawa.

There is no change for the better in our commercial advices from the United States, and trade is almost entirely confined to staple lines. Reported injury to growing crops has caused a slight increase during the week in grain and cotton, and rather more favorable conditions are said to exist here and there, but there is no alteration of consequence in the general condition of business. A difficulty in making collections is beginning to be felt in several directions. At Chicago a better feeling exists in dry goods, boots and shoes. A fair amount of employment continues in the boot and shoe industry, though the summer demand is falling off, and the advance in price attempted cannot be maintained. Leather is weaker on a lighter demand. The state of the wool industry is disappointing.

GENERAL.

The death rate has doubled in southern Russia as a result of the intense heat.

The Russian Government has despatched engineers to make Vladivostock a commercial port.

The new roller steamer, the invention of M. Bajinawa, has been launched at St. Denis, France.

Merchants in St. John's, Nfld., will not accept American coin and are discounting American bills.

An American missionary named Snyder has reported at Liverpool the discovery of a large lake in the Congo Free State.

Vittorio Emanuele, Prince of Naples, eldest son and heir-apparent of the King of Italy, is betrothed to Princess Helene of Montenegro.

A despatch from Berlin says that the powers have all agreed upon the adoption of a policy which will compel Turkey to grant autonomy to Crete.

A Tangiers despatch says that a plot has been discovered aiming at the dethronement of the Sultan of Morocco in favour of his elder brother, Muley Mahomet.

It is reported that a bill is being drafted at the request of Emperor William, to be submitted to the Reichstag, asking for $20,000,000 for naval purposes.

Dr. Nansen will not again attempt to reach the North Pole in a ship, but may lead a sledge expedition from Franz Joseph Land, the only way he now believes it can be reached.

It is reported in London that the forces in the Transvaal are arming, and that it is not improbable that they may make an attempt to overthrow the treaty obligations towards England.

Two members of the Spanish cortes, General E. Stebanez, the ex-Minister of War, and fifteen others have been arrested at Barcalona for complicity in a conspiracy to create disorder in connection with the coming embarkation of re-inforcements for the army in Cuba.

In consequence of the frontier dispute between Bulgaria and Turkey, the Bulgarian Government has notified the Turkish Government that unless the latter appoints delegates to a frontier commission by a certain date, the Bulgarian troops will be ordered bo reoccupy the positions recently occupied by Turkish soldiers on the territory which Bulgaria claims belongs to her.

In the course of artillery practice by the ships of the French Mediterranean squadron near Toulon, the guns of the cruiser Vantour were turned on the battleship Brennus. The conning tower, where Admiral Gervais and his officers were stationed, was badly injured but the officers were not hurt. The helmsman of the Brennus was seriously wounded.

RUSSIA'S GREAT STRIKE.

STARVATION PAY AND LONG HOURS OF RUSSIAN WORKMEN.

Effects of the Strike May Be of Political as Well as of Economical Importance—The Workmen Were Quiet and Orderly—The Government Sides With the Masters and Imprisoned Hundreds of the Work People.

A great strike among the weavers of St. Petersburg, which lasted for a fortnight, and exceeded in extent and severity every previous movement of the kind in Russia, deserves the attention of all students of the workmen's question, says a St. Petersburg letter.

The immediate cause of the strike must be sought in the (very slight) competition to which Russian manufacturers have been exposed by the lowering of the duties on foreign textile goods by the Russo-German commercial treaty of 1893. The masters, who still made from 10 to 30 per cent on their capital, seized upon this as an excuse to lower wages and increase hours, thus reducing the workman to starvation limit, about $2.50 a week being the maximum pay for twelve hours' work per day!

The position of the workman was rendered still more intolerable by the irregularity with which his wages were paid, and the heavy fines and deductions for misconduct and bad work, in the levying of which the masters and managers were the sole judges. Further the "truck" or "pluck" system of factory shops, where the men are unmercifully fleeced, was not unknown.

It is not wonderful, then, that in September last the men sent their wives to beg in the streets. Added to the general question of wages and hours was the recent grievance that the men were forced to stand idle for three days during the coronation, and received no wages. As they remarked, "The Czar's holiday means hunger for us and our families."

However wretched the case of the workmen, the main interest of the present strike is not that it adds one more page to the martyrology of labor, but that it presents the first instance in Russia of organized resistance to the

GREED AND TYRANNY

of the masters, which is supported by the whole force of the Government. The organization displayed must fill every impartial observer with admiration, as, on the other hand, it has caused nothing short of dismay in Government spheres.

