

## CITY CHIMES.

What people would do if they were deprived of light reading is a problem. There is little danger of such a calamity in Halifax at present, for in addition to the regular book stores being well supplied with the newest literature, there is an excellent circulating library, and Miss Laleah Fairbanks, who manages it, has recently returned from Toronto and Boston with a great supply of books, wherewith the enemy time may be killed or kept at bay by those who are troubled by him during the long winter coming. Miss Fairbanks' library is most popular with the society people of Halifax, and a large number of people in the country also have a continued supply of books sent to them by her. Such an institution as this library is almost indispensable in a city like ours, and it is to be hoped that in time it will grow to more extensive proportions and books of recognized standing be constantly circulated among its patrons.

No doubt there will be a large audience present in the Grafton Street Methodist Church this evening on the occasion of the re-opening of the organ. A splendid programme has been prepared and enough tickets issued to comfortably fill the church. The doors open at 8 o'clock, music commences at 8.30. A silver collection is to be taken up for the benefit of the choir and the organ fund.

The justly celebrated Balmoral Choir appeared at the Academy of Music on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Large audiences were present at both concerts, and enjoyed the rare treat of hearing Scotch music, rendered as it is seldom heard in Halifax. They also gave selections of English, Irish and Welsh music. The choir appeared under the auspices of the North British Society.

The political picnic at Donaldson's grounds, on the shores of Bedford Basin, on Wednesday, was attended by a great throng of gentlemen of both sides of politics, and many ladies, who were also divided in their political persuasion and allegiance. The day was as fine a day as could be, and no more charming spot could have been chosen for the welcome of Canada's veteran Premier. Nearly every lawyer in the city was present, and other professions were also well represented. There were many representative men present from all parts of the Province. Mr. John F. Stairs, ex M. P., presided. The Premier, accompanied by Sir John Thompson and Hon. C. H. Tupper, arrived on the grounds at half-past three o'clock, and was accorded a rousing reception. The speeches were of the most cheerful and cheering nature, and calculated to fire the minds of all with confidence in the great future of our country.

The event of the week has been the Nautical Fair, which was opened in the Exhibition Building on Monday evening and has continued ever since, drawing crowds of delighted visitors. To give a full description of the various booths would require more space than we can spare, so we can but mention those features which seemed the most attractive. The general appearance—the *tout ensemble*—of this building, which has so often been transformed into scenes of beauty, is charming, the novelty of it constituting one of the chief attractions. On all sides the eye was arrested by things appertaining to ships, and they were "real" things too, many of them, no base imitations. A Gardner gun frowned down upon the surging mass of pleasure-seeking humanity, and one could not help reflecting how quickly that lead pumper would scatter the crowd and clear the building if it was set to work. A wee lot of a sailor paced the quarter deck on which the gun was placed, and glass in hand kept a bright lookout for sails. The grand dining saloon is one of the most artistic features of the Fair. The moonlight marine scenes, which are "the making of it," bear the signature of A. Webster, and they are certainly done with great taste. In this saloon several dinner parties have been held, and it is probable that it will prove to be one of the most remunerative of the many well laid plans for making money. No one should miss a visit to the German coffee garden where Frau Doering presides with such grace over the dispensation of articles of German cooking. It was quite worth the price of admission to visit this one booth. Some of the fairest faces are to be seen there, and the bright, pretty costumes are very becoming. The Anchorage is one of the most charming spots at the Fair, the designs and decorations being beyond improvement. Here Pomona presides, and the tables groan under the weight of delicious fruits. Her Majesty's Ship *Victoria* rides at anchor across the south end of the building, and is an excellent representation of a man-o'-war. These appeared to us to be the best features of the Fair, but it is not to be understood that the others are not on an equally attractive basis, and perhaps may be more admired by those who possess better taste than ours. The barge *Flora*, which occupied the centre of the floor—ought we to say harbor—must not, however, be passed over without special mention. When we say that it and its fair freight were the admired of all beholders we can say no more. Now that our readers have gathered from this account some idea of the appearance of the Fair, it is in order to describe the most important part of the proceedings, the grand march by seventy-two young ladies. The deck of the *Victoria* was the starting point, and there the sailor-women gathered. The centre space of the building had been previously cleared and roped off so that there would be no impediment in the way. Around this rope crowded the interested and delighted beholders, and above in the gallery there was an equally large gathering. The band of the *Bellerophon* furnished the music for the march, which took place between 8 and 9 o'clock. Well, it is not quite possible after all to describe the evolutions, but they were performed with an exactness that did credit alike to the ladies and their instructor, Mr. Greenwood. All who were fortunate enough to view this spectacle were unanimous in their praise.

