

## TAX EXEMPTIONS.

To the Editor of *The Critic* :

DEAR SIR,—

The movement of the City Council to abolish tax exemptions is one that greatly distresses all large hearted people. Those also who see deeper than the mere outside are grieved that such a short-sighted policy should be pursued. It should not be forgotten or over-looked that some of our institutions are Provincial in their character, and that the advantages of having them situated in our city amount to much more than the taxation. A large amount of money is disbursed by various institutions, and tradesmen and laborers reap the benefit, and through them the community is made more prosperous. If Halifax were to refuse to exempt charitable institutions from taxation, other places would hold out a beckoning hand and the institutions would shake off the dust of the city and depart from us. In the case of churches also, it would be altogether disgraceful to place the burden of taxation on those who keep up religious institutions for the common good. Should the Legislature consent to ratify this measure Halifax will be placed in a most unenviable light before the rest of the world. May we be spared the contempt of the civilized world, or at least let a vote of the citizens be taken first. I have trust enough in the hearts of our townsmen to think they would repudiate the idea with scorn.

Yours, etc.,

J. A. B.

## CITY CHIMES

The "Steadfast" Circle of King's Daughters, Dartmouth, commenced holding a bazaar in the R-form Club Hall in that town yesterday and will continue it to day. Delicious home-made candy is on sale, and the fancy and other work makes a splendid display. The object for which the "Daughters" are working is a worthy one. They are endeavoring to secure funds to establish a cottage hospital in Dartmouth, and they merit all the assistance they can get.

We wonder how it happened that the Leicestershire band did not have an overflowing audience to hear its performance of the "Stabat Mater" on Saturday evening. Are Halifaxians so accustomed to military band music that familiarity has bred contempt? In any other city on the continent, we feel safe in saying that there would not have been room in a building the size of the Academy of Music to hold the people who would have flocked to hear the music of that glorious band, and yet our Academy was not half filled. The reserved seats were nearly all occupied, but the balcony was a sorry spectacle of comparative emptiness. Those who were there enjoyed a treat, and we can say most emphatically that Mrs. Lear's singing alone was worth the price of admission and more, as well as a long walk and some trouble to get to hear it. All the numbers by the band were as well done as they could possibly be; the time was perfect and the crescendo passages deserve special praise. Bandmaster Hughes has his musicians under thorough control, and the movements of his baton were faithfully obeyed. The band played as one man, and there was never a jarring note nor one anticipated nor overdrawn. The soloists were all in good voice and sang notably well. Dr. Slayter rendered the beautiful aria "Cujus Animam" in his very best style and received much applause. Professor Currie also was more than delightful in "Pro Peccatis" which, however, is not nearly so effective an air as "Cujus Animam." We would very much have preferred to hear him sing the latter, but as he rendered his solo in a manner calling for unstinted praise we must be satisfied. Words fail us to describe Mrs. Lear's "Inflammatus," which was simply divine. When this lady made her appearance she was greeted with rapturous applause, which shows what a favorite she has become with the music-loving public. Mrs. Lear has never given us such a treat as that on Saturday evening. With the full band accompaniment her voice rang out, full, strong, clear and sweet above it all, holding the listeners spell-bound. When she ceased, such applause as is not often accorded an amateur awoke the echoes, and after she had been recalled and presented with a beautiful bouquet the encore was so emphatic that she kindly sang the entire solo again, thereby giving an unusual amount of pleasure to the audience. The two quartettes and the duo by the band deserve special mention, as also the playing of the accompaniments. We trust that we may again have an opportunity of hearing the Leicestershire band under like circumstances and that each individual member of it may acquit himself as well as on Saturday. We also hope the usual courtesy to the Press will not be omitted on another occasion as it was on this, but we are magnanimous and give praise where praise is due, even if we had to pay for our tickets. We venture to say that if the members of the band had been society amateurs, there would have been an over-full house, and we do not see why true merit cannot take the place it deserves in this town. Is toadyism to blame?

Professor Zera Semon is again to the fore with his entertaining powers and is to give three performances in St. Mary's Young Men's Hall, commencing on Easter Monday. He will be assisted by the members of the dramatic class of the Young Men's Society, and will no doubt furnish good entertainments. The proceeds will be devoted to the building fund of the organization.

The members of the Orpheus Club, Auxiliary and Orchestra are now putting forth every effort to make up for time lost, and their fifth subscription concert was announced to take place last evening. As usual in our comments on Thursday concerts, we can only use the hackneyed expression "to be continued in our next," but we feel quite sure that all who were present at Orpheus Hall last evening enjoyed a good concert.

No longer need we search for signs of Spring, for indications that the glad season is well established greet us on every side. April, the month of promise, entered with bright sunny weather, and old Sol has shone most benignantly throughout the days that have followed. There being very little frost in the ground, streets and roads are rapidly becoming quite dry, and if Jack Frost has not planned a little surprise party for us by a reappearance of his most despotic self, we may congratulate ourselves on being blessed with an early Spring season.

