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 curfew by-law will be enforced in Hamilton.

The strike at the Springhill, N. S., mines has been settled.

The Eastern portion of Lake Erie is reported to be frozen over.

Mr. John McKergow was elected President of the Montreal Board of Trade.

A Chatham syndicate is reported to have struck a rich flow of oil at Bothwell.

The Hochelaga Bank will increase its capital stock from $800,000 to $1,000,000.

Hon. J. I. Tarte has completed arrangements for the survey of Fraser River.

The Montreal Patrie says it is rumoured that there will soon be a Papal ablegate in Canada.

It is considered probable in Montreal that there will be an early dissolution of the Quebec Legislature.

Immigrants who arrived and settled in Canada last year numbered 25,478, against 25,571 in 1895.

The steamer State of Georgia, 34 days out from Dantzic for Halifax, has been given up for lost.

William Tisdale, who lived fourteen miles north of Pilot Mound, Man., was frozen to death last week.

The amount of money at present deposited in the Dominion Post-Office and Savings Banks is $57,875,775.

The Ottawa Electric Street Railway Company last year carried more than one million and a half passengers.

At a meeting of the Manitoba Cabinet on Thursday it was definitely decided to call the House together on the 18th of February.

Mr. H. Beaugrand, ex-Mayor of Montreal, and proprietor of La Patrie, is slowly recovering, and is now quite out of danger.

Lord Aberdeen has presented ex-Mayor Borthwick, of Ottawa, with a silver inkstand, as a souvenir of his term of office.

A new morning paper is shortly to appear in Montreal. It will be a four-page, one-cent daily ,and will be known as the Morning Despatch.

Evangelist H. Clarence Ramsey, of Toronto, has left for China, where he is to engage in missionary work for many years.

The Donaldson line steamship Warwick, which ran on the Yellow Muir ledge, Nova Scotia, two weeks ago, has disappeared from sight.

The Ottawa branch of the Canadian Federation of Labour has declared for an Alien Labour law, and reciprocity in labour with the United States.

Bricklayers on the sewer works in London are on strike because Foreman Smith refused to pay a fine of $25 imposed by the Toronto union.

The fourteen-year-old son of Mr. Henry Tripp, of Ridgeway, Ont., was drowned in the lake of Windmill Point last Wednesday while sleighing on the ice.

Mr. James Mussels, a G.T.R. yardman at Niagara Falls, was caught between the draw-bars of two cars while coupling, and instantly killed.

The profits on the silver and copper coinage accruing to the Dominion Government during the past year amounted to seventy-six thousand dollars.

Premier Laurier has declined an invitation to speak at the Washington birthday celebration in Chicago on Feb. 22, owing to pressure of business.

The directors of the Central Canada Fair, Ottawa, intend enlarging the fair grounds and reconstructing the main building during the coming summer.

A shortage of about $20,000 has been discovered in the funds of Brant County and Township, of which the Treasurer was the late Mr. W. S. Campbell.

Hon. Sidney Fisher announces that he has completed arrangements with shipping companies at Montreal for cold storage for agricultural and dairy products.

Capt. Collier of the London Salvation Army, in speaking of "Worldly Amusements," condemned skating, but admitted he had never been in a skating rink in his life.

A convict named Horrigan plunged a fork into the arm of a convict named McDonald in Kingston Penitentiary on Wednesday. Horrigan was sent to the prison of isolation.

Premier Laurier has replied to the British Consul-General at Brazil, guaranteeing the expenses of returning eleven more Canadian families, comprising forty persons from Brazil.

Capt. McNeil, of the Donaldson SS. Amaryntbia has been condemned to pay to the wife of Dr. De Cow $700 for the contents of a trunk stolen from his vessel in July, 1895.

According to official returns the production of pig iron in Canada more than doubled during the last fiscal year, 84,607 tons having been produced, as against 31,641 in the previous year.

London is supplying food and clothing to a band of 30 gypsies, men, women and children, who are encamped outside the city, and who are unable to leave their horses having strayed or been stolen.

James Mackie, station agent at the G. T. R. junction, near Kingston, and for 30 years connected with that railway, and Robert Thompson, of the freight department at Kingston, have been dismissed.

Pilotage commissioners at Halifax, St. John, Sydney, Victoria and other ports have been asked to refund to the Government fees appropriated by them during 1896 which were not allowed under the statutes.

GREAT BRITAIN.

The battleship Monarch was placed in commission at Chatham on Tuesday. She will go to South Africa.

