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.

The Ontario Legislature will meet on Wednesday, February 10.

Mr. Thos. Roch was killed by being struck by a tree in the woods near Tyndall, Man.

The resignations of the entire staff of the Ottawa Protestant hospital have been accepted.

Another consignment of Lee-Enfield rifles numbering 2,000 arrived at Kingston.

It is reported that there is a great deal of smuggling at present on the Canadian Pacific coast.

Five more pitch gas buoys will be placed on the shoals in the St. Lawrence River next season.

Owing to the lack of snow lumber operations in the Gatineau district have been temporarily suspended.

The failures in the city of Montreal during the past year were far in excess of those of the two previous years.

The Dominion Parliament will not meet until March, and the tariff proposals will not be brought down until April.

The Rev. George Clouthier, chaplain of the Stony Mountain penitentiary, has been dismissed by the Minister of Justice.

The will of the late James Hamilton, of London, Ont., filed for probate at that place, disposes of an estate of $31,150.

Ratepayers of the township of Ancaster have voted a bonus of $5,000 to the Hamilton, Chedoke & Ancaster Electric Railway.

An official announcement is made that the Government intends at the coming session to ask Parliament to repeal the Franchise Act.

A man named Apollidore St. Pierre of Papineauville, Que., committed suicide at Rat Portage on account of misfortunes in his love affairs.

Mr. Borden is at present engaged upon a scheme to commute the two years' salary allowance to retiring militia officers into a pension for life.

It is stated that the Franchise of the Niagara Falls Power Company for the building of the Canadian power tunnel has been extended for four years.

The engagement of Miss Ella Walker, granddaughter of Hiram Walker, the millionaire distiller of Walkerville, Ontario, to Count Manford Von Matuschka, of Schloss, Bechau, has been announced.

The Montreal street railway management have adopted a new style of cash box for their conductors, furnished with a new contrivance known as an improved receiver, which the moment the coin strikes the aperture seizes it in a tight grip, preventing its removal.

Mr. William Whyte, superintendent of the Western Division of the Canadian Pacific railwayy, states that of the total amount of ninety million bushels of wheat in the West at the opening of the season, he estimates that from two million and a half to three million bushels are in the hands of the farmers west of Winnipeg.

GREAT BRITAIN.

The Lord Mayor of London has started a fund for the relief of the famine sufferers in India.

Andrew Percy Bennett has been appointed British consul at New York.

It is expected that the new Canadian building at Bisley will be ready for the team next season.

The appointment of Carlos Villanueva, consul-general for Venezuela in London has been approved of by the Queen.

Americans in London have subscribed for a loving cup as a present to Mr. Bayard, the American Ambassador at London.

The Right Hon. and Most Rev. Frederick Temple, D. D., was on Friday enthroned in Canterbury cathedral with much ecclesiastical ceremony.

It is reported from London that the commissioners have signed a report recommending the speedy construction of the Pacific cable.

Lord Dufferin has accepted the presidency of a movement started at Bristol to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of Newfoundland by Cabot.

Lady Selina Scott, who pleaded guilty on Thursday to the criminal libel of Earl Russell, was on Friday sentenced to eight months' imprisonment without hard labor.

While hunting with the Meynell hounds on Tuesday, Mr. Chaplin, formerly president of the British Board of Trade, was thrown from his horse and seriously injured.

Sir Donald Smith, the Canadian High Commissioner, has established new agencies in Ireland and Wales to make better known to emigrants the resources of Canada.

The British Board of Trade returns show that the total imports for 1896 have increased £25,117,677 over 1895, and the exports have increased £14,633,193 over the previous year.

The Pall Mall Gazette, referring to the report that Mr. Laurier had declined the honor of knighthood, says that his answer left the matter so that he could accept at a future date.

Mrs. Gladstone unveiled the memorial window to the Armenian martyrs in Hawarden Church. Before the ceremony of unveiling the window Mr. Gladstone delivered a speech to an Armenian deputation.

