

## CITY CHIMES.

His Grace Archbishop O'Brien entertained a number of gentlemen at his residence on Monday evening.

The Second Orpheus Concert took place in Orpheus Hall last night.

The arrival of several hundreds of books for the Citizen's Free Library is a piece of good news. The lot was purchased from a London library and cost \$720.

A large number of the little folks and their mammas are busy thinking of what to wear at Mrs Leigh's fancy ball on the 30th. No doubt many original and pretty costumes will be the result.

Santa Claus will come around next week and bestow his favors on good little boys and girls. The faith that is placed in Santa Claus is sometimes wonderful to behold, but scepticism creeps even into the hearts of youngsters, as for example when pater said to Tommy: "Don't fret my boy, Santa Claus won't forget you." Tommy replied with unusual insight in one so young, "That's all right, dad; I ain't afraid he'll forget the tin whistle I asked for, but I can't help being a trifle nervous about his recollecting the bicycle and the watch and chain." Tommy was ambitious, as well as wise beyond his years.

The Exhibition rink was opened last Saturday. A large number of people were present, and enjoyed skating to the music of the West Riding Band.

A well known and popular snow shoe club intend giving a ball at an early date. It promises to be a pleasurable event.

On Monday evening a dinner was given at the Halifax Hotel to Mr. M. H. Condon, the popular captain of the Union Engine Company. The city fathers, the board of fire-wardens, the recorder of the city, the assistant city clerk, the city electrician, and a large number of well known citizens were present. The special reason for the gathering was to present a gold watch and chain accompanied by an address to Captain Condon. The watch and chain are very handsome and bear the inscription, engraved by Mr. Larkin, on the inside of the case: "Presented to Capt. M. H. Condon, by the Union Engine Company, 1768., Halifax, N. S., Dec. 15th, 1890." On the outside is the captain's monogram. Attached to the chain as a charm are a fireman's helmet and cross brooches. Captain Condon replied feelingly to the address from the officers and men of the company. A number of toasts were honored, and jolly songs were sung by several gentlemen. The proceedings were brought to a close by the company singing Auld Lang Syne.

Christmas is in the air. The cold weather and the crowds of holiday shoppers one sees in the street combine to impress this upon us. The displays in the shops are not however anything like up to what they were last year. Perhaps the reason of this may be that it was overdone last year, and that our merchants are afraid of losing money on too heavy an outlay for the Christmas trade. Be this as it may, there is still much buying and selling going on and there is a reasonable selection of novelties from which one may choose their gifts. One of the attractions at present is the train in Cragg Brothers' window which travels by steam power. Before this window not only youngsters but grown men stand open mouthed, gazing at the wonderful sight. Every child in the city ought to be taken to see it.

A fan drill entertainment will be given in the Academy of Music next Monday evening for the benefit of the Church Hospital. It will be under the patronage of General Sir John Ross, Lieut.-Governor Daly, Col. Ryan and officers of the R. A., Col. Hill and officers of the R. E. and Lieut.-Col. Nesbit and officers of the West Riding Regiment. Sixteen young ladies will go through a fan drill, which will be followed by a minute dance by ladies and gentlemen in olden times costumes. The entertainment will conclude with a farce "The Aria Bell." The band of the West Riding Regiment will be present. As this affair is for the benefit of a deserving institution we trust a full house will greet those who have taken so much trouble to prepare for it.

The recital given in the Orpheus Hall on Thursday evening of last week under the auspices of the W. C. T. U. was a great success. Despite the stormy day nearly all the tickets were sold, and in the evening the hall was filled. Miss McGarry gave a number of readings which delighted her hearers, each one being greeted with well merited applause. Mrs. G. S. Cambell and Mr. Crawford gave Miss McGarry grand support with their Scotch songs.

The annual meeting of the members and friends of the School for the Blind was held at the institution, Murdoch Square, Morris St., last Saturday afternoon. Mr. W. C. Silver, the president, was absent on account of illness, and Mr. J. C. Mackintosh presided. A large number of ladies and gentlemen were present. The report of the board of managers for the year was read by the secretary, Mr. E. D. Moynell, Mr. J. C. Mackintosh read the superintendent's report. Music by the band and choruses by the pupils formed the lighter part of the programme. The chief feature of the year's work has been the building of the new wing, which forms a handsome addition to the main building. After the meeting was concluded Mr. Fraser showed the visitors through the new building, which will be ready for occupation in February.

In the window of the Halifax Piano and Organ Company, Hollis Street, may be seen an oil painting of Jock Patterson, the well-known piper of the 63rd Rifles. It is the work of George Craig, the Dartmouth artist. The scene is laid at Saskatchewan Landing, with the camp in the back ground, and Jock in full "regimentals" in the foreground.