The body of Isaac Pitman, the inventor of the Pitman system of shorthand, who died last week, was cremated at Woking on Thursday.

It is understood that the Prince of Wales will attend one of the series of farewell banquets that Ambassador Bayard will give to his friends at the Embassy.

Lieut.-Governor Kirkpatrick, who recently underwent an operation in a London private hospital, continues to make favourable progress towards recovery.

The British and Foreign Arbitration Association has cabled to Washington a petition to the United States Senate in favor of the ratification of the Anglo-American arbitration treaty.

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, in the House of Commons on Wednesday, said that he was not in a position to state what progress had been made towards an improved Canadian mail service, explaining that the Dominion Government is still considering the question.

UNITED STATES.

Mr. Gladstone has gone to Cannes.

The National Bank at Potsdam, N. Y., has closed its doors.

Gilbert Rud, aged 25, was frozen to death at Spring Valley, Minn.

A father, mother and three children were frozen to death near Little Rock, Ark., yesterday.

The heavy ice in the Ohio River has caused a total suspension of navigation.

Buffalo is suffering from a water famine, caused by the intake being choked with slush ice.

The lumbermen of Tonawanda, N. Y., are a unit in demanding a protective policy on Canadian lumber entering the United States.

Capt. John Campbell, of the barque British-America, was frozen to death two miles out of Mobile, Alabama, on Tuesday night.

A fire in Philadelphia destroyed a million dollars' worth of property. Mr. John Wanamaker's store was one of the buildings damaged.

According to statistics prepared in Albany, N.Y., the average of wages paid in New York State to workingmen is $436 a year, compared with $551 in Ontario.

The betrothal is announced in London of Miss Alice Harper, daughter of the late Henry Harper of Philadelphia, to Captain Phillips, of London, formerly of the 13th Hussars.

Secretary Adam, of the British Legation at Brussels, has been appointed to succeed Viscount Gough, secretary of the British Embassy at Washington, recently appointed secretary of the Embassy at Berlin.

The new timber dry dock and the largest in the Brooklyn, N.Y., navy yard, is reported to be two feet shorter and four inches shallower than the specifications called for. It has already cost the Government $538,679.

It is semi-officially stated that negotiations for a treaty of general arbitration between France and the United States were commenced about a year ago, but were only resumed when it was announced that the Anglo-American treaty had been definitely concluded.

The condition of business in the United States, according to the commercial reports of Messrs. Bradstreet and Dun, of New York, show little or no actual change. There are trade fluctuations here and there, and a tone of fair confidence in the future appears to exist among commercial men. As a rule trade is dull and prices continue low; the month is called a disappointing one, for the simple reason that expectations as to the amount of trade likely to be done to the amount of trade likely to be done at the beginning of the year run too high. Some woollen mills have stopped during the week, but a larger number have started, and more still are preparing to start at once. While there is no actual improvement in trade, the conditions are such as to inspire justifiable confidence.

GENERAL.

The reported illness of the Czar is again denied.

Dr. Zedekauer, the Czar's private physician, is dead.

Bombay has had 9,835 deaths since the plague broke out.

Senor Canovas del Castillo, the Spanish Premier, is slightly indisposed.

Italy has ordered six battalions of troops to be put in readiness to start for Massowah.

The Chilian Government is being defrauded annually of more than $10,000,000 through smuggling.

It is announced that two million people are now employed upon the relief works in the famine districts of India.

The officials of the Japanese Legation in St. Petersburg confirm the report that the plague has broken out in the Island of Formosa.

It is denied at Madrid that negotiations are pending for a new commercial treaty between Spain and the United States.

The Grand Duchess Xenia, sister of the Czar, and wife of the Grand Duke Alexander Michaelovitch, has given birth to a son.

Advices from Havana says that the conflict between the sugar planters and Weyler continues with more bitterness than ever.

The proposed visit of the Czar and Czarina to Rome and London at the end of April has been cancelled, owing to the health of their Majesties.

The betrothal is announced of the Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Coburg, the eldest son of the Duke of Edinburgh, to Princess Feodore of Saxe-Meiningen.

A Madrid report says that General Azcarraga, Minister of War, is to be appointed Governor-General of Cuba, and that Gen. Weyler is to be retained as commander-in-chief.

A battle is reported to have taken place on Tuesday between Brazilian troops and religious fanatics in the State of Bahia, Brazil. The loss on both sides was 250 killed.

