

The Londonderry Iron Company, Acadia Mines, N.S., are running their works to their fullest capacity, chiefly on iron, water and gas pipe.

The firm known as Murdochs' Nephews stands undoubtedly pre-eminent as one of the largest dry goods firms in the Maritime Provinces, and they claim that their commanding position enables them to do business to the advantage of their customers by 10 per cent. below other houses, and renders them extremely formidable to all competitors. They confidently look forward to the transaction in 1890 of business to the extent of \$1,000,000. The five story building occupied by this enterprising firm on Hollis St. is well known to everyone in Halifax. Several improvements have been recently effected in their premises. The building is one of the handsomest in the city, and has a frontage on Hollis St. of 100 feet, extending 60 feet west on Prince St. On entering the handsome front entrance of this spacious edifice we find ourselves on the ground floor, in which are stored the immense stock of cloths of every description for tailoring purposes. Having noted the quality and designs of the various fabrics, we ascend a wide and commodious staircase to the first floor above, where one of the finest stocks of fancy goods in the Maritime Provinces is to be seen. The second floor is devoted to general staples and dress goods, stock enough, one would think, to supply the entire Dominion. One noteworthy feature of this department is the excellent light afforded from each side, the extensive room being exceptionally well lighted. Continuing our explorations, we are ushered into room after room, over flooring with every description of dry goods, hosiery, linens, dress goods, ladies' wear, carpets, house furnishing goods, etc. An able and competent staff preside over the various departments, headed by Mr. Boak and Mr. Jenkins, and customers visiting the city will find every attention and the utmost courtesy shown them. A new elevator on the latest improved hydraulic principles has been added, and visitors are carried from flat to flat without the slightest inconvenience to themselves. In its completeness in every department, it is safe to say there is scarcely an establishment to compare with it in the Dominion of Canada. The Messrs. Murdochs' Nephews give permanent work to 25 employees. Their establishment is altogether a credit to the city of Halifax.

CITY CHIMES.

The walking in many places has been precarious and not at all permanent owing to ice during the week. It is kind and thoughtful when citizens strew ashes on their particular piece of ice, instead of leaving it as a trap for the unwary pedestrian, but a little judgment should be exercised in the use of ashes. The usual way is to take a scuttle full of ashes, well mixed with cinders and small pieces of coal, and to dump this in spots over the ice. The only clean and respectable method is to have the ashes as free as possible from cinders and coal, and to sprinkle them thinly over the ice. It is better if they can be put on while hot and so take hold of the ice immediately.

We understand that the Amateur Dramatic Society have decided not to give any performance this season owing to the long and continued success of the McDowell Company. We trust, however, that they will endeavor to give an entertainment sometime before the spring. They have always succeeded in drawing large and fashionable audiences, and the general public enjoy seeing the youth, beauty and talent of our city coming to the front. Besides this the receipts are bestowed on local charities and philanthropic enterprises.

The City Council have resolved to apply to the legislature for power to borrow money for the purpose of paving the streets and sidewalks. This is a matter of which THE CRITIC has frequently urged the necessity, and it is gratifying to find that this necessary work will probably be undertaken within the near future. It is certainly not before it is needed.

There is to be a carnival at the Exhibition Rink on the 27th inst. There will be an electric display, and numerous other novelties are to be introduced. No doubt it will be most attractive, and will be well patronized.

A Scotch concert is to be given in St. Andrew's church on the 24th inst. under the patronage of the North British Society. A splendid programme is being prepared, and all who love the works of Scotland's greatest poet should make an effort to be present on the occasion which celebrates the anniversary of Robert Burns' birth.

Alas for the hopes of those who have been longing for snow. On Sunday the land was in perfect condition to receive its beautiful white mantle, and when the soft flakes began to fall silently and gradually piled themselves deep on the ground, it seemed as if we were going to have a return of winter of the old-fashioned sort. On Monday, however, all hopes were dashed, and rain and fog soon turned the snow to slush, through which it was impossible to pass dry shod, except in rubber long boots. The out-door skating was also spoilt, much to the regret of numbers of people who prefer it to rink skating. Tuesday and Wednesday were seasonably frosty, and by the time this appears in print we may be favored with another fall of the beautiful, which will be appreciated by the livery stable keepers and their patrons at least, if not by the people generally.

