

SOCIETY

THE LEAP YEAR BALE.

It's only once in four years that the Bachelor Maids have the opportunity to usurp man's privileges, and even this chance has been denied them for the past eight years. The end of the century cut out leap year which was a rather unkind cut on the part of the man who made the centuries. He should have had more gallantry and more consideration for the ladies. However, everything comes to him who waits and also to her. Among the many splendid features of the year 1904 is the privilege it conveys to the fair members of the social world to play the man, and all who had the privilege of attending the leap year ball given by the bachelor maids of Chatham, have every reason to feel most grateful to the year 1904. That the ball was a great success, it is unnecessary to state, because the girls had the management of it.

That it was the best and most entertaining social entertainment ever offered in Maple City society, it is still more needless to add. The leap year ball marks an epoch in the social calendar and for the future the Chatham young men will mark events by the date that the young ladies gave.

When the young ladies undertake to do anything they can always give their male admirers pointers and make their attempts at social entertainment look like a cheap and contrived edition of a favorite masterpiece.

The I. O. O. F. Auditorium was daintily decorated. The waving festoons of red and blue seemed to close in the expansiveness of the hall and make it appear more homelike and pleasant, and bring the guests and charming hostesses closer together. Then the decorations in addition were tasty in the extreme. Colors harmonized with dresses and the stationary colors of the room.

The girls, always thoughtful and dear, had provided a retreat for the wall-flowers. A bower had been fitted up for unfortunate youths in the eastern corner. A Japanese umbrella made the roof and down stuffed chairs and cushions provided one soft spot for unfortunates. How kind and considerate the girls were in contrast with the men; all who had occasion to seek the retreat, realized to the full. But to do the girls justice, there was seldom if ever occasion for and to enjoy the comforts provided.

The Chaperones received equal consideration. The dais was furnished in parlor effect and from this point of vantage, the chaperones and patrons, who danced not, enjoyed watching the fair bachelor maids and their charming partners worshipping at the altar of Terpsichore. From this pleasing oasis in the desert of waxed floor, the chaperones smiled on the merry makers and occasionally descended to join in the dance. Among the number of these were noticed Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Stephens, M. P., Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Witherspoon, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gray, Mrs. Greening, Mrs. Hugh Malcolmson, Mrs. W. J. Taylor and many other social leaders. Mrs. Geo. T. McKeough, honorary secretary, received the guests, and the young ladies exhibited the same cleverness in selecting their honorary secretary that they evinced in all their other arrangements in connection with the ball.

The bachelor maids left the young men not long in doubt, and as the beautiful and timid youths entered the ball-room, they were welcomed with bright smiles and invited to dance. Programs were soon filled and many

young ladies were heard expressing regrets that their programs were not of greater capacity.

Mrs. Geo. T. McKeough and Mr. Robert Gray opened the evening's gaieties, by leading off in the grand march. In this all of the 160 guests participated and the evolutions which the leaders devised formed one of the unique and pretty scenes of the night.

The luncheon served at the bewitching hour of midnight was dainty and well, just as everybody knew it would be.

During the whole night everybody enjoyed themselves and drank deep from the pleasures provided. Nobody was tired and, when the last dance had been ended and a rousing cheer had been given for the bachelor maids, even the guest felt inclined to linger. There was a great deal of rivalry among the young men as to who would be the first to be asked for a dance. C. B. Kent, John Gray and Norman Harper ran all the way from their respective residences to be the first, but when they got to the ball they found George Heyward already there, with his program half filled. The school trustee said he had to go without his supper to do it, but he did. He always was a gallant.

Among the additional poetical acknowledgements received by the honorary secretary are the following, which were courteously loaned to The Planet by the ladies:

To Chatham maids fair of the bachelor air,

This is my acceptance

Of your note of invite for next Tuesday night,

For he's anxious to make your acquaintance,

To be at your shrine, precise as to time,

He'll endeavor as lay in his power,

He'll do any old dance, even get up and prance

Rather than be a wall-flower.

Now list ye, I prithee maidens fair,

Who give the ball this new Leap Year;

If I accept as doth become my inclination,

Shall I be left against the wall as on probation?

Such a course would be to me most painful,

If indeed I might not also add most shameful;

But faint heart, they say, had never won faire lady,

So I'll accept and hope at least to have a dance with (O) Sadie.

Billie ——— accepts your kind invitation,

To dance with the prettiest girls in the nation;

If your program's not full please give him a dance,

And you may be sure he will jump at the chance.

To bachelor maids,

I write to say

That John ———

Will be with you to stay

From night till day.

Unless, as expected,

He is a wall flower,

When he will probably leave

At an early hour.

Although the opera "Robin Hood"

Just now is in full swing,

And every person in it should

Shun every other thing—

Bill ——— is invited

To attend your Leap Year ball,

And if you think he'll slight it,

Then you don't know him at all.

Dear Maids, your favor came to hand:

I am sure your party will be grand;

Thanks very much for being invited,

The thoughts of going made me excited.

But, business first; then pleasure comes,

Is how the old adage runs.

Sorry that absent from town I will be,

So no wallflower you make of me.

F. ———

Wilfred ——— accepts with pleasure

Your kind invitation to read a poem

On Tuesday next he will be there,

And thus enjoy a pleasure rare.

To dance, and chase away dull care,

With the Bachelor Maids of Chatham, fair.

Ah! distinctly I remember my first

dance in yore's December,

When each separate, flick'ring ember

of ambition on the floor

Died within my very being, as I could

not fall from seeing

That for clumsy, awkward fellows

there was nothing else in store—

That to partners fair and dainty he

must always be a Bore;

—Only this—and nothing more.

