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.

Another case of smallpox has developed at Montreal.

Hamilton City Council has decided to abolish statute labor tax.

Toronto had 61 deaths, 55 births and 19 marriages during January.

There is talk of a Templar building, to cost $50,000, being erected in Hamilton.

Mr. Mulock has given notice in the House of the bill to abolish the superannuation system.

The value of exports from Manitoba during January exceeded five and a half million dollars.

Chief Twiss of Dundas has been appointed High Constable of Wentworth County.

Customs collections at Brantford for January show an increase of $5,250 over January 1897.

A pulp mill is to be erected at St. Joseph d'Alma near Quebec, by a company with a million dollars capital.

The financial statement of Nova Scotia shows the year's expenditure as $853,698, and a deficit of $21,458.

The C. P. R. contemplates making many improvements on the western section of the system during the present year.

Lieut.-Col. W. E. Hodgins, of the Governor-General's Foot Guards, has been appointed A. D. C. to the Governor-General.

The Canadian Pacific Railway announce that their direct cable connection between Halifax and Jamaica is now open for business.

Sir Adolphe and Lady Chapleau have taken up their residence in Montreal, and his Honor announces his intention of resuming his practice of law.

Dr. Roche, M. P. for Marquette, is lying seriously ill in the Winnipeg Hospital, and will not be able to attend to his parliamentary duties for some time.

The duty collected at the Ottawa customs house for January last, was $34,914, compared with $26,303 for the same month last year, an increase of $8,691.

Miss Cole of Hamilton, about 65 years of age, on Tuesday was found dead in a miserable house in which she lived alone on Jackson street, her body being frozen stiff.

F. W. Boehlofsky, of Vancouver, has secured $2,000 damages from the British Columbia Electric Company for the loss of his right arm, as the result of a tramway accident.

The annual report of the Department of Marine just issued show the expenditure for the fiscal year to be $792,970, about $39,700 less than the Parliamentary vote.

Graham Waddell, a farmer of Newmarket, Ont., is in the General Hospital, Toronto, suffering from what is known as an X-rays burn in the abdomen, which refuses to heal.

Pressure is being brought to bear upon the Government to place an export duty on nickel ores. The matter will be left until Parliament has been heard from on the subject.

The customs returns for Hamilton for January, 1898, show duties collected amounting to $44,753.82, as compared with $43,042.68 for January, 1897, an increase of $1,711.14.

The Customs Department has received $47,000 from the collector at Dawson City, making $85,000 in duties received from the Yukon since the opening of navigation last year.

It is reported at Lethbridge that the Alberta Railway & Coal Company have sold to McKenzie and Mann for the Stickeen-Teslin road steel rails for 80 miles of the roadbed, and also four locomotives.

Mr. Charles M. Hays, General Manager of the G.T.R., denies the report that the Grand Trunk is interesting itself in Premier Greenway's scheme for building a line from Winnipeg to Lake Superior.

An outbreak of black diphtheria is reported at one of the camps on the Crow's Nest Pass Railroad. Two young men from Nova Scotia were left to die in a box car without medical attendance or comfort.

The Vancouver Board of Trade has established an agency in Seattle, Wash., to afford information of Vancouver's advantages over the United States cities in supplying outfits for the Klondike.

The Supreme Court of British Columbia has quashed the conviction of a coal mine owner for employing Chinese in the mines, on the ground that, while the Act prohibited the employment of Chinese, it did not provide any penalty for its infraction.

Mr. Charles Stiff, formerly Superintendent of the Great Western Railway, will probably succeed Mr. C. R. Smith as Secretary of the Hamilton Board of Trade. Mr. Smith's resignation has been accepted, as he is going to San Francisco.

Another fire insurance company has been formed to have its head office in Toronto. The company will be known as the Equity Fire Insurance Company. It has an authorized capital of $1,000,000, subscribed capital of $300,000, and paid-up capital so far of $30,000

GREAT BRITAIN.

Grass is being cut in the parks of London.

There is said to be an epidemic of threats to kill actors in London.

The London Morning Post approves the suggestion that Canada should organize a naval militia.

The late Charles P. Villiers' seat for Wolverhampton has been captured by the Conservatives, Dr. Gibbons being elected there by 111 majority.