The movement for a ten-hour working day and a fair wage was already announced in proclamation published by the secret printing press of St. Petersburg in January last. The strike began on May 29 (Russian style) with the Yekateringof Mills, whence it spread rapidly to some score of others.

At first only the men went out, but afterward the women made common cause with their husbands and brothers. Women's strikes at cigarette factories, etc., have occurred here before, and have been successful. At the height of the movement some 30,000 hands went out. The organization was based on directions from the workmen's secret Socialistic League, but the St. Petersburg workmen surpassed all expectations by the quiet and orderly manner in which they behaved.

It must be remembered that no public meetings are allowed in Russia, and that the police were busy for months in arresting and banishing all those workmen whom they regarded as suspicious from their greater intelligence or known influence among their fellows, including many who taught in the workmen's schools and evening classes. For over six months at all the mills there have been numbers of sham workmen, spies from the police. Other agents of the Government, corresponding to the French "agents provocateurs," have been constantly striving to get individuals to commit themselves. But all these maneuvers, thanks to the workmen's own organization are now so well known that during the strike the workmen themselves appealed to the spies and agents to leave them and cease molesting them!

The hardships to which the factory hands were exposed during the strike may be best imagined when it is known that the local branch of the Socialist League only disposed of a sum of 4000 rubles as a strike fund, to which was added 3000 rubles subscribed in St. Petersburg among their sympathizers, who are nearly all very poor. There were cases among the latter of sacrificing

A MONTH'S WAGES

for the good cause. The workmen were obliged during the short strike to sell in many cases even their coats and boots.

Among the mill owners several were in favor of yielding to the workmen's demands, but the Government, or, rather, M. Witte, the Minister of Finance, who was appealed to in the matter, and the present Minister of the Interior declared that this could not be allowed in the face of the illegal behavior of the workmen. It should be remembered that, according to a principle of Russian law, combination to affect prices among workmen or masters is equally illegal, but, while the former are heavily punished in such cases, the latter combine every day to corner various articles of consumption and rob the consumer without any evil consequences for themselves.

During the whole strike, students and others, both men and women, who sought to get information for the strikers and to help their families, were arrested, and the whole strike region was teeming with spies, who made it very difficult to communicate with the strikers.

To sum up, notwithstanding the greatest provocation, often of a most insidious kind, by police agents, and great suffering, the strikers maintained, following therein the direction of the Socialist League, the most exemplary order. Although most of the workmen have now returned to work, in response to very small concessions on the part of the employers and some promises of doubtful value, the great strike of June, 1896, will not be soon forgotten. The heavy punishment falling on some hundreds of workmen and their sympathizers among the educated classes will only serve to accentuate its importance.

The Council of Ministers, summoned for the purpose, is discussing the labor question in Russia and the unexpected growth of Socialism. Labor legislation, already long projected, will undoubtedly be now pushed forward rapidly, but this will not be the end of it. Industrial Russia is entering on a new phase. The Russian workman is now organizing in all seriousness; he will soon attract a greater share of attention than the paternal Russian Government was, until lately, willing to accord him. The result may not improbably be not merely of economical, but of political importance.

A WONDERFUL CITY.

Over a Thousand Men, Women and Children Live Under Ground

It is generally believed that light and fresh air are absolute necessities to human existance, and that if the normal supply of either be cut off man cannot long exist. It appears, however, that there is at least one spot on the globe, or, rather, in the globe, where a civilized community of human beings not only manage to exist, but which live in a flourishing condition in a place where sunlight is totally unknown.

We refer to the "City of the Salt Mines," which is situated several hundred feet below the surface at Wielicska, Galicia. This wonderful subterranean city has a population of over a thousand men, women and children, scores of whom have never seen the light of day or the earth's surface! This remarkable city has its town hall, a theater and its assembly room, as well as a beautiful church, decorated with statues, all being fashioned from pure crystallized rock salt. It has well graded streets and spacious squares, all well lighted with electricity. As mentioned in the foregoing, there are isolated cases in this underground city, where not a single individual in three or four successive generations has ever seen the sun or has any idea of how people live on the outside of the earth! Their rock salt houses are said to be perfect sanitariums, and the average longevity of the denizens of the "City of the Salt Mines" is said to exceed that of the surface inhabitants of Galicia.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.

Sir, your son's performance on the French horn is execrable. It will drive everybody from my house. You told me he was a teacher.

I did not, I said he was a tooter.

THE COLONY OF NATAL.

A BRITISH SELF-GOVERNING STATE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Largely Inhabited by Zulus—They Fought Against the British But Are Now Happy and Contented—The Zulu Marriage Custom—Strong Drink Playing Havoc with the Natives.