On your invitation peering, long I

stood there, wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming—dare I venture

to inflict myself once more?

But the silence was unbroken and the

stillness gave no token

That in search of selfish pleasure I

might once again explore

All the goodness of long-suffering

maidens as I'd done before.

Quoth my conscience, "Nevermore."

So on Tuesday midnight dreary, I

shall ponder, meek and weary,

Reading many a quaint and tedious

editorial utterance o'er;

Yet my thoughts—at times entranced—

will be with the maids a-

longing.

While they tread to music mystic at

the shrine of Terpsichore,

And if mirth at anchored wall-flow-

ers (other fellows) o'er me pour,

You'll forgive me—just once more.

May I hope for pardon's token for

reply so poorly spoken;

Words of mine seemed weak and faulty,

so your kindness I'll implore,

And confess I caught Poe napping

when I went out poetry trapping.

But naught found in bard's creations,

nor in literary lore,

To the maids of Maple City can ex-

press my boundless store

Of Good Wishes—Evermore!

Harry ———

To the Bachelor Maids of Chatham's

bound,

Mr. and Mrs. ——— with grief

Professed,

After pondering long as to what they

should say,

Are compelled to decline for next

Tuesday,

Your kind invitation to the Oddfel-

lows' Hall,

To tread a measure at the Leap Year

Ball.

"The writer regrets

That his Leap Year debts

Will prevent him from treading a

measure;

For his clothes are in pawn,

Tho' he hopes before long

To redeem them or bust his suspend-

ers."

J. S. ———

TO DISQUALIFY MEMBER

Thomas Joseph Haller, of Bothwell,

began proceedings on Saturday to

have Wesley Sussex, a member of the

Bothwell council disqualified. O. L.

Lewis, who is acting for Haller, ap-

peared before Judge Bell to-day and

asked that a fiat be issued. The

request was granted.

The grounds on which this action is

taken are that Sussex is not assessed

for the amount required by statute,

which requires that the council

shall be assessed for \$600 free of

encumbrances. Sussex is assessed for

\$300 in Bothwell, but there is a mort-

gage on the property and a farm in

Zone (valued at \$1400) for \$750. It

is also urged that Sussex hasn't paid

his taxes for 1903.

The third ground on which the dis-

qualification is asked for is that Sus-

sex last year, acting under orders

from the Charity Committee, furnish-

ed meat to two poor families. This

year he moved the payment of the ac-

count himself. The amount of the

account is \$1.05.

GOOD CONCERT

The benefit concert that was given

by local talent under the manage-

ment of Miss Emma Lawrence was

a grand success. Solos were render-

ed by Miss Anne Johnson, Charles

Lynn and Mr. H. Bud. Miss Lena

Burton made a decided hit as an

elocutionist. The celebrated enter-

tainer was a novelty and rendered

a number of selections and encored

repeatedly.

We wish to thank the ladies and

gentlemen who so kindly assisted,

rendering their services toward mak-

ing the concert a success.

TRAIN SERVICE

The trains on the Lake Erie are

running very irregularly to-day.

For the last few days the track has

been clear, and the trains have been

on time. Yesterday the snow and

wind blocked up the tracks north. A

freight train is stuck in the drift at

Tupperville, and Pierce's train has

not yet left Sarnia. No train went

north this morning. Whiteley's train

from the south came through all

right as everything is clear between

Chatham and Blenheim. Whiteley

went back again to Blenheim, this

morning instead of making his trip

north.

TO ENFORCE BY LAWS

"The police start out on Monday

next to enforce the by-laws to the

letter," said Chief of Police Holmes

to a Planet reporter Saturday morning.

Enforcing the by-laws to the letter

will mean big doings in the city: snow

on the sidewalks for instance will keep

citizens busy for a time at least.

Then a number of lumber dealers

have cedar posts in the street—not in

the way, of course, but then the by-

laws.

There are many other things that

citizens must get used to—not after

seven p. m., on Saturdays, you know.

INQUIRIES AS

TO THE TARIFF

Questions Sent out to British

Manufacturers By Cham-

berlain's Commission

Answers Will Form Basis of Tar-

iff Bill to be Submitted to

the Nation

London, Jan. 30.—Joseph Chamber-

lain's tariff commission to-day mailed

to all manufacturers appearing in

trade directories in the United King-

dom an inquiry form with regard to

trade conditions as affected by foreign

tariffs. The replies are designed to

form the basis of further inquiry on

which the commission intends to for-

mulate a tariff bill which it will sub-

mit to the country.

The form contains 11 questions. The

questions follow:

What is the proportion of your

output for the home market?

What is the proportion of your

output for foreign markets?

What is the proportion of your

output for the colonial markets?

What branches of your home trade

have suffered from competition?

Are any articles similar to those

you manufacture imported into your

country below your cost price?

Are such articles placed on the Brit-

ish market below the normal cost of

production in the country of origin?

Is your trade suffering from the

adverse competition of foreign coun-

tries, owing to difference in wages,

hours, etc.?

Has your export trade suffered in

recent years owing to the tariff of

any foreign country?

What reduction in the tariff of any

foreign country would enable you to

compete successfully within that

country with commodities made

therein similar to those you manu-

facture?

FEBRUARY

is considered the dulllest month of the year in the clothing business.

However we do not allow dullness to enter here during this melancholy month of trade, but keep the volume of business up by marking regular prices down.

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