# 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.

Mr. A. S. Abbott, ex-City Clerk of London, is dead at the age of 85 years.

Spain has been added to the list of countries entitled to the preferential tariff.

Lieut.-Governor Mackintosh and family have removed from Regina to Victoria.

The plebiscite on total prohibition will likely be submitted to the Dominion voters next October.

Sir Adolphe Chapleau will likely be appointed Canadian Commissioner to the Paris Exposition.

Chatham is building a House of Industry, to cost $15,000, and to accommodate 80 persons.

E. E. Sheppard, Canadian Trade Commissioner to South America, will be in Victoria about Feb. 15.

The firm of J. H. Blumenthal & Sons one of the largest clothing dealers of Montreal, has assigned.

C. P. R. earnings during 1897 were $24,046,792, an increase of $3,305,196 over the earnings of 1896.

Customs duties collected at Montreal during the year amounted to $6,992,-360, an increase of $372,959 over 1896.

Over 300,420,000 feet of lumber have been shipped during the past season, the largest in the history of the trade.

A convention of Baptists of Quebec Province and the eastern portion of Ontario is being arranged. It will be held in February.

The contracts for supplies for the permanent military corps throughout the Dominion have been awarded at Ottawa.

A valuable collection of coins, the property of Canada, was stolen from the National Art Gallery in Ottawa on Tuesday night.

Mrs. Georgina Scott, a colored woman of Hamilton, who was burned by the explosion of a lamp a few weeks ago, is dead.

Gen. Montgomery Moore has forwarded to the War Office in England a large number of applicants for Fenian raid medals.

Very few more sealers will go out from Victoria this season, unless cheaper labor or higher prices for skins are obtained.

The Minister of Public Works has extended the time for receiving models for the monuments of Queen Victoria and Alexander Mackenzie.

No customs returns have been received for months from Vancouver, and it is said to be the intention to hold an investigation into the state of the office.

An iceboat went through the ice on Hamilton Bay, throwing seven people into the water. Miss Amelia Hall narrowly escaped drowning, going down two or three times before being rescued.

Chief Justice Richardson of the Northwest Territories has been appointed administrator in the place of Hon. Charles H. Mackintosh until the latter's successor as Lieutenant-Governor is appointed.

Instructions have been sent to the city postmasters that in cases of letters for the United Kingdom or the colonies mailed with only three cents in stamps the postmaster is to affix a two-cent stamp and let the letter go forward.

Judge Dugas of Montreal, and Mr. Frank Pedley of Ottawa have been appointed commissioners by the Dominion Government to investigate the charges preferred against the contractors building the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, for alleged ill-treatment of their employees.

GREAT BRITAIN.

The Earl of Wilton is dead at London.

The Princess Beatrice's new book has been published at Darmstadt.

It is said that England has guaranteed a loan to China of over $80,-000,000.

Major-General Gatacre will be sent from Aldershot to command the British troops in the Anglo-Egyptian expedition.

Great Britain has announced that she will refuse to recognize any special rights granted in Chinese ports, and will insist on the enjoyment of the same privileges as granted to any other power.

UNITED STATES.

A fire in Saginaw on Thursday morning destroyed eight million feet of lumber.

William Carson, a millionaire lumberman, died on Thursday at Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The Earl of Ava, the eldest son of the Marquis of Dufferin, arrived in New York on Thursday.

Mr. John Redmond is to lecture through the United States on the "Irish Patriots of Ninety-Eight."

E. Triplett, president of the Alcorn Agricultural and Medical College for Coloured People, at Rodney, Miss., has been murdered.

Fire at Stockton, Cal., on Wednesday destroyed two grain elevators containing 10,000 tons of wheat belonging to the Farmers' Union & Milling Co.

An express on the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf Railroad, was held up and robbed within the limits of Kansas City on Monday. The robbers escaped.

Plans for the buildings of the proposed Pan-American Exposition, on Cayuga Island, Niagara river, in 1899, have been awarded to architects Grace & Hyde, of New York, who will receive $700,000 for the work.

Another counterfeit silver certificate of the denomination of $100 was found in a Philadelphia bank. So numerous have these counterfeits become that the United States Government has decided to call in the issue.