Natal is a self-governing colony in south-east Africa which was acquired by the British in 1845. It has an area of 16,145 square miles, is about 250 miles long, has about 150 miles breadth between the sea and the Drakenberg range on its western and north-western boundary, and has a coast line 170 miles long. The country rises from the coast in a series of terraces to an elevation of between 3,000 and 4,000 feet, and presents many varieties of climate soil and scenery. Articles produced and exported are wool, raw sugar, hides, ivory, butter, ostrich feathers, arrowroot, cured meat, straw, cotton, and grain. Tea is also raised but not exported from the country. The climate is pronounced pleasant and healthful. In the neighborhood of the coast the temperature on the average is 74 degrees in summer and 63 degrees in winter. It is much cooler in the elevated districts. Pietermaritzburg is the capital of the colony,

THE TOWN OF DURBAN.

Durban, the chief colonial port, is situated on the north side of Port Natal, a circular basin 10 miles in circumference, communicating with the sea by a narrow channel. It is an enterprising and rapidly growing place. In 1869 the population numbered only 5,708. Now it has grown to 35,000, of whom two-thirds are Europeans, the remainder consisting of natives and coolies. The town can boast of some very fine public buildings, one of the most notable being the Town Hall. The main streets are very spacious and well laid out. Paraffin lamps have hitherto afforded light to the town, but arrangements are on foot for the introduction of the electric light, and this important step will soon be completed. Durban has a pretty good harbour, but a sandbar at the entrance has proved a great obstacle to navigation. Many improvements have been carried out, however, so that vessels of 24 feet draught can now enter the harbour. It is hoped shortly that by means of dredging there will soon be sufficient depth of water to enable the largest ocean vessels to enter the harbour without impediment.

A FINE RACE OF PEOPLE.

There are about 500,000 Zulus in the Colony of Natal. They are a people of remarkable physical development and, to great strength is added, in the case of both men and women, considerable symmetry of limb. Although naturally a peaceable people, they prove dangerous opponents when aroused. This was clearly shown in the war with the British, when the desperate valour of the Zulus was only overcome by the superior arms and weapons of the Queen's soldiers.

Now these gallant blacks are quite happy and contented under British rule which is not oppressive, and guarantees them every privilege which a free man could desire.

The Zulus still recognize the authority of their chiefs who are invested with magisterial powers in the case of minor offences committed by those under them. Some of the chiefs are of Falstaffian proportions. They become very obese owing to the inactive life they lead, and the vast quantities of native beer or mead which they consume. Cetawayo, the Zulu chief who led the British such a dance, was a man of enormous size.

The Zulus are a very moral race, and in this respect they offer a good example to more civilized peoples. The men usually marry at the ages of 25 years, and the women at 23. A Zulu would think himself very poorly off indeed who did not have at least two wives. The method of courtship and marriage is very simple. The lovesick swain, having been fascinated by the charms of some dusky belle, sets off for the kraal of the latter's father

ATTIRED IN HIS BEST.

His woolly crop is encircled with a band of tiger skin, and strips of the same material depend from his neck, and gird his loins. Armed with a long staff he sets out in the best of spirits on his matrimonial mission. But all his personal attractions count for nothing if he is not endowed with sufficient worldly goods to purchase the prize. If he is accompanied in his mission by several sleek, well-fed cows, the Zulu papa is sure to say yes, and he at once takes possession of the blushing beauty. There may be other competitors in the field however, in which case the man who has the most cows gets the maiden. The simplicity of this system of courtship will commend irself to those whose love making has been one long period of buying bouquets and opera tickets culminating in the purchase of a diamond ring. The Zulu marriage festivities consist of about two days eating, drinking and dancing, in the midst of which like a gay Lochinvar, the bridegroom bears the future partner of his joys and sorrows off to his kraal. From that time forward the wife's duties consist in hoeing the mealie patch, or grinding corn, cooking, and performing other little odds and ends which always need attention in a well regulated Zulu household. When children arrive, the care of them is another duty which devolves upon the wife.

The attire of the Zulu maiden is of the scantiest possible character. She is adorned with many strings of beads, but preserves a proper regard for decorum by wearing a sort of loin cloth worked in beads in a collection of feathers. Immodesty is not one of her failings, however, and there is nothing in her behavior in public to offend the eye. Both males and females are required to put on other clothing when they enter the European towns or settlements, but the garments are quickly doffed again once the native regains the open country.

THE DRINK TRAFFIC.