Lieut von Bruzwitz, the German officer who some time ago ran a laboring man through the back with a sword for knocking against his chair in a cafe, has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Advices from Agordat say that the dervishes, who were believed to be advancing on that place, have abandoned their fortified camp at Amideb and are retreating in the direction of Aimoasa, pursued by the friendly natives.

FATAL FIRE AT BERLIN

THE GAS WORKS WRECKED BY AN EXPLOSION.

Mr. Aldrich Killed—Secretary Breithaupt and Mr. Weller, a Workman, Very Seriously Injured.

A despatch from Berlin says:—At 7.20 on Tuesday evening the citizens of the Town of Berlin were startled by a loud report, and on investigation it was found that the Gas Company's works had been blown up, killing Mr. Aldrich and badly burning Mr. E. Carl Breithaupt, Secretary-Treasurer of the company, and Mr. Weller a workman. Owing to the combustible nature of the material the firemen could not do much to quell the flames. A cry for help was heard, and when the firemen directed a stream in the direction of the sound it was found that Mr. Aldrich was pinioned between the brick wall and the tank, with a pile of burning boards on top of him, but when they reached him he was burnt beyond recognition. Two heroic firemen risked their lives to save Mr. Aldrich, while the other firemen played the water on them, but he was dead when brought out. Mr. Breithaupt now lies at the residence of Dr. Bowlby in a precarious condition. He had been blown on the top of a roof on an adjoining building. His face, hands and body are horribly burned, and his back badly injured. Mr. Weller was blown through the door and was found by a woman who had him moved to her house near by. He will likely lose his eyesight.

It is impossible to say how the explosion occurred, a report going the rounds that Mr. Aldridge looked into one of the tanks with the aid of his lantern and in some way caused the explosion. Another theory, and one which is believed to be the correct one, is that one of the men had a lighted cigar, which dropped into one of the tanks. Mr. Aldridge had been in the employ of the gas and electric works here for ten years, and was looked upon as thoroughly acquainted with his work.

CALM IN FACE OF DEATH

SPLENDID DISCIPLINE ON THE WARREN HASTINGS.

The Troops Fall in Below While the Women and Children Were Landed—All Saved.

A despatch to the London Daily Telegraph from Port Louis, Island of Mauritius, furnishes particulars of the wreck of the British Indian troopship Warren Hastings, which was wrecked off the Island of Reunion on Thursday, January 14th. It appears she ran ashore at 2.20 a.m. It was pitch dark, and torrents of rain were falling. She had on board soldiers and crew to the number of ,1232 men, in addition to a number of women and children, the families of the married men of the military force. When the ship struck the troops were ordered to retire from the upper deck to which they had flocked on the first alarm, and to fall in below. This they did promptly, the most perfect discipline prevailing, although the men were fully conscious of the danger which they were in. They were quietly mustered on the 'tween decks without confusion or excitement. Owing to the fact that the surf-boats could not be used in landing the troops, two officers of the Warren Hastings were lowered from the ship's bows to the rocks,and when it was found that a landing could be effected in this way the disembarkation of the soldiers was commenced at four o'clock, Commander Holland hoping it was safe to retain the women, children, and the sick on board until daylight. But the steamship was soon found to be heeling over so rapidly that everyone was ordered to the upper deck, the danger of capsizing being imminent. Thereupon Commander Holland ordered the landing of the troops to be stopped in order that the women, children and sick persons should be landed immediately. This order was obeyed with admirable discipline. By five o'clock the decks had heeled over to an angle of fifty degrees to starboard, and the boats were all swept away. The good swimmers were then permitted to swim ashore, carrying ropes. By these means many others were landed, and the disembarkation of all on board was completed by 5.30 a.m., with the loss of only two native servants. Many acts of gallantry were recorded. The French officials and inhabitants of the Island of Reunion gave the shipwrecked people every assistance possible.

THE INDIAN FAMINE.

Great Distress in the Presidency of Bombay—An Outbreak of Cholera Feared—Excessive Mortality From the Plague.

A despatch from Bijapur, Presidency of Bombay, says:—The special correspondent of the Associated Press who is visiting the distressed provinces of India has arrived at Bijapur, about 245 miles south-east of Bombay, and finds in this district the keenest distress, especially among the people of the lower castes. The latter are on the verge of starvation, and are only saved from it by the Government relief work, which enables them to earn enough money to at least keep body and soul together while awaiting the brighter state of affairs which recent rains are expected to provide later in the year.