After the march the crowd has possession of the whole floor, but there was scarcely room to move about. The large attendance, while good for the object of the fair, was almost too large for comfort. Miss Fairbanks' book of poems describing the fair met with a ready sale and was much praised. The *Sailor's Star*—The Nautical Fair Gazette, was also disposed of in large numbers. Mr. Walter Leigh, of Cambridge House School, is the editor. Now just a word of criticism. The building was crowded with people, so densely crowded that a panic would have undoubtedly been a terribly fatal affair had anything occurred to cause one. Those on whom the responsibility of general arrangements fell should have foreseen the crowding of the building, and left at least two staircases available. Only one staircase was open for access and egress to and from the gallery, and the state of affairs may be more easily imagined than described. Even when there was no particular excitement it took about half an hour for a person to navigate that staircase. This is a thing that should never be allowed. No matter what the other stairways were thought to be needed for, they should have been left free to the public. Suppose a fire had occurred! Well, we hope the next time that a show is held in the Exhibition building that care will be taken to keep the stairways open. We are glad to note the success of the Fair, and hope the Sailors' Home will benefit handsomely in consequence.

## COMMERCIAL.

A review of the different branches of trade reveals on the whole a satisfactory condition of affairs. There appears to be a fair desire towards ordering, and a considerable accession is noted in some of the leading lines—notably dry goods and groceries, which show a fair degree of activity, while several satisfactory features, as affording an indication of the feeling that actuates buyers generally, are visible. In groceries the prominent features have been the movement in sugar and foreign dried fruits. Activity in molasses in all central markets is another prominent feature, American buyers having secured possession of the bulk of the available supply in Canada. In our own natural products business continues of moderate dimensions, but there is nothing of which to complain if the reports mean anything. Money, however, continues to be rather tight, but there are hopes, based on apparently sound indications, that it will very shortly assume a more favorable aspect.

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

	Week Sept. 26. 1890	Prev. 1890	Weeks 1889	Weeks 1888	Weeks 1887	Failures for the year to date, 1890	1889	1888	1887
United States.....	179	167	189	150	166	7416	8366	7330	6986
Canada.....	31	30	32	28	25	1188	1168	1274	917

DRY GOODS.—Business in this line continues to improve in volume and a good trade is in progress. Travellers now out on the road report a fair order demand for fall goods. An improved enquiry is experienced for silks as compared with last season, and a natural deduction is that buyers must have better expectations, as the article is more of a luxury than a necessity. Stocks too seem well reduced here, which is evidenced by the fact that there has been some running around between the houses to complete orders, so that on the whole the position seems healthy. Advices from buyers now on the other side cite very firm markets, and this precludes any disposition towards cutting if there was any.

IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.—The general position of the iron market is unchanged since our last report, but aside from the usual run of business here, the movement has been rather quiet. This is due to the fact that manufacturers, especially those of agricultural implements and tools, are just now too much occupied in attending the annual exhibitions to devote any attention to purchasing. It is quite likely that this may prove unprofitable to buyers if the market continues in its present course. The tendency now is upward, and it is very improbable that there will be any change in the direction of lower prices while the market on the other side continues to stiffen.

BREADSTUFFS.—The local flour market shows no change and only a small jobbing business is doing. Beer's cable reports wheat very inactive and corn very heavy. Weather in England, frost continues. French country markets steady. The Chicago wheat market opened rather weak and little has been doing. Still during the week an advance of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ to 1¢ has been accomplished. Corn was steady and advanced  $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢. Oats were fairly steady showing but little variation. All other American markets showed slight advances in wheat values during the week.

PROVISIONS.—The local movement in provisions has been small, but prices were steady at quotations. The Liverpool provision market was easy, lard showing a further decline of 3d, and bacon a decline of 6d. on all grades. The Chicago hog market was steady with an upward tendency.

BUTTER AND CHEESE.—Butter rules quiet with a jobbing movement in progress in the better lines of stock at steady figures. All really choice is as usually taken up as soon as offered. In cheese matters have ruled quiet on spot, and there is no new feature to note. Limits continue impracticable as far as regards late made varieties, and there is a stand off between buyers and sellers which induces a quiet market.

FRUIT.—Business has been rather quiet in foreign dried fruit for the reason that there is very little on spot, but fresh receipts, now shortly expected, will doubtless brighten up the market. There are very few lemons in this market at present and oranges are also scarce. Both are very firmly held. The feature in the fresh green fruit market is the large supply of grapes, in which a pretty active business is doing. Peaches are scarce, as are also tomatoes. Summer varieties of apples continue easy in feeling, but stocks have been somewhat reduced. Regarding winter apples no additional developments have arisen.

SUGAR.—The activity and strength of the sugar market noted last week