Representative Johnson of North Dakota has introduced a bill in the United States Congress to repeal the law which has just gone into effect relative to pelagic sealing and the importation of sealskins taken by pelagic sealers.

GENERAL.

General Blanco will take the field against the Cuban insurgents.

Dr. Zaccharin, the famous physician of Czar Alexander III., is dead.

Emperor William has invoked the Pope's aid in the passing of the naval bill.

Ex-King Milan has been appointed commander-in-chief of the Servian army.

Major-General Yeattman-Biggs, who commanded the second division in the India frontier campaign is dead. He fell a victim to dysentery in India.

Dr. Scheuk, of Vienna University, claims to have discovered the secret of exercising an influence over animals so as to fix the sex of their offspring.

A despatch from Bermuda states that the steamer Scotia has commenced the work of laying the cable which is to establish communication with Turk's Island and Jamaica.

They are having a Presidential election in the Transvaal Republic. Mr. Kruger is opposed by Mr. Joubert, and it is said the third candidate. Mr. Schalkburger is running to split the opposing vote and secure Kruger's election.

## CURIOUS FACTS

**About the Two Most Remarkable Rivers in the World.**

From the beginning the Nile was an exceptional river. Its sources were unknown. There was those who thought that the Nile flowed down from heaven; that it welled up from streams that disappeared under the earth on another continent, or, at the very least, that its springs were inaccessible to man.

There was no such mystery about the Euphrates. From the remotest times its sources seem to have been known by hearsay, if not by observation, to the dwellers on the coast.

The Nile was beneficent even in its floods. The people learned to let its waters flow over their lands at the time of the inundation, and where they raised dikes and sunk canals and basins it was to let in the water not to keep it out.

The Euphrates also had its floods, but these were destructive. They scarred the soft earth with ravines and swept the fertile soil onward to build new lands along the edge of the Persian Gulf. The people anticipated the overflow with dread, and their most absorbing task was to restrain the river within bounds. They became more intimate with the earth than their Egyptian contemporaries. They learned how to mold the clay and to make their houses and the houses of their Kings and their gods out of the material under their feet. The Egyptians learned something about brick manufacture, but they had no need to depend wholly upon that sort of building material. It was easy for them to obtain stone, as their huge piles attest.

### VERY FINE WRITING.

A machine has been invented which is composed of exquisitely graduated wheels rubbing a tiny diamond point at the end of an almost equally tiny arm, whereby one is able to write upon glass the whole of the Lord's prayer within a space which measures the two hundred and ninety-fourth part of an inch in length by the four hundred and fortieth part of an inch in breadth, or about the measurement of the dot over the letter "i" in common print. With this machine anyone who understood operating it could write the whole 3,567,480 letters of the Bible eight times over in the space of an inch—a square inch. A specimen of this marvelous microscopic writing was enlarged by photography, and every letter and point was perfect and could be read with ease.

### RAIN FOR PLANTS.

Rain does plants comparatively little good until it enters the soil, where it can be absorbed by their roots. A daily record of the amount of water in the soil without indicate whether the indications were favorable or otherwise for certain crops. There is a plan for burying specially constructed electrodes in the soil, in order that by measuring the resistance to the passage of a current through the soil the amount of moisture can be ascertained. This method was suggested by the necessity of grounding thoroughly telephone and telegraph lines. If the terminals are not continually in a moist soil the lines do not work during dry seasons.

### OLDEST SAILING CRAFT.

The oldest sailing craft in the world is the so-called Gokstad ship, a Viking vessel, which was discovered in a sepulchral mound on the shores of Christiania Fjord. It is 1,000 years old.

### BURIAL ALIVE.

A Dublin lawyer, writing of an estate he had just bought, added: "There is a chapel upon it, in which my wife and I wish to be buried if God spares

# THE HOME.

### YUCCA.

A thick, sharp nest of dagger-pointed leaves,
Black-tipped from the gray mesa rises green,
And from its heart there springs amidst the sheen,
As a white-pinioned bird the sunshine cleaves;
As Hope, that life's sharp bitterness relieves—
A blossom-spire that greets the sky serene,
In calm dominion o'er the desert scene.