The War Office has requested the resignation of Albert Frederick Calvert, charged with purchasing the colonelcy of a Middlesex volunteer regiment for $8,000.

In the course of his tour of the United States and Canada, Prince Albert Leopold, the Belgian heir presumptive, will pay a visit to President McKinley, it is asserted in connection with the affairs of the Congo Free State. The visit will be of an official character.

UNITED STATES.

The price of coal has advanced 10 cents per ton in New York.

H. C. Frick, of Pittsburg, Pa., has purchased at Paris, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret's masterpiece, "Blessing the Bread."

The new United States postage stamps are out. The one-cents are green and the five-cents dark blue. The new American post cards are a little smaller than the old ones.

Thos. L. Thompson, ex-United States Minister to Brazil, ex-Congressman and editor, committed suicide at Santa Rosa, Cal., on Tuesday, by cutting his throat. Despondency is supposed to have been the cause.

The trial of Sheriff Martin and his 82 deputies began in the Luzerne County Court, at Wilkesbarre, Pa., on Tuesday. They are charged with shooting and killing 22 striking miners, and wounding over 50 more at Lattimer in September last.

A. E. Standen, of Chicago, travelling salesman, is about to start a campaign of advertising religion. He is of the opinion that if dead walls, etc., can be used to advantage in the sale of liquor, tobacco, etc., they can be put to the same use in the sale of the Bible.

GENERAL.

Fire on Monday destroyed the village of Randeguee, Switzerland. Three lives were lost.

Deaths from the bubonic plague at Bombay during the past seven days number 927.

Latest reports say that 20 persons were killed and 50 injured as a result of the recent earthquake at Balikeer, Asia Minor.

The Salvation Army has proposed to the Government of New South Wales to establish a farm as a reformatory for boys and girls.

A Government inspector who paid a visit to a diamond mine near Praetoria saw diamonds unearthed of formation similar to the Kimberley diamonds.

It is reported at Berlin that a conspiracy has been unearthed at Teheran, Persia, to murder the Shah and to instal a younger brother at the palace.

The export and import trade of New South Wales for the past year showed an increase of £1,070,000. The exports of gold showed an increase of £907,145.

A man named Luis Coro Lazo, who recently returned to Cuba from the African prisons, exploded a bomb at the private residence of the Conservative ex-Mayor of Havana, Senor Miquel Diaz. A number of doors were broken, and a large hole made in the house. The Diaz family and those inhabiting neighbouring houses were panic-stricken. Lazo was captured while attempting to escape.

HER HUSBAND CAME TO CHURCH.

Mrs. Rose Uttered a Shriek and Fainted — Thought It Must Be His Ghost.

During Sunday evening's service at the Baptist chapel at Milmont, Penn., Mrs. Lauretta Rose occupied one of the pews, and when a man was shown to the same pew the woman uttered a shriek, swooned, and fainted. The man was her husband, a respectable mechanic and a good citizen. He assisted in restoring his wife to consciousness. She was then helped home, where at midnight she was able to explain as follows:

"When I saw the man enter the pew I knew he looked like my husband. Then I thought it was his shadow, or his spirit, and that something terrible had happened to him, probably death. I knew that it could not be my husband, for he had not been to church in twenty years."

The husband says he just took a notion to go to church, but had no idea he would frighten his wife in that way.

PENALTIES OF A BACHELOR.

The ancient Romans were severe with their bachelors, who were made to pay heavy fines; and worse than that, Camillus, after the siege of Veii, is recorded to have compelled them to marry the widows of the soldiers who had fallen in war. In the time of Augustus married men were preferred for public office. The Romans who had three children were exempted from personal taxes, and the bachelors had to pay them. Plato condemned single men to a fine, and at Sparta they were driven at certain times to the Temple of Hercules by the women, who castigated them in true military style. In the French settlements of Canada women were sent over after the men and the single men that they might be forced to marry, were subjected to a heavy tax and to restrictions on their business and their movements generally.

KIND-HEARTED BRIDGET.

Cooking-School Girl—Bridget, what did you do with that cake I baked yesterday? Mr. Finefello is here, and I want to give him some.

Bridget—Wull, mum, I'll get it fur ye if ye say so; but sure it isn't me wud be discooragin' a noice young man like that.

