

CITY CHIMES.

Many houses in our city are sadly in need of being freshened up with a little paint, and it seems as if, now that the weather is daily becoming brighter and clearer, thus showing up such deficiencies, it would be a good time to have it done. Strangers visiting Halifax stigmatize it as the dirtiest city they ever saw, and while it may not be quite as bad as that, there is room for vast improvement. There is no natural reason why Halifax should be a dirty city: on the contrary, the air is particularly pure, and the situation conducive to sanitation and health. The majority of our householders can well afford to keep their dwellings and other houses that are rented or leased in first rate repair, and they ought to have the spunk to do it. Fancy having strangers remark on the dinginess of our city! It is a reproach to every man or woman who owns a house, and this state of affairs should be changed without delay.

The fifth subscription concert of the Orpheus Club was given on Tuesday evening last in Orpheus Hall to a large and very appreciative audience. The vocalists were Mrs. H. Garry and Mr. F. C. Sobeski. Mrs. Hagarty, in No. 8, "Salva Regina," gave the audience a genuine musical treat, rendering the song with much taste and expression. In the Duo with Mr. Sobeski Mrs. Hagarty's part was taken in a creditable manner. Mr. F. C. Sobeski, who appeared in Halifax for the first time during the present season, possesses a well tuned and pleasing voice, which is unquestionably a welcome addition to the musical talent of the city, but we could wish Mr. Sobeski would give to us the vowel sounds in pure Saxon, by doing so he would greatly add to the enjoyment of his audience. The dedication solo, "Marianna," composed by Herr Doering, and played by him on the 'cello on Tuesday evening, must have been inspired by deep, full and tender passion, and it is not surprising that as a result of this the Marianna in question is now Frau Doering. Herr Doering's other selections were played with much skill, and seldom have we heard a performer who could draw from the middle and upper registers of the 'cello such clear, soft sympathetic music. The clarionette solo of Mr. J. G. Covey and the harp solo of Miss Page were novel and pleasing features of the programme. The Haydn Club, which appeared in four numbers of the programme, bears evidence of careful training in systematic work. The Club since its re-organization has made rapid strides, and if it continues on its present line of improvement is destined to become as popular as good orchestras always are. In the rendition of "Semiramide" the running passages were remarkably smooth and grateful to the ear, but the fuller chords were weak in the fortes and passages, while the time in several places was not strictly kept. Barring these minor drawbacks the performances of the Club were exceedingly creditable both to the members and to the conscientious leader, Herr Klingensfeld.

The convocation of Dalhousie College in the Academy of Music on Thursday of last week was attended by a large number of the fair sex, very few gentlemen being present, even standing room was scarcely available after the proceedings had begun. The programme was an interesting one, and was listened to with attention. The interruptions of the students in the form of songs for each graduate as he came forward altogether prevented the hearing of anything that were said on the stage. The valedictory addresses were both good, but the one delivered for the law class by Humphrey Mellish, of Charlottetown, deserves special mention, being witty and clever all through. The valedictorians were as usual made the recipients of several tributes in the form of bags, baskets, etc., full of the dear knows what. One would think that something new in the way of convocation honors from the freshmen might be discovered. The public are, to say the least, becoming accustomed to these old ones and would appreciate a change. There were no lady graduates this year.

The public examination of the pupils in the Halifax Academy took place last Friday. A large number of prominent educationists were present, besides many others interested in the proceedings. The pupils of the six departments numbered nearly 200, and the examinations proved them very proficient in the various branches of study pursued during the past year, and the teachers deserve credit for the high standing taken by the pupils.

The influx of summer visitors to our province is about beginning, and every effort should be made to spread the fame of Nova Scotia as a summer resort for the half baked denizens of Uncle Sam's domain. The good steamer "Halifax" does a large part of the work of bringing the travellers hither, and is deservedly popular, as the route is direct and takes but a short time. Her genial commander, Capt. Hill, is a universal favorite, and those who place themselves under his protection may expect to be well cared for. Inquiries are constantly coming from the States asking for information about summering places in N. S., and the best way to reach them. It would be a good idea if people wishing to take summer boarders were to let it be known in the States. They would certainly secure their desire.

The W. C. T. U. of Halifax is about opening a new and important department of work by providing a recreation and reading room for girls employed in the city. The sum of between four and five hundred dollars has been contributed to this object by a benevolent gentlemen of Halifax, and at his request the room will be open all day for a resting place for ladies and girls, and in the evening efforts will be made to make it attractive to working girls. The Union is making an appeal for funds for this object and it is to be hoped that they will meet with a liberal response.

PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW.

DOMINION.—When will parliament adjourn? This is the question that our representatives at Ottawa are asking of each other, but we fancy that at the present moment even the Government might find this question a difficult one to answer. The Banking Bill, which is by all odds the heaviest act of the session, has been passed through its several stages with but few amendments. It goes without saying that this bill meets the approval of the great majority of persons holding bank stocks, but to the great mass of the people it affords but little security of the redemption of bank notes in the event of a failure. The larger banks would have doubtless been willing to place with the Dominion authorities sufficient security to guarantee their note issue, but the smaller banks would have been crippled, and hence their influence has been thrown in favor of the banking act of 1890. The report of the Committee of the House, charged with the duty of investigating the circumstances which led General Middleton to confiscate and appropriate to himself a large and valuable lot of furs, was unbiassed and without party coloring, and nothing is now left for the General to do excepting to send in his resignation, which will undoubtedly be accepted with pleasure. The Franchise Act has been fully pruned, and each year it is becoming more and more symmetrical. It is proposed now not to disqualify a voter because he happens to be away from his home for a period of a few months, the limit within which disqualification can be avoided is six months. Another good idea is that Indians are not to have the right to vote unless they are located upon land held by them in fee simple, thus, in order to become a citizen, the Indian is obliged to live like a civilized being. Some years ago Dartmouth was very anxious to obtain railway communication with the railways of the Province, and with commendable zeal, though with somewhat undue haste, the town agreed to contribute some \$4,000 a year for twenty years towards the accomplishment of its object. The railway was built, but the subsidy was never paid, and the town is now seeking to get rid of the awkward obligation. Of course the town never should have made such a promise, as Dartmouth is as much entitled to railway communication as are her sister towns in other parts of the Province. Moreover, the railway communication given the town was little better than none at all, it being but a costly siding, without any corresponding advantages. Dartmouth is destined to be the terminus of a railway system, and her people should never rest satisfied to be side tracked as they now are. The gophers are getting to be a perfect pest in some portions of the North-West Territories, and we are pleased to learn that an active gopher war is to be carried on during the summer with a view to their extermination.

COMMERCIAL.

During the past week trade on the whole has continued quiet, and, excepting in certain lines of groceries, fruits and some little movement in dry goods, gives as yet but few signs of opening out. The best features noticeable are that payments continue to be fairly good, and matters in the country seem in a little better position for the movement of goods out of traders' hands.

Though many of our wholesale houses have reason to complain of the present dull state of trade, the general outlook continues to brighten as spring advances. The time is near when business must naturally expand, and some of our merchants look for the largest and briskest maritime season's business that has been experienced in Canada for many years.

The great drawback to trade in the present day is that there are too many people in business, and it becomes simply a matter of the "smartest" winning. Too much leniency is shown to insolvents who are able to effect a composition on easy terms, and are thus enabled to undersell their neighbors in the same line who are striving to pay 100 cents on the dollar. There ought to be more discrimination in granting compositions in order to protect solvent customers. Though one can scarcely conceive of competition becoming keener than it is to-day, it is the opinion of many that the great tug of war for commercial existence has yet to come, and that preparations are already being made for it by merchants reducing their personal expenses to meet the smaller profits of business.

It has been proposed in parliament to authorize the government to confiscate all unclaimed bank dividends and balances in connection with which no transactions have occurred for five years. The proposition is preposterous. To misappropriate these funds would be an unwarranted interference with private rights. The proper course would be to order that these unclaimed sums be advertised so that the owners might be reminded of them, or their heirs be given a chance to claim their rights. But for Parliament to step in and appropriate monies in the banks that have not been claimed for five years would be an arbitrary interference with the rights of property. The banks, as custodians of the people's funds, are in possession of a trust that must be held inviolable. Once establish the precedent of a government raid upon unclaimed dividends and balances, and what other funds would be safe from spoliation.

Eradstreet's report of the week's failures:—

	Week	Prev.	Weeks	corresponding to				
	April 25, week	1890	1889	April 25, week	1888	1887	Failures for the year to date.	
United States..	174	166	181	193	158	4085	1890	1889
Canada.....	38	29	25	26	20	575	1888	1887
							3736	3807
							645	652
							455	

DRY GOODS.—No material change in the position of this market has occurred since our last—the quiet sorting-up business then noted continuing. Reports from the country indicate a somewhat better movement out of traders' hands, and more repeat orders are reported by wholesale houses, but there is nothing very special in this. Payments are of fair volume, and the movement out of city retailers' hands as far as can be learned is about up