Thick hung with creamy bells that chime strange breves,
O Yucca gloriosa! Spirit soft,
And full of strange, mysterious subtle scent,
Slow swing thy fair white blossom bells aloft,
In the calm mesa's wide environment.
Ringing the dirge of that old race which oft
Heard music in thy bells and smiled content.

### A GOOD CUP OF TEA.

Almost everybody likes a good cup of tea, but not one person in a hundred who makes tea makes it good, says a writer.

It is necessary to have a good tea to start with. Nobody can make a good cup of tea from poor tea. Good tea, however, is sensitive to its treatment. A very poor cup of tea can be made from very good tea.

One of the hardest of all lessons to teach the average cook is to make a good cup of tea. No wonder; comparatively few mistresses themselves know how to do it. Those who appreciate good tea well made have to attend to the making themselves, and the custom of drawing the tea on the table, where it is to be served, becomes more and more popular.

To make good tea it is necessary to use water that has just come to a boil and is boiling when it is poured upon the tea. Water that has boiled before, or which is brought to the boiling point and then allowed to cool off before it is used, spoils tea.

Next it is necessary to use a porcelain pot. It must be clean. It must be rinsed with boiling water just before the tea is put in.

Tea should not boil.

It should not stand in the water more than three minutes. Unless one is going to serve only one cup apiece or wishes to brew fresh tea for the second cup around it is better to use imported teapots which have a colander-like top into which the tea is put and through which the water is poured. By pouring on a half cup of water, waiting a minute and pouring on the balance of the amount which is to be used the proper amount of tea strength is extracted, and the tea thus drawn in the pot can be kept hot under a cozy till the second cup is poured without losing its aroma or becoming bitter, as it always does when the tea-leaves stand in the water more than the first three minutes, or two, needed to brew the tea.

Some tea requires longer to draw than others. But in very many experiments with many teas I have never failed to make good tea from good tea, and to have the second cup as good as the first by using the teapot with the strainer, pouring the water through in two or three instalments, with not more than half a minute's time between them. These teapots can be had as low as any goods porcelain pot, even down to a quarter in price, by going to the Japanese tea and fancy stores.

Of all the teas in use probably none gives the immediate stimulating and soothing effect of a high-grade Japan tea. Mixed teas are not to be mentioned in the same day, and many of the highly advertised teas of the day fall far below the Japan tea in purity strength and flavor. Appreciative tea drinkers value the flavor of tea as much as connoisseurs in wine enjoy fine wines.

High class tea cannot be bought for a quarter a pound, but there are Japan teas to be had at all prices, and none of their grades are excelled by any teas at the price, and few are comparable for the qualities tea lovers value.

### TO COOK CHICKEN.

Pressed Chicken.—Take a large chicken, boil in very little water. When done take the meat from the bones, remove the skin, chop and season. Press into a large bowl, add the liquor and put on a weight. When cold cut in slices and eat with sliced lemon or cucumber pickle.

Pressed Chicken in Pig's Feet Liquor.—For one large fowl boil four pig's feet until they almost fall to pieces; take them out, and prepare for eating. Cut up your chicken, and drop it into the liquor from the boiled pig's feet; add a sliced onion or two, and some parsley; boil down until the liquor barely covers the chicken; boil until the meat drops from the bones, when lifted out, and remove all bones. Chop very fine, and drop in the remaining liquor; put in a dish that will serve as a mould; cover with a dish suited to help press it hard. When cold cut in thin slices; lay on slices of lemon for decoration, or some hard boiled egg sliced. The jelly of pig's feet is better to mould meat with than gelatine.

A chicken to be served whole may be cooked as follows: Wash the chicken and fill it with a bread stuffing and tie it into shape as for roasting. Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper and dredge thickly with flour. In a deep saucepan put three thin slices of salt pork, two slices of carrots half a green pepper, and one onion chopped fine. Place the pan over the fire and stir until the pork and vegetables are lightly browned. Lay the chicken in the pan and place two slices of pork upon it and put the pan in a hot oven for twenty-five minutes. At the end of that time take the pan from the oven, again dredge the chicken with flour, add one bay leaf, some sprigs of parsley, a stalk of celery, and two generous pints of stock. Cover the pan and return to the oven to cook one hour, then turn the chicken and cook half an hour longer. Place the chicken on a platter and strain the liquid around it. Garnish the platter with bunches of parsley.