The concert given under the auspices of the Y. P. S. C. E. of Fort Massey Church on Friday evening last was a thoroughly enjoyable affair and reflected much credit on the managing committee as well as upon all who took part in the programme. Mrs. Klingensfeld gave two solos, in both of which her sweet soprano voice was heard to advantage. Her second number "Lord Have Mercy On Me," to which Herr Klingensfeld played an obligato in his usual inimitable style, received an enthusiastic encore. Mr. H. W. Mackintosh was accorded rapturous applause for his excellent tenor solo, and Mr. J. Harrison charmed all hearers with his rendition of "Old Madrid." In response to an encore Mr. Harrison gave "Beyond a Doubt." Miss A. Burns sang well, and the instrumental trio by the Misses Burns and Mr. Hermann Cornelius was very pleasing. The recitations by Miss Edna McKerzie and Mrs. Pinckney were acceptably given, and formed a pleasant feature of the well-arranged programme.

What a busy, bustling time the ladies have had this week. Showdays following upon showdays have claimed the full attention and attendance of those among the fair ones who enjoy viewing the new and seasonable goods our merchants have placed on their counters. On Wednesday morning the mantle departments of Messrs. Wood Bros., G. M. Smith & Co. and Mahon Bros. presented a busy and interesting scene. The various comments, the eager searching for suitable garments and the wearied and disappointed expressions on the faces of many prove to a quiet looker-on that in the words of one of our pretty maidens, "it is just too tiresome for anything." However, when in a few days selections have been made and donned the ladies will no doubt feel well repaid for all trouble as they survey the effect produced by the "new spring jacket." A word about these jackets and capes: all long, very long, the jackets buttoned closely from top to bottom, with none of the jaunty appearance given by the open-front style which predominated in last spring's goods. A comparatively few of the new sacques are made with "block backs," or, to be more explicit, minus seams. These in our humble opinion are nothing more or less than ugly, certainly not graceful, but if Dame Fashion has issued her decree that they are to be worn we will probably ere long become accustomed to the cut and perchance in time admire it. The capes are very much the same as those that have been worn during the winter, only of course are made of lighter weight cloth. Hoods lined with silk that matches the facing give a stylish touch to these cloaks. The favorite color is black, and braid and jet form a pretty finish. Easter being late this year, there will likely be an attractive array of new clothes on that festive occasion, and the maid who hasn't at least the proverbial Easter bonnet will be hard to find.

Halifax has been visited during the past week by Mrs. Mary H. Hunt, of the National Department of Scientific Instruction of the W. C. T. U. of America. Mrs. Hunt, on Friday evening, addressed our Provincial Parliament and the large number of interested listeners who filled the galleries and floors of the Assembly room, taking for her subject the temperance education of the children in the public schools. The lady spoke with rare ease and great fluency, and appeared to be thoroughly at home with her subject. Mr. Hemeon, M.P.P., presented Mrs. Hunt with a beautiful bouquet from the W. C. T. U. of the city, and a vote of thanks was moved by Dr. Parker, seconded by Hon. C. E. Church, for the information given the members and the others who were present on that occasion. On Sunday afternoon Mrs. Hunt spoke to students particularly and young men in general in the Y. M. C. A. Hall; and on Monday evening delivered a lecture on Brunswick Street Methodist Church. The topic was "Waiting for the Verdict," and Mrs. Hunt, who spoke from the pulpit, held the attention of her listeners throughout. At the close of the address, Mr. A. H. McKay, Superintendent of Education, moved a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was seconded by Mr. Geo. E. Lavers. Mrs. Hunt is an ardent advocate of the temperance question as presented by the W. C. T. U., and will doubtless accomplish much for the good of the cause so dear to her and her fellow-workers.

The members of Park St. Church gave a tea and entertainment in their schoolroom last evening. Although late in the season this entertainment was behind those that have gone before in no other respect, and the ladies who so aptly managed affairs fully sustained the reputation they have gained for the dainty tempting repasts they offer and the first-class musical and literary programme furnished after the hungry have been fed.

The series of Recitals to be given by the pupils of the Doering-Brauer Conservatory will probably be of much interest to students of music. The series consists of four parlor concerts, on the evenings of Friday, April 8th; Saturday, April 9th; Monday, April 11th; and Tuesday, April 12th. On Wednesday evening, 13th inst., Herr Ernst and Frau Marianna Doering propose giving a concert at their home for the benefit of their pupils. For each of these entertainments a good programme has been carefully arranged, and friends of the pupils will have an opportunity of witnessing the efficiency which has been attained by the young students of the Doering-Brauer Conservatory of Music. Mr. and Mrs. Doering are ardent lovers of their art, and the success with which their efforts are meeting is the best testimonial to the talent and zeal displayed in their work.