AGRICULTURAL

PRUNING OF FRUIT TREES.

Whoever attempts to prune a fruit tree of any sort before cutting off any limb, branch, twig or fruit-spur, should be able to assign a scientific reason for pruning off one or more of such portions of the tree-tops, writes S. E. Todd. If a pruner is not able to give a scientific reason for cutting back or removing any part of the top, he will be quite as likely to damage a tree as to improve the growth or the fruit productiveness of any tree.

When I was a small boy my father sent an illiterate wood-chopper to prune his apple trees, using no tools but a wood-chopper's ax The man was an expert with a woodman's ax He knew how to chop down trees, how to trim off the branches, and how to pile up the brush and the wood; but he had not the slightest conception of the scientific knowledge essential to enable a pruner to prune a tree so as to improve its lateral or its upward growth, or its fruit-productiveness. Consequently he went to work in the orchard as he would when clearing ground of a forest. Such pruning! Such reckless cutting and slashing and such damaging vandalism was really provoking and heart-sickening!

The trees were large and in full bearing; very few of them needed any more pruning than cutting off, here and there, a small branch. But that pruner chopped off with his keen-edged ax many large and leading limbs from every tree. Many of the limbs were fourteen to eighteen feet long, and six to eight inches in diameter, at the butt end where they were severed from the parent stocks. Then the branches that were allowed to remain were all trimmed neatly and clean of every twig, leaf-spur and fruit-spur, leaving nothing but a large bush at the end of a long limb. I well remember how long, and destitute of branches and twigs, most of the limbs were. In many instances more of the top was slashed away than remained. Huge and gaping wounds on every tree, which were never covered with wax of any sort, were exceedingly damaging to those trees. From the time of that reckless pruning, the rapid decay of the most fruitful trees commenced. Every season the yield of fruit continued to diminish. Many of the trees, I well remember, continued to decay, at the heart, until there was nothing left except an old, half-decayed tree, standing on two prongs, like an old decayed tooth.

Now, let us contemplate a better and more philosophical mode of pruning. Here is a point of immense importance, which only a few persons understand. Every fruit tree (if it is a generous producer of fruit) will send out fruit-spurs, on the sides of all the limbs and small branches, covering the sides and upper surface with fruit-spurs and leaf-spurs from the body of the tree to the extremity of the branches. These should never be removed; yet many owners of orchards, with saw or hatchet clip off every fruit-spur from the main part of the large limbs and small branches, leaving only a denuded branch.

Fruit-spurs are small shoots only one or two inches long. These should not be cut off, nor jammed off by one's feet when he is plucking the fruit. Fruit-spurs produce fruit-buds in one season for the crop of fruit the following season. Leaf-buds may appear one year and the following season they will produce fruit-buds, and the succeeding season the fruit-buds will yield fruit. Dame Nature is a scientific philosopher. She would cover all the large branches with leaf-buds or fruit-buds and leaves, for the purpose of protecting the bare branches from the scalding heat of the summer's sunshine. That is one point of transcendent importance to be remembered by every one who owns a fruit tree of any sort. Still another consideration should be well remembered. When the fruit-spurs of any tree are replete with fruit, the crop will not be half so liable to be shaken off by furious winds as is the case when the fruit grows at the extremity of long and swaying limbs. Most cherry trees will produce fruit-buds in abundance on every limb, and branch if they are not cut off, or jammed off by the reckless feet of people who pluck the fruit. Thoughtless pickers will often claw off a large cluster of cherries and take also the fruit-buds, thus destroying the crop of fruit for the next season. Such pruning of fruit trees is always very damaging to the fruit productiveness and to the growth of any fruit tree.

We have only one large cherry tree, the limbs and branches of which are well covered with fruit-spurs. No one is allowed to climb into thatt ree-top to pluck cherries until he or she is made to understand that the fruit-spurs must not be clawed off with the fruit. The branches of our apple and pear trees are well covered with fruit-spurs; and the spurs always yield a generous amount of fruit. It is a wrong practice to prune away all the small branches, twigs, fruit-buds and leaf-buds from the interior of a tree-top, making it like the interior of a tent. The old stereotyped rule is to cut away the interior of a tree-top so as to let in the sunshine and air. There is no sound reasoning in such direction for pruning trees. The foliage at the extremities of the branches will exclude all direct sunshine. Fresh air and wind will sweep through a tree-top, even when the top is so dense that a person cannot climb, around among the branches. Fruit trees require but little pruning. Many need none at all. The fruit-buds should not be removed at all.