The remains of a cooked chicken may be made into a delicious dish suitable for a course luncheon. Free one pint of chicken from bone and skin and chop the meat fine. Put one tablespoonful of butter in a frying pan, and when it is melted add two tablespoonfuls of bread crumbs and half a cup of stock or boiling water. Stir until the mixture boils, then take from the fire and add the chicken, some salt and pepper, and a little nutmeg. Beat two eggs and add, mixing them in thoroughly. Butter pop-over or custard cups and fill them two-thirds full with the mixture. Place them in a baking pan half filled with boiling water and bake in a good oven twenty minutes. When they are baked, carefully turn them out upon a heated platter and pour around them the following sauce: Rub three tablespoonfuls of butter with two of flour until a paste is formed. Put this into a saucepan with half an onion, one bay leaf, a stalk of celery, one blade of mace, and half a dozen peppercorns. Cover with one pint of white stock, put the pan over the back of the fire and let the contents simmer twenty minutes. Draw the pan to a hotter part of the fire and stir in half a pint of cream. Let the mixture come to the boiling point, and the sauce is ready to strain and use.

### CARING FOR HOUSE PLANTS.

In order to have the best success in growing house plants for the windows in winter, the first thing is good, healthy plants, free from insects. People often fail to revive a sickly plant. The aim should be to get good soil from the florist or from a pasture. It matters not whether it be a geranium or a palm, the best care is necessary for success. Nothing is more beautiful than a window filled with fine flowering plants in midwinter, but to have a lot of plants three feet high, not a leaf on them, is not inviting, and they require as much care as the healthy plants.

The practice of most plant buyers is to get them of the florist in the spring, plant them in the garden, and let them grow all summer. When the first frost comes they will lift the large plants, full of bud and bloom, out of the ground and pot them. In a few days the plants begin to lose their foliage and wilt. The best way to do is to cut away about two-thirds of the plant and make them start new roots and new growth, though it puts off flowering for some time. The best way to have good house plants is to buy what are wanted in May, put in good-sized pots, and plunge the pots in the earth. See that good drainage is obtained, put a small board on the bottom, to keep out the worms, and about every two weeks turn around to keep the roots from going through the bottom of pot. Keep well watered through the summer and by fall you will have fine plants that will produce more flowers than half a dozen poor ones. The best plants for flowering in winter are geraniums, Chinese primrose, calla, cyclamens, cineraria, carnations, Easter lilies, lilium, freesias, begonias, and many others.

Insects should never be seen on plants. Regular use of tobacco smoke at least twice each week will drive them away. The red spider often does much mischief before he is discovered. A dry, hot atmosphere favors his production. To prevent him, keep the plants moist and syringe them. Bulbs, ferns, palms, etc., make good plants for home culture. Most house plants do well in an average temperature of not more than 50 degrees at night, with 20 or 25 degrees higher in the day time. Plants are often put in the cellar for the winter. They will live, but not make as good a plant as a cutting rooted in March. We have to watch them closely in the greenhouses. If men in the florist business could raise plants by putting them under a bench in the winter they would get rich in a few years. Flowering plants need the best sunlight, while foliage plants will thrive without the bright sun. Plants should not be put up too high in a room, for the air is too hot and dry there.

### BULBS AND ANIMALS.

All bulbous plants that have been at rest during the early summer should now be looked over, as it is time to pot most of them. It requires early potting and good culture to get freesias in bloom by Christmas. It is almost impossible to have the soil too rich for these bulbs, and to have really good flowers liberal supplies of liquid food is necessary after they have began to grow.

To have Roman hyacinths early we must plant early; in fact, as soon as it is possible to obtain the bulbs. The largest bulbs do not always produce the most flowers, but, preferably, those that are hard and well matured. It is the custom with some growers to rush the crop of bulbs on the market to secure early sales at the risk of maturity. This can be easily detected in the bulb as it is then not hard and shows signs of premature ripening off at the crown. These delicate and fragrant flowers are in demand as early as Thanksgiving-time, and the bulbs should be planted as soon as they can be obtained.