In response to a letter signed by more than eighty noblemen and gentlemen eminent in literature, science, and art, Mr. Herbert Spencer has consented that a fund shall be opened to paint his portrait for the nation.

The Westminister Gazette on Wednesday gave prominence to a rumour that the Queen has decided to commemorate the fact that she has enjoyed the longest reign in English history by abdicating in favor of the Prince of Wales.

Sir Charles Tupper and the Colonial Agents of Victoria and Tasmania were given a complimentary dinner in London on Wednesday night. Sir Charles made a speech, pledging the loyalty of Canada to the British Empire, which was received with great applause.

UNITED STATES.

Storms continue to impede railway traffic in Missouri,

Jacob Witham, aged 87, and Mrs. Rivers, aged 97, were married at Deerfield, N. H., on Tuesday.

A despatch from Fargo, N. D., says two children of John Pettit, of Hunter, were frozen to death in Sunday's storm.

Lawrence Wilson, one of the eight boys bitten by a mad dog December 1st in Baltimore, died at that place yesterday.

The Wyoming state general hospital at Rock Springs, Wyo., burned to the ground on Wednesday. One woman died from fright.

Commander and Mrs. Booth-Tucker have been invited to Washington by Mrs. Cleveland to explain the methods of work of the Salvation Army.

It is reported in Washington that Mr. John Hay, of that city, will be appointed successor to Mr. Bayard as ambassador to England.

Blasting powder was used to kill rats in the house of Alex. Dolwick, at Millersville, Ohio, on Tuesday. Five of the family were burned, one fatally.

South Benton, Ark., hasn't a sound building now as the result of Saturday's cyclone. Many families are homeless, and a number of deaths are reported.

During the year ending September over 190,000,000 fry were hatched and distributed by the fish hatcheries of the United States. The cost was less than 20 cents per 100.

Five true bills have been returned at Washington against Francis J. Kiekhoffer, late distributing officer of the State Department, on charges of embezzling international indemnity funds. His total shortage is about $127,000.

Richard D. Cornelius, one of the oldest and best known bank cashiers of Baltimore, committed suicide. His body was found in the duck pond in Druid Hill Park a few hours after a shortage of $60,000 had been discovered in his accounts at the National Farmers' and Planters' Bank.

At Bay City, Mich., a mob of several hundred angry Poles attacked the parsonage of St. Stanislaus' church, breaking every window and driving Father Bogaci and his body-guard into the basement. A number of shots were fired and two or three men badly wounded.

Our telegraphed summaries from the commercial agencies in New York are, as might have been expected, more retrospective than anticipatory, saying little about the present, and less of the probable future of trade. Business everywhere is dull, and it is as yet too early in the year for any practical developments. The bank failures in the West have been serious, but the effect has so far been discounted that no further serious interference with trade is likely to occur. The trade situation is quiet, though in some directions more seasonable weather has stimulated a demand for seasonable goods.

GENERAL.

The Pope has recovered from his indisposition.

Emperor William has designed the tower for the German Protestant church at Jerusalem.

Owing to the exodus on account of the plague, the population of Bombay has been reduced one-half.

The Petite Republique, of Paris, says that the Government has no faith in the duration of European peace.

A special from Oaxaca, Mexico, says a severe earthquake is reported from the southern part of the state.

A severe earthquake was felt at Cheroque, Department of Panama, on Sunday. Some property was destroyed.

Dr. Manser, senior physician of the principal hospital of Bombay, died of the plague which is raging in that city.

The report that the Japanese are assisting the rebels in the Philippine Islands is officially denied in Madrid.

The Boers have completed a bill of indemnity against the British Government amounting to £2,000,000 for the Jameson raid.

The Paris edition of the New York Herald states that it can guarantee the accuracy of the news which it presents that Antonio Maceo is still alive.

The Warsaw doctors have decided that the Countess Helen, whose body was disinterred through a dread that she was merely in a state of catalepsy, is really dead.