Every tree that needs pruning should be pruned when the superfluous branches are small. When the branches are allowed to grow ad libitum or at random until they are as large as a man's arm, it will be very damaging to the tree to cut off such large branches. If we examine any fruit trees and some ornamental trees we can see at the point of articulation or junction of the limbs with the main stem a sort of crease or seam or cicatrice extending around the base of each branch. That natural seam indicates the better place for severing the limb from the main stem. If a branch is sawed off at that seam, the wound will always heal much sooner than if the kerf or cut was made on either side of it. I have directed the attention of many intelligent men to this important point; but not one of them had ever observed that seam. Wherever I go about the country or city or village, I see many fruit trees and ornamental trees ruined by ignorant pruners, who saw off large branches several inches from the main stem; whereas, they should be severed at the seam indicated in the growth of the bark.

My own practice has always been to keep a small kettle of grafting wax on hand, by melting a pound of rosin with a pound of tallow, which is applied warm to the wounds, with a small paint brush. If this proportion of rosin and tallow should be too brittle, add a small quantity of linseed oil. Should the wax be too soft, add more rosin.

CARE OF CIRCULAR WOOD SAWS.

Farmers who employ circular saws for cutting wood for fuel and other purposes may be interested in the views of a saw manufacturer regarding their use and care. There are five points of special importance for the user to observe:

1. Keep the saw perfectly round. This is attained by jointing off points of teeth before the saw is filed. It is conveniently done by holding a short round iron bar at back of saw squarely across teeth and touch points of teeth as lightly as possible while the saw revolves, so that each tooth just strikes the bar when held firmly in one position. Repeat this process with every third or fourth filing.

2. Saws must run true. This requires that the arbor and mandrel collars are true. If they are so and the saw winds in and out of line, when turned round by hand while on the arbor, from a gauge held on one side below base of teeth; then the saw is sprung out of the true. Should the same run true when turned by hand but wobble when running at full speed, it has been run not by being pinched in sawing. In either of these cases the saw should be sent to a saw factory to be repaired.

3. Keep all the teeth the same size and shape. Retain the original shape of the teeth by proper care in filing. Take a diagram of shape of teeth when the saw is new for guidance as the saw wears down. Keep the teeth all spaced alike.

4. Give each tooth exactly the same amount of set. By using a gauge and setting each tooth accurately to it no difficulty need be had in setting the teeth.

5. Sharpen the teeth properly. This operation depends upon the use of the properly shaped files and the skill of the filer. Twelve-inch mill saw files and nine-inch round smooth files, in careful hands, will keep the bottom of each tooth round and the points sharp. Give the teeth only a slight bevel on front and top. File half the teeth from each side of the saw. Never run a saw after it becomes dull; keep it sharp by frequent filings. Attention to these matters will keep the saw in its best condition until worn out.

POULTRY NOTES.

Overfeeding will spoil any flock.

Do not use fat, clumsy males in breeding.

In breeding fowls, select for frame and bone substance.

If you are breeding fancy fowls buy a standard of excellence.

One secret of breeds for profit is the feed and care given them.

In nearly all cases hens learn to eat eggs from having them broken in the nest.

One objection to a small poultry house is the difficulty in keeping the nests clean.

If the fowls have sore feet or nimble feet, it means that the roosts are too high.

Leaves, cut straw or dry dirt are good to scatter grain in, to compel the hens to scratch.

A CHANCE FOR INVENTORS.

The Lazy Man's Idea of the Public Yearning for a Stove Blacking Machine.

"If somebody would only invent a stove-blacking machine!" said the lazy man. "Now, there is a chance. I build the fires in my house, and about once in so often I black the stove. I would rather build forty fires than black the stove once. It is hard work, and I get my hands all covered with stove blacking, and I don't believe I make a very good job of it, either. I should say that some simple machine, not very costly, that a man could load with blacking and just hold up against the stove and hear it go b-z-z-z-z-z for a minute, and then there you are with the stove all blacked, would be received with enthusiastic if not vociferous approval by all."