Mignonette is desirable in winter, especially as it is never seen to so good advantage as when well cultivated in a house with a suitable temperature. Our summers are much too hot to favor the growth of good spikes, and it is well to sow some seeds of an approved strain now to have it when flowers are most scarce, just when chrysanthemums are past. Mignonette likes a cool temperture, say a maximum of fifty degrees, and a deep soil.

A word may be said for browallia speciosa major, which has proved desirable for pot culture in winter. A packet of seeds sown now will make nice plants for winter use and will flower along until late spring.

### CLEAN POTS FOR THIRSTY PLANTS.

Myra V. Norys writes that the more thirsty a plant is, the more, perhaps, does it need a clean pot, partly because it will have to be watered so frequently, and is thus likely to become clogged. For the same reason, plants of this character like a pot not too close in grain, though it must be said that there are some cheap pots made that are too coarse and porous for any plant that will endure sunshine. For a plant in shade possibly no pot can be too porous.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

**A Few Paragraphs Which May Be Found Worth Reading.**

Boston is to have a restaurant wherein only vegetable productions will be cooked and served.

Dogs are annually taxed two dollars each in Paris; but pups are exempt until they are weaned.

A French agriculturist has grafted tomatoes upon potatoes, with the result that this plant produces potatoes underground and tomatoes above.

A jealous husband in Bellefonte, Pa., thought his wife had too many admirers, and to make her beauty less attractive, he shot off the tip of her nose.

Stale sermons are not admired by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He advises his clergy to burn their sermons after they have been preached three times.

After sharpening an indelible lead pencil, John Renshaw, of Yonkers, N. Y., used the same knife to cut his corn. Blood poison resulted, and the man died.

Taxes are remitted on Paris houses which are unoccupied. If any part of the house is untenanted, a corresponding reduction is made in the amount of the tax.

A small inheritance came to a London pauper at the age of seventy. He invited his friends to a champagne supper, and he drank so freely that within three days he died.

An undertaker at Leavenworth, Kan., during the recent reunion of soldiers in that city, displayed in the window of his coffin shop a banner with these words, "Welcome, Comrades."

There are five centenarians in the little village of Friendsville, Pa. They are Mrs. Mary Callen, aged 104; John Gibson, 102; William Seeley, 102; Mrs. Philaney Golden, 100; and Mrs. Helen Garcey, 100.

The dairyman of Syria marches his goats to the houses of his patrons, and milks them on the street in sight of his customers. Should they express a wish for the milk of any particular goat, the wish is gratified.

If one dollar were loaned for one hundred years at six per cent., with the interest annually collected and added to the principal, the investment would amount to $340. At eight per cent it would amount to $2,203; at ten per cent., $13,809.

A gentleman who needed wifely attentions was recently married at Van Beuren, Ark. He interrupted the ceremony long enough to adjust one of his suspenders, both of which were held in place at the back by the restraining influence of one button.

A cord of wood, weighing 4,000 pounds will yield nine gallons of alcohol, 200 pounds of acetate of lime, 25 gallons of tar, and 85 bushels of charcoal. Wood alcohol is almost a perfect substitute for grain alcohol for mechanical and manufacturing purposes.

The outfit for the trolley railway in Birmingham, England, came entirely from the United States. The cars were built in Philadelphia, the rails were made in Pittsburgh, the boilers in Erie, the engines in Milwaukee, and the electric fittings in Schenectady.

Young ladies take up the collections in the First Baptist Church of Trenton, N.J. A marked increase in the attendance has been noticed since this novel feature was introduced. The clergymen of other churches in the vicinity criticise this innovation, and one of them has said, "Very soon the lady collectors will be required to shoot around the aisles on roller skates."

Postmaster Van Cott, of New York, recently received this letter from an ambitious young lady in a rural town: "I am an actoress, and kan play Shakspeer. For seven months I have akted the best parts in our Sunday skool charades. Kan you get me a chance to star at a New York theatre? My age is sixteen, my eyes is blue, and I am so awful ambishus I kan hardly sleep."