A public meeting has been called, under the presidency of the Viceroy, the Earl of Elgin, to consider private measures to relieve the famine sufferers in India.

It is stated that the uncle of the Princess Chimay has stopped all supplies of money until affairs are settled in regard to her elopement with the Hungarian gypsy.

Reports from Cuba attribute many murders to the Spaniards. Within a few miles of Havana the bodies of sixteen Cubans were found in one ravine.

Newfoundland Legislature opens February 11. A resolution will, it is said, be introduced by the Government favouring reciprocity with the United States.

It is reported at Constantinople that Bedros Effendi, the Armenian recently appointed sub-Kimakan of Tscharsan, was assassinated two days after his arrival there.

It is stated in Vienna that Austria-Hungary will have to follow France and Germany, and spend from eighty to one hundred million dollars for quick-firing guns for the artillery service.

There is much talk in Paris of the impossibility of the French dockyards executing quickly enough the new naval programme, and the question whether ironclads shall be purchased in England has excited a patriotic discussion.

WITHIN THE LAW.

Wild-eyed Man. I want a lot of poison right off.

Drug Clerk. It's against the law to sell poison to people who look as if they want to commit suicide; but I'll let you have a bottle of Dr. Black-Sequin's Elixir of Life. That seems to be pretty sure death.

THE RAILWAYS OF CANADA

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES SHOWING THEIR GROWTH.

Number of Miles in Operation—Statistics as to Capital Invested, Passengers Carried, Earnings, and Other Facts of Interest.

The Dominion of Canada is fairly well supplied with railways. The Canadian statistical year book shows that on the 30th of June, 1895, there were 15,977 miles of railway in operation in the Dominion, and 16,091 miles of track laid.

The railway mileage of track laid and square miles of area to each mile of railway, according to provinces, are shown as follows:

Ontario has 6,403 miles of track; Quebec, 3,139 miles; New Brunswick, 1,404; Nova Scotia, 891; Prince Edward Island, 210, Manitoba, 1,472; North-West Territories, 1,772, and British Columbia, 890.

There is one mile of track laid to every 34 square miles in Ontario, to every 72 square miles in Quebec, to every 20 square miles in New Brunswick, to 23 in Nova Scotia, to 9 1-2 in Prince Edward Island, to 44 in Manitoba; to 225 in the North-west territory, and to 478 in British Columbia.

In addition to the above there are 28 miles of railway owned by five coal and iron companies, all in Nova Scotia. This mileage is all of the 4 feet 8 inch gauge, with the exception of three miles with a 3-foot gauge.

MANY RAILWAY CENTRES

The southern portions of the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario are covered with a network of lines. Several railway centres have been established. Six lines centre, at Quebec City, seven at Montreal, seven at Toronto, and six at Ottawa. No less than nine railways centre at Winnipeg.

Of the older provinces, New Brunswick is better supplied with railways in proportion to area than any of the others.

According to population Ontario has 43.7 per cent. of the people of Canada and 39.8 per cent. of the railway mileage. Quebec has 30.8 per cent. of population and 19.5 per cent. of the railway mileage. British Columbia has two per cent. of population and five per cent. of railway mileage. Manitoba has 3.2 per cent. of population and 9.1 per cent. of railway mileage. The North-west Territories have only 1.4 per cent. of population and 11 per cent. of railway mileage.

It will thus be seen that the western provinces have been provided with railway facilities far in advance of population, it having been felt that railway communication should precede population.

During the harvest of 1895 wheat to the value of $1,000,000 was cut every day. As but a small portion of this wheat was required for use within the province, the exportable surplus would be very large. Therefore there is an absolute necessity of having railway communication even in excess of the wants of population, judged by ordinary standards.

DEVELOPMENT OF RAILWAYS.