The E. A. McDowell Company have closed their engagement in Halifax, which has been an unprecedented success, and no one can now say it is useless to bring companies of recognized merit here because they can not obtain audiences. For ten weeks the McDowell Company have been giving performances every evening as well as Saturday matinees, at all these the

audiences have been good, and at some "standing room" has been at a premium. The plays produced have as a rule been well known and popular compositions, most of them of a stamp calculated to please people of taste and refinement. The success which has attended the Company has been well deserved, and the members of it have made many friends in Halifax. Last week "Engaged" was given on Friday and Saturday evenings, and "The Private Secretary" drew a large audience at the prime matinee on Saturday afternoon, when four pairs of gold-plated skates were presented by the management to the lady, girl, gentleman and boy holding the lucky numbers. On Monday and Tuesday evenings Sardon's great comedy-drama, "A Wife's Peril" was presented. On Wednesday a triple bill, "Suowball," "My Uncle's Will" and "Pap, or confusion confounded," was given, and on last night a grand complimentary benefit was tendered to Mr. E. A. McDowell, who assumed the role of "Conn" in the "Shaughraun."

COMMERCIAL.

Business generally has not got quite over the effects of the holidays, and there are few noticeable features in connection with the different wholesale branches of trade.

The weather continues unfavorable to the vigorous prosecution of trade. Our first real snow-storm this season occurred on Sunday, but, being succeeded by a warm, drizzling rain during that night and the following day, "the beautiful" rapidly disappeared. The season is undoubtedly far advanced, but we may yet hope for seasonable weather and snow enough to give the necessary impetus to the lumbering business.

The Bank of England a few days since advanced its rate to 6 per cent., and the street rate in London moved up to 5½ per cent., with short loans at short date as high as 7 per cent. At the same time despatches from New York stated that sterling exchange was demoralized and almost unobtainable, with street money scarce, as high as 18 to 20 per cent. being paid on call. If the present stringency continues it will certainly tend to put up the rate of discount in this market, although some assert that there need not be the slightest fear of any advance in that direction. Be that as it may, it has been noticed lately that the easier feeling in call loans which set in last month did not extend to time loans, and that virtually there has been no larger supply of legitimately negotiable loanable funds than there was before, the easier feeling in call loans being caused by the lending of money that should be held by the banks as reserves, and which is bound to be called in before the last day of the month in order to appear in the monthly bank statements to the Government.

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

	Week Jan. 3.	Prev. week.	Weeks corresponding to Jan. 3			Failures for the year.			
	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1889	1888	1887	1886
United States...	310	237	286	293	291	11719	10367	9740	10368
Canada.....	28	30	22	15	13	1616	1730	1315	1186

The following are the assignments and business changes in this Province during the past week:—Rufus Porter, general store and hotel, Kentville, adv. stock-in-trade for sale by tender; Brown Bros. & Co., druggs, Halifax, admitted, Wm. H. Hamilton partner under same style; D. F. McDonald, general store, Victoria Mines and Lingan, assigned to M. A. McDonald, in trust for benefit of creditors; Thos. C. Johnson, watchmaker and jeweller, Halifax, admitted Chas. E. and Albert G. Johnson, under the style of Thos. C. Johnson & Sons; C. & W. Anderson, grocery and liquors, Halifax, sold out to C. Willoughby Anderson, who continues the business under the same style; Geo. A. Leslie, Halifax, transfer \$5 to Garduer Clish interest in property of Dufferin gold mines; National Supply Co., Louis F. Eldman only, copartnership registered Dec. 26, 1889; Henry Cann, consort to Mary Cann, his wife, to do business in her own name; P. P. Archibald, hotel, Halifax, sold out to Jus. Grant.

DRY GOODS.—The dry goods situation is featureless and quiescent, and merchants are now looking forward and trying to judge what the spring trade will amount to. On this point there is considerable divergence of opinion. Still wholesale houses admit that the winter's trade must now prove extremely disappointing, the continued mild, open weather with no steady cold spells having assured the carrying over of large stocks to another season, which means that further extensions of credits will have to be given either by the wholesale houses or by the banks. Still, on the other hand, it seems plausible to anticipate that the small call for winter goods may cause an unusually large demand for spring varieties. New spring samples are arriving by each incoming steamer, and travellers will soon be out with them—indeed a few have already started. Remittances are slow, but there are reasons for expecting them to improve with the turn of the year. Cotton and woollen staples are quiet but prices are firm.

IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.—The market is quiet for pig with very little business on spot. Bar iron and other manufactured products are firm with an upward tendency. Metals in London are steadily advancing, which has tended to strengthen the market in New York. Montreal and elsewhere on this side of the water. Advices from the great pig iron centres in Great Britain are very strong, private cables reporting sales of Scotch warrants at 6½s., which is an advance of 2s. 7d. within a few days. It is curious to note from statistics, which we have not room to reproduce, that in Scotland, while there is a stock on hand equal to twelve months' output, yet there is an apparent excess of consumption over current production. In the Cumberland district the production is shown to have increased over that of last year. Yet, despite larger supply, the stock on hand has been reduced 153,300 tons. On the face of the returns it would appear that the English consumption and export exceed the production. Still the reserve stocks and the natural tendency of high price to stimulate the production render