It is estimated that fully one-tenth of the cattle in this district have already perished from lack of fodder, and the number will undoubtedly be considerably increased between now and the advent of the new crops. In the fields can be seen lying numbers of carcasses of animals being devoured by vultures. There are many gangs of robbers engaged in pillaging grain stores whenever an opportunity arises, and the prisons are full of thieves who have been captured while stealing grain or in attempting to do so.

Among the masses there are many cases of illness arising from lack of proper nourishment, and it is regarded as certain that cholera will reach this district sooner or later, owing to the carelessness of the people, who dread being taken to the hospitals provided for their care, believing that they are certain to die within a fortnight if they enter a hospital.

Beyond doubt the utmost resources of the Government will be taxed before long in the efforts which will have to be made to cope with the steadily increasing distress.

A despatch from Jubbulpore to the London Chronicle, regarding the Indian famine, says:—"Relief measures were neglected in the Central Provinces throughout 1896. The latest statistics up to the end of October give as the excess in the mortality over the previous ten years 82,388, inclusive of cholera cases. Most of this excess is due to famine."

UTOPIA OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

Interview With a President Who Represents 130 People.

The captain and crew of the missionary brig Pitcairn, just returned to San Francisco from her fifth annual cruise among the islands in the South Sea. An interesting official came up on the Pitcairn in the person of J. R. McCoy, President of Pitcairn Island. He is the ruler of that little colony away down south, and his word is law. President McCoy has 130 subjects under him, who are ruled by a Parliament of seven men. These men are elected every year, and they elect the President. The Parliament makes the laws, which are then approved by the President. Besides being President, Mr. McCoy is Chief of the Department of Justice, and passes on all cases, where there is a controversy. All his subjects are Adventists. Everything on the island is carried on by the co-operative plan. The President was born on the island, and has been chosen ruler for several years. When the missionary brig landed at Pitcairn, President McCoy, who is engaged in missionary work, left affairs of state in charge of the Vice President, and made the tour of the island with Capt. Graham. It was his intention to land at the New Hebrides or the Santa Cruz Islands and establish a mission there among the natives, and then work his way back to his old home. It was learned,. however, that the wild men of the South Sea still consider white people an

EXCELLENT ARTICLE OF DIET,

so President McCoy postponed his stay one year.

President McCoy found that the King still reigns on Palmerston Island and all his subjects are members of the royal family. In explaining his discovery on this island Mr. McCoy tells an interesting story. The island is a long distance from any group and is very lonely. The Pitcairn dropped anchor and a party was sent ashore to explore the island. They had been on shore but a short time when President McCoy met the King, who announced that he was the ruler of the island. He is a full-blooded white man, and what was more astonishing to the explorers, they found that everybody on the island could speak the English language. The King was found to be a hale and hearty, jolly, good fellow, and his subjects were all prosperous. They tilled the soil and are a self-sustaining people. There were forty-five men, women and children on the roll as subjects of the King, and this included everybody on the island. Strange to say, every subject is related to the ruler.

"The story of how this old fellow came to rule on this island is a queer one," said President McCoy. "I have the story from his own lips. Many years ago he left his home in England and knocked about the world as a sailor. Finally he deserted his ship and took refuge on one of the islands where a refuge on one of the islands where there were a few natives. He learned the language and became a great favorite with the people. One day he seest island and got themselves wives. and with them he located on Palmerston Island. They were the first inhabitants of the island so far as I know. The old sailor went to raising cocoanuts. His sons grew up and they wanted wives. Their father fitted up a small vessel and away these sons went to the nearest island and got themselves wives. The

POPULATION OF THE ISLAND

commenced to increase very rapidly, until now of the forty-five inhabitants every one is related to the sailor King.

"Down the Pitcairn where I preside as President and Chief of the Department of Justice everything goes along smoothly. It is the ideal way for people to live, for it is a case of everybody for his neighbor. Our Parliament of seven makes the laws and elects a President. There is no salaried office on the island. In fact, we do not deal in money, and there is no circulating medium on the island. One man does all the trading, and then a division is made. No one on the island is allowed to get ahead of his neighbor. While we fly the English flag, still we receive no instructions of any kind from the English Government.

"I started out to make a missionary trip and went to Tahiti Island, Raratongo, Palmerston, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, New Hebrides, Banks and Santa Cruz Islands. I intended to establish a mission at New Hebrides or Santa Cruz, but I found the people too wild.

"There are only two white men on the whole group of Santa Cruz Islands. A Mr. Forest started a mission, but he has given it up and has gone into business. He has an assistant, and both of them have had many narrow escapes from being killed by the natives."