In the year 1850 there were only 66 miles of railway in operation in all Canada. These had increased to 2,065 in 1860, and to 2,278 miles when the provinces were united. During the next ten years there was an increase of 3,304 miles. In 1888 there were 12,184 miles in operation, and in 1895, as stated above 15,977 miles. Thus since confederation there has been the enormous increase of 13,699 miles of railway in operation. In 1868 the paidup capital invested in railways amounted to $160,471,190, and in 1895 to $894,640,559.

Altogether Canada has had to date 136 railways. Twenty-five of these have amalgamated and form the Grand Trunk railway system. The consolidation of 22 others have produced the Canadian Pacific railway system. The remaining 89 have more or less consolidated, so that in all there are 76 separate organizations. Two of these are bridge companies with 3 3-4 miles of rails; one is a tunnel with 2 1-4 rails, two are electric railways, one nearly 14 miles long, the Niagara Falls Park and River Electric Railway, and one 22 miles in length, the Montreal Park and Island railway, leaving 69 railways, besides the Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk and the Intercolonial.

SIZE OF THE RAILWAYS.

The mileage (miles laid) of the several railway companies is as follows: Canadian Pacific, 6,174 miles; Grand Trunk, 3,161; Intercolonial, 1,383; other railways, 5,332. Electric railways, 35; bridges and tunnels, 6.

As a rule the railways of Canada are built with a gauge of 4 feet 8 1-2 inches. The exceptions are the Carillon and Grenville, with a gauge of 5 feet 6 inches; the Prince Edward railway with a gauge of 3 feet 6 inches, and the Montford Colonization and the Alberta Coal railways, each with a gauge of 3 feet.

The railways of Canada have been greatly assisted by state and municipal aid. The Dominion Government has contributed at the rate of $9,369 per mile constructed, the Provincial Governments at the rate on an average of $1,847 per mile, and the municipalities at the rate of $881 per mile on the total mileage. As, however, the provincial contributions were limited to roads within the province, the individual provincial contributions per mile were much larger. On the whole the Dominion Government has contributed $150,000,000; the Ontario Government, $6,700,000; Quebec, $14,400,000; New Brunswick, $4,400,000; Nova Scotia, $1,400,000; Manitoba, $2,600,000; British Columbia, $37,500. Municipalities have contributed the large sum of $14,000,000. Taking into consideration the various sources from which the whole railway capital has been drawn, it appears that the ordinary share capital is 28 per cent. of the whole; the bonded debt, 36 per cent.; Dominion Government aid, nearly 17 per cent., and Provincial Government aid, 12 per cent. Very nearly 22 per cent. of the total capital has been contributed by Federal, Provincial and municipal aid.

STATISTICS OF RAILWAYS.

In 1875 trains were run over 17,680,168 miles of track in Canada. In 1895 the train mileage was 40,661,890. The total number of fares in 1875 was 5,190,416; in 1885 it was 9,672,599, and in 1895, 13,987,580, showing the enormous increase in railway travel during two decades.

Only 5,670,836 tons of freight were carried in 1875. Ten years later 14,659,271 tons were carried, and in 1895 no less than 21,524,421 tons.

The earnings 20 years ago of Canadian railways were $19,470,539. Last year the earnings were $46,470,539. The working expenses in 1875 were $15,775,532; in 1895 they were $32,749,669.

The expenses were 81 per cent. of the receipts in 1875. In 1885 they were 75 per cent., and in 1895 70 per cent.

From the above figures it will be seen that the train mileage increased 130 per cent.; the number of passengers carried 169 per cent., and the tons of freight transported 280 per cent., all during a period of 20 years. The earnings during the same period increased 140 per cent., while the working expesnes, instead of keeping pace with the earnings, increased only 107 per cent.

PERCENTAGE OF EXPENSES.

The percentage of expenses to gross receipts was smallest in 1895 in the case of the Canadian Pacific railway system, being 63 per cent. The Canada Southern came next with a percentage of 67 per cent. The percentage of the Grand Trunk railway system in this respect was 69 per cent. The Quebec Central's expenses were over 80 per cent. of the total receipts. Government railways were run at a small loss, the expenses being 2 per cent. above the receipts.