OCCUPATION AND LONGEVITY.

Two Butchers Die to One Clergyman — Alcohol Responsible.

The British registrar general, Dr. Tatham, has just issued a supplemental report showing the influence of occupation upon male mortality between the ages of 25 and 65, during 1890, 1891 and 1892. According to his figures, the clergy lead the healthiest lives. Their number in the United Kingdom in 1891 amounted to 36,800, and they died at every age period less rapidly than any other class in the community. All necessary corrections being made, and the general mortality of males being represented by 1,000, that of the clergy was no more than 533. The legal profession, as composed of barristers and solicitors, included 19,978 persons, and their death rate was greatly larger, reaching 821, as against 1,000 for all males, and as against 953, for all occupied males. Among 26,244, "law clerks," the mortality was 1,070 as compared with 953, and was largely due to diseases commonly associated with intemperance. The medical profession at the last census, included 18,936 males, physicians, surgeons and general practitioners. The comparative mortality figure for them was 966, as against the above mentioned 821 for lawyers, 533 for the clergy and 953 for occupied males in the aggregate. The mortality from alcoholism among railroad employes and stokers is the same as among the clergy, or only 2, while among guards, porters and pointsmen it is 5, which is still considerably less than half the standard figures for occupied males. An excellent place in the tables is held by agriculturists, including farmers and laborers, justifying the belief that an active life in the open air will do much to neutralize the effects of exposure to cold and wet. The liquor trades are very fatal to those who are engaged in them; and curiously enough the mortality among butchers is exceedingly high. Their comparative figure is 1,095, so that, roughly speaking, in an equal number of both, two butchers would die to a single clergyman. With regard to the causes of these great variations in the mortality of different classes of workers, Dr. Tatham inclines to the belief that the abuse of alcohol is the chief cause of excessive death rates.

A GENEROUS DUCHESS.

The chameleon as a pet nurtured by fair femininity is no longer a favor. The gorgeous Brazilian beetle is occasionally allowed to roam at will about my lady's coiffure, but he is becoming very scarce. And now there is a new pet, even more strangely at variance with feminine nerves, than either the lizard or the beetle. What do you think it is? Nothing more or less than a tiny turtle, kept alive in golden chains, his shell studded with precious stones, and his life one round of pampered pleasure.

Fancy having a turtle clawing its cold, clammy way about your breast, neck and head! Well, it's surely no worse than a lizard or a beetle, and is more of an ornament, by reason of the jeweler's art. In Paris jeweled tortoises are quite the rage. So we may look for an invasion of the ugly little creatures any day.

Isn't it strange that a woman who will go into hysterics over the sight of a poor, inoffensive, scared little mouse will nurture these other specimens of the lower animal life? Mother Eve early showed a fondness for the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and Cleopatra took an asp to her bosom. So why should not our modern Eves and Cleopatras shower their affections upon turtles? It is woman's privilege to be contradictory, and the mouse will ever be a monster in her eyes.

The pet turtles are very small, about thirty millimetres in length, according to the Parisian standard. The shells are covered with an ornament of filigree gold, in which are set as many gems as the owner may wish. Some have been thus ornamented with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires to the value of a thousand dollars. Imagine a turtle less than an inch long, being worth a thousand dollars!

A tiny ring is run through the edge of the shell and to this is attached a gold chain of very fine links. A pin at the other end secures the chain to the wearer's bodice or hair, just as she pleases, and the bejeweled captive is allowed the length of his chain to make his explorations.

The little reptiles appear in no way injured by the work upon their shells, nor do they seem to be inconvenienced by their cargoes of precious stones. It is said that in time they even display an affection for their mistresses and show other symptoms of unexpected intelligence. This claim, however, need not be taken without a grain of salt.

NOT IMPROBABLE.

"Think the Powers will take the whole of China?"

"I suppose so; but perhaps they'll take only a part and make the rest pay indemnity for getting into trouble with them."

FRAGRANT RICHES.

Klondike Sam—I dreamed of wealth last night.

Zero Jim—Dreamed of the yellow gold, eh?

Klondike Sam—No; I dreamed I was back in mother's old kitchen on baking day.