It is a sad commentary on civilization, that with the appearance of Europeans amongst the Zulus, the latter should be cursed with a craving for spirituous liquor. Their own native beverage is a comparatively mild mixture of which a Zulu might drink a gallon and not turn a hair. Unscrupulous Europeans, however, sell potato oil to the natives. This is simply rank poison, and is introducing the seeds of premature decay and death amongst the blacks. Unfortunately the native does not know how to practise moderation, and when he gets possession of a bottle of rum, or other intoxicating liquor he drinks until he drops like a log. On the coast, where sugar factories abound, and a good deal of rum is made, the evil is very great. The sale of liquor to the natives is punishable by heavy penalties, but nevertheless methods are found of evading the law. How to cope with the evil which is rapidly growing, is a problem which statesmen, and philanthropists, are endeavoring to solve.

CUTTING MAHOGANY.

The Work of Handling a Giant Tree in the Tropical Jungle.

While the camp is being made the "hunter" is off exploring. The precious swietenia mahogani does not grow in clumps and groves like our pine and walnut, but each monarch stands alone in solitary state amidst a dense growth of other huge trees, its trunk concealed by a wild tangle of vines, orchids and underbrush, requiring the closest attention of the experienced woodsman to detect it. In a tropical wilderness, where the trees are so thick that one can hardly force his way between them, the whole hung with an impenetrable mass of verdure as with a curtain, their mingled tops a solid wall which makes eternal twilight below, and every trunk turned round and round with creepers—it is not an easy matter to distinguish species. The hunter climbs the tallest trees that he can find comparatively clear, and from its top his practiced eyes detect the foliage of the coveted mahogany. He then counts the trees in line, notes carefully the direction, distance and every landmark, slides down from his leafy observatory and proceeds to

CUT AND BLAZE A TRAIL

to his "find." This done he marks the trees with his machete and returns to camp. Each man in a company is assigned his particular work—some to fell the trees others to cut truck-roads through the jungle, others to collect and haul the wood and water, etc. The cutters turn out from camp as soon as it is light enough to see—which in the tall, dense woods means a much later hour than in the regions where the sun has a better chance to show itself; and generally by noon tree cutting for the day is finished. All work is done by the task system, which is said to be the only way of handling native labor; that is, one man's "stent" is to cut two trees from 8 to 10 feet in circumference; two men are given three large trees to bring down, or four men are detailed to lay low some forest giant, perhaps 25 feet in circumference.

To the tenderfoot that seems a task impossible of accomplishment. Owing to its enormous buttresses the trunk can not be cut near the ground, so the axmen are obliged to rig up a platform, 10, 15, 20 or as many feet high as the buttress extends. These plattorms are called "barbecues," though how that word applies nobody but an Englishman who prides himself on correct use of the language can say. The "barbecue" is made of slim poles, one on each side of the tree, on supports, and two other poles laid across them; also, one on each side of the tree. The axman mounts the platform, with one foot on each pole, two men to a tree, on opposite sides and rapidly fell the trees.

IT IS A MARVEL.

how men can stand on these slender poles and chop down enormous trees; but they do it, and quickly, too. In an incredibly short time the stately monarch of centuries totters and falls, crashing its way through the crowd of smaller trees. The trunks and branches are then squared, and are ready for transportation. In felling a valuable tree every precaution is taken against breaking or splitting it and thus spoiling the lumber. This manner of cutting on a platform seems very wasteful, as it leaves in the stump an average of 400 feet of the best part of the tree so far as beauty of grain is concerned—to say nothing of the gnarled and twisted roots, which bear the same proportionate additional value that our walnut roots do to the rest of the tree; but no better way has yet been devised. Three hundred trees are considered a good season's work for one camp, each tree yielding 2,000 feet of timber, on a modest estimate of the average.

When the morning's stent is completed, the men are free the rest of the day to hunt, fish, sleep or gamble, to search on their own account for Indian rubber, sarsaparilla and other marketable products of the woods, or to make canoes, paddles, bowls, etc., from the mahogany stumps for their own use or to sell when they return to the haunts of man. The logs are hauled to the camp at night, so as to avoid the intense heat of the day. Where the place is not too remote, oxen do this part of the work.

TOBACCO KILLS GERMS.

Tobacco and tobacco smoke are antiseptics and germicides of considerable power and their action is useful in relieving or preventing any tendency to chronic congestion of the lungs. Many doctors have remarked the comparative immunity from consumption and other plumonary diseases enjoyed by workers in tobacco factories.

SOME AVERAGES.

The pouplation of the world averages 109 women to every 100 men. Eight-ninths of the sudden deaths are those of males.