Notwithstanding the hard Canadian winters the proportion of expenses to receipts in connection with our Canadian railway system is not quite so high as in the United States. In the New England States the proportion is 72.7 per cent., in the Middle States 70.74 per cent., and in the Central Northern States 71 1-2 per cent.

The total earnings of $46,785,487 from the whole railway system of the Dominion were derived as follows:—From passenger traffic, $13,311,400; from freight traffic, $29,545,490, and from mails, express and other sources, $3,928,558.

INTEREST IN CAPITAL.

The net earnings of all the railways in Canada last year were $14,035,817. Taking into consideration the total amount invested in these railways the proportion of such earnings to capital was only 1.57 per cent. Leaving out the bonded debt and the amount contributed by the state, provinces and municipalities, the percentage of earnings to capital invested was 3.88 per cent. for the year 1895. In the year 1892 it was 4.41 per cent.

OTHER COUNTRIES COMPARED.

The average amount received per ton of freight carried in Queensland is $2.98; in Russia, $2.90; in Italy, $1.82; in France, $1.52; in Canada, $1.37; in Denmark, $1.11; in Germany, 79 cents; in Great Britain, 68 cents; in Belgium, 65 cents.

The greater distances travelled may account for the average amount being higher in the colonies than in European countries.

The average cost per completed mile of roadbed in Canada up to the present time is $55,599. In Great Britain the cost per mile has been $269,851; in the United States, $61,409; in India, $43,785, and in Western Australia, $21,720. The proportion of net revenue to capital cost is very small, almost the smallest in the world.

It has been said that the cost of a railway should not be more than ten times its annual traffic, or in other words, that the annual traffic should be 10 per cent. of the capital cost. Judged by this standard, the cost of Canadian railways has far exceeded their limit, as in 1895 the gross receipts only amounted to 5.2 per cent. of the total capital expenditure, the theoretical capital having been $467,854,870 and the actual cost $894,640,559. In most European countries the cost of railways is above this standard, and in British India and the United States it is below it.

The rolling stock of Canadian railways in 1895 consisted of 2,023 locomotives; 216 sleepers and Pullman cars; $1,076 first-class cars; 702 second-class cars; 1,154 mail and express cars; 36,360 cattle and box cars; 15,758 platform cars, and 4,845 coal and dump cars.

There are only 364 miles of railway laid with iron rails in Canada. The remainder is equipped with steel rails.

LIST OF FATALITIES.

In the last twenty years there have been killed in railway accidents on Canadian railways no less than 3,415 people and 11,462 have been injured. Taking the year 1895 as an average year there were nine passengers killed 60 injured; 51 employes killed and 488 injured; 127 others killed and 110 injured. Seven of these passengers were killed while getting on or off trains in motion. Six employes were killed by being on the track, and 17 by falling off trains. Of the other fatalities 85 out of 127 were killed by being on the track.

The average of passengers killed during the past twenty years is only one in every one million carried. The average in United States in 1893 was only one to every 1,985,152 carried. As a matter of fact a higher percentage of passengers have been killed and injured on Canadian railroads than in any country in the world during the past twenty years.

MAKING GLASS RESIST FIRE.

Attention has lately been drawn to a product called "wire-glass," which, it is asserted, presents an effective barrier against fire. It consists simply of a mesh-work of wire embedded in a glass plate. Even when licked by flames and raised to a red heat it does not fall to pieces, and experiments have shown that, employed in windows and skylights, wire-glass not only resists the heat of fire, but also the shattering effects of cold water poured over it while it is yet glowing hot.

NO MORE USE FOR HORSES

WHEN THE WONDERFUL NEW FIRE TRUCK COMES IN USE.

It is Run by a Compressed Air Motor, and Can be Easily Controlled in the Streets—The Machinery Very Simple and Manipulated by One Man on the Driver's Seat.