## COMMERCIAL.

Wholesale trade in nearly every department has been very slow during the past week. A variety of circumstances have contributed to this state of affairs. Payments have been anything but prompt, which makes dealers as well as the banks extremely cautious in the matter of credits and accommodation. Retailers, especially in fancy lines, have done and are doing a very satisfactory trade, and their shops are crowded, particularly after night fall, till late hours.

The stringency in the money market seems to be of a more chronic nature than many have been willing to admit. This is especially true in the leading monetary centres in the United States. The difficulties of the situation in New York appear to be fully recognized in London, when the *Times'* financial article alludes to the possible necessity of assisting the New York banks with English gold to enable them to cope with the present emergency. About \$5,000,000 in gold is said to have been shipped from England for this continent during the last week, a considerable portion of which is being brought out by the Bank of Montreal and the Bank of British North America for their New York agencies. Nearly every merchant whom we have met during the past few days referred to the money stringency and its adverse effect upon general business, and there is a wide spread impression among our business men that the end of the present distrust and scarcity of money has not been reached. Hence the extremely cautious action on the part of the banks in calling in temporary loans, and in otherwise strengthening their resources in order to be in a position to fully protect their mercantile accounts in the event of a crisis. This is all commendable enough, but it invariably results in the strong firms getting all that they want, while assistance is withheld from the weaker ones. It will not be at all surprising if a number of weak firms hit the dust in the event of the present difficulty in obtaining credits lasting much longer. Not only the banks but wholesale merchants are adopting a more cautious policy, and are curtailing their lines of credit in all directions, which will go a long way towards mitigating the severity of a crisis, should it strike us. It is very evident that our neighbors on the other side of the line are suffering from a financial panic. We are consequently passing through a period in which the greatest caution should be exercised, both by bankers and merchants, lest the wing or tail of the cyclone strikes us with too much canvas flying. Paper in the early part of the present month was met by our wholesale men as well as might be expected, but their remittances were disappointing. Discounts on mercantile paper range from 6 to 8 per cent., 7 per cent. being the general rate.

*Bradstreet's* report of the week's failures:—

	Week Prev.		Weeks corresponding to		Failures for the year to date.			
	Dec. 12.	1890	1889	1888	1887	1890	1889	1888
United States.....	341	321	370	309	253	9842	11023	9747
Canada.....	40	27	23	38	31	1556	1501	1639

**DRY GOODS.**—The dry goods trade has shown no change during the week, except in connection with city retailers, the snow-fall having caused some accession to their business, which has incidentally led to some odd jobbing trade. The cold snap of the past week brought in some reasonable orders for flannels, blankets and heavy underwear. A little more snow, which may be reasonably expected, will bring in country customers, and will somewhat help business along, but the trade in general is unquestionably quiet, and little stir is now expected till after the first of the year.

**IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.**—The market has been quiet and unchanged with but little business doing to note in any line. The market for pig iron is very unsettled in sympathy with the decline on the other side, and merely nominal in the absence of business to any extent. Advices from Great Britain still quote an unsettled market for warrents, due to financial influences, but there is little new to state in regard to the regular market for makers' stocks. In sheet material the firm position of tinplate is the most prominent feature. Hoops and bands are without change, and the same may be said of other lines. Buyers all along appear unable to realize the true position of affairs, and the extent to which American orders were booked. Stocks in Canada are, therefore, light and in few hands and it is unlikely that any reduction in values will occur. Ingot tin and copper continue unsettled elsewhere and there has been no change here. Pig lead and iron pipe remain the same.

**BREADSTUFFS.**—The local flour market rules steady, with a quiet jobbing trade in the leading brands, and no holders are disposed towards concession for the sake of inducing business. Beerbohn's cable reports wheat and corn in England quiet but steadier, and oats firm. French country markets a turn dearer. At Chicago wheat was strong and achieved an advance of about  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. Corn was dull and declined  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. Oats were firm and steady. In New York wheat made a further advance of  $\frac{1}{2}$  c.; in St. Louis  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. to  $\frac{1}{2}$  c.; in Toledo it was quiet but firm advancing about  $\frac{1}{2}$  c.; at Duluth it declined  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. Corn and oats were unchanged all along the line.

**POTATOES.**—The demand for potatoes in Canadian markets on American account appears to be now pretty general, owing to the growing scarcity in the United States and generally rising values. It seems that Americans have headed off a good portion of the supply that would otherwise have come to our markets for sale, by adopting the ingenious method of writing to the different postmasters in the country and asking them to hand their letters to dealers in their respective districts. Consequently in a number of instances business will be done direct between American buyers and country dealers.