ALL SEASONS FOR ITS OWN.

Ice is an awfully ruinous thing, sighed Cholly. In winter whole towns are bankrupted by ice gorges and in the summer the young men are bankrupted by ice-cream gorges!

EUROPE FEARS PLAGUE

NINE SUDDEN DEATHS GREATLY ALARM MARSEILLES.

Sanitary Officers Very Active—Doctors Call the Disease "Infectious Pneumonia," But the Public is Not Convinced—France Adopts Drastic Measures.

The greatest alarm prevails at Marseilles on account of nine sudden deaths in one street.

A report was circulated ten days ago that a case of bubonic plague had been discovered. This was promptly denied by the health officials, but the precautions taken to guard against the plague were redoubled, especially in the vicinity of the old and new forts, where sailors congregate from all parts of the world.

The health officers declare that the nine deaths announced to-day were from "infectious pneumonia," but the public is far from being satisfied with the explanation.

Despatches from Paris show that the Government is alive to the danger. Decrees have been issued forbidding pilgrims from leaving Algeria, Tunis and Senegambia this year for Mecca, and merchandise from India must be imported through five designated ports, of which Marseilles is one. At these ports of entry Indian merchandise will only be allowed to be landed after having been thoroughly fumigated and otherwise disinfected.

Quantities of anti-plague serum are being sent to Marseilles and to other French ports, and all ships from the East will be carefully examined and quarantined if necessary.

ENGLAND FEELS SAFE.

Englishmen think the chance of the plague getting a foothold in Great Britain is remote, owing to the excellent sanitary conditions. But on the Continent the alarm has increased and the continental press demands the most rigorous inspection of everything imported from India.

Some excitement was caused in Paris last week by the stopping of a small steamboat bound from London to Paris at Bougival, a village on the Seine, about four miles north of Versailles. A rumor spread that the steamer was infected with the plague. It leaked out that she had on board carpets and bedding from India, but it developed later that they had been stored in London for six months, so the authorities allowed her to proceed to Paris.

Along the unsanitary ports of the Mediterranean grave fear is expressed that the plague will be introduced on steamers from India. The French Minister for the Interior, M. Barthou, has ordered large quantities of anti-plague serum prepared and sent to the French ports.

At a meeting of the Council of Public Assistance in Paris a note of alarm was struck in a remark that infected Indian carpets may have been brought into the French capital already.

Dr. Brouardel moreover asserts that the danger of the plague reaching Europe is imminent, that preventive means in France only exist in

RUDIMENTARY FORM

that France could do nothing to prevent the entrance of the plague and could do little to combat it.

These remarks have created a deep impression, and at the Cabinet council held at the Elysee Palace, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Hanotaux, and the Minister for the Interior communicated to their colleagues and to the President the sanitary measures adopted by the Government.

These include forbidding pilgrims from leaving Tunis, Algeria and Senegambia for Mecca this year, and President Faure has signed a decree imposing severe penalties upon the importation of merchandise from the infected ports of India through other ports than Marseilles, Pauillac, St. Nazaire, Havre, Dunkirk and Algiers.

The Italian Sanitary Council has considered the situation and it is understood that it advises against a general quarantine, as being commercially ruinous and inefficacious.

In Germany the plague is viewed through Anglophobe glasses. Great Britain is attacked for allowing herself to be lulled into a feeling of false security by the Indian authorities and the Bombay press, which is charged with trying to conceal the danger.

A NEW BULLET.

The British War Department Have Adopted a Terrific Missile of War.

The British War Department was much disturbed to find that the stopping powers of the bullet of their service rifle, the Lee-Metford, is so feeble that in the Chitral campaign the soldiers lost confidence in their weapons. The bullet had great penetrative power, but a great many of the tribesmen hit by it advanced as though untouched, and it comparatively seldom caused instant death. One tribesman, who had been hit by six bullets was treated in hospital, and made a quick recovery. Steps were soon taken by the War Department to devise a more destructive missile, and experiments have been made with a bullet having a metal-covered point made thin, with a lead core slightly exposed. While the flight of the bullet through the air is not interferred with, as it strikes an object it spreads out, and has almost the terrific power of laceration of the explosive bullet. A French officer has endeavored to make a compromise between these two forms of projectiles by inventing a bullet having the maximum power of disabling, and the minimum power of killing. It is made of paper, with a thin shell of aluminum. It has the same precision as the ordinary bullet, but produces a perfectly smooth wound. The Austrian War Office is now making trials of the invention.