The automatic fire truck has come, and soon every Fire Department of importance in the large cities will be in possession of one of the latest inventions It will be in every way a more practical and efficient aid to fire fighters than its more picturesque predecessor, which depended upon well-trained horses for its motive power.

From an artistic or sensational new point there will doubtless be many persons who will regret the passing of the fire horse. But the spirit of progress has no sympathy for the picturesque. This, as well as everything else, must give way before the march of improvement, and so the horse's occupation is gone.

Of course, the same clanging of bells will be heard; the same rush of the long red truck through the crowded thoroughfare will be seen, and the same helmeted and rubber-clad fire fighters recklessly riding to victory or death on the narrow footboard will characterize the usual conflagrations, but there

WILL BE NO HORSES.

The one aim of the fire fighters is to get to the scene of action and get their life and property saving apparatus into position and ready for use in the quickest possible manner. The delay of a few minutes or even seconds in reaching a fire may mean life or death to those imprisoned in the upper stories of a burning building, and even with the utmost exertions of three powerful horses, nine times out of ten the heavy ladder truck, without which the work of fire fighting is severely handicapped, is the last to reach the scene, because it is so heavy and unwieldly that the lighter engines and hose carriages outstripped it in the race. All this will be changed by the new invention.

In appearance the automobile fire truck does not differ greatly from the hook and ladder truck of to-day. There is the same arrangement of ladders along the body of the truck, the same footboard for the crew, and the manipulation of the rear steering gear is the same. The radical difference is in the arrangement of the front wheels and the driver's seat.

THE MOTIVE POWER

Of this automobile truck is what is known as a compressed air gas engine of continuous running design. One of the principal advantages is that it is always ready for use. All that is necessary is for the motorman to take his seat and move the operating lever.

The engine which furnishes the motive power, is placed just above the front axle, and directly beneath the driver's seat. A system of cog wheels and levers act directly between the engine and the front wheels. In fact, the entire machinery, which is very simple, and consists principally of cog wheels, is located directly in front of the engine, almost beneath the footboard of the apparatus.

Extending upward from the machinery through the footboard, and extending at a height a little above the driver's seat, are two levers which resemble those in common use on cable cars. One of these levers is used for the double purpose of steering the machine, and as a brake, while the other lever controls the speed of the engine. It can be reversed when necessary, and in addition can be used as a supplementary air brake.

The engine is so constructed that when the driver takes his seat and grasps the left hand lever, the whole apparatus is ready to start. By simply drawing the lever toward himself, the driver sets the truck in motion. The cogs on the lever, which work the wheels, fall into another set of cogs, which work directly from the engine, and the start is made.

A MOST PECULIAR FEATURE

Is found tin he fact that in order to stop the truck it is not necessary to stop the engine. A forward pressure on the left-hand lever throws the cogs out of place and a pull on the right-hand lever applies the air brakes. Should this not stop the progress of the truck in a sufficiently short time, the cogs can be thrown back into place and the engine reversed, and an entire set of other brakes be applied to the rear wheels of the truck.

The fender is automatic and adjustable, just clearing the street, and is designed so that any person unfortunate enough to be caught in it will escape at all events alive and with a reasonable certainty of little injury.

The truck can be driven at a speed of 40 miles an hour, if necessary, and in order that it can travel at a high rate of speed over smooth and slippery pavements the tires of the wheels are roughened and provided (like a horse's hoof) with corks and short spikes. This improvement has been found to be most successful, especially in turning sharp curves.

Another great advantage of the new invention is found in the fact that the motive power being so completely under control it can be used immediately for elevating an extension ladder, which is of the greatest importance both in the fighting of fires and the saving of human life.

THE ATLANTIC'S DEPTH.

The depth of the Atlantic between the Canary Islands and the West Indies is something awful. A pretty level bottom runs right away from the African Islands to the American ones, gradually deepening to nearly 19,000 feet. At this spot we might sink the highest point of the Alps and still have nearly half a mile of sea-water covering it.