

CITY CHIMES.

DELSARTISM IN HALIFAX.—Halifax society folk are indeed in luck! No more round shoulders, stiff backs, contracted chests or ungraceful gait among the ladies of good society, or at least there will be no excuse for such things after the coming winter. Some time ago our local papers informed us that the famous apostle of Delsartism, Mrs. Henrietta Russell, had arrived in Nova Scotia; and now, after a pleasant summer spent in camping at Windsor, Mrs. Russell has taken up her abode in our city, and has this week commenced a series of drawing room "lecture talks." To say she has met with a warm reception would be putting it mildly, for I hear from all sides that the ladies who have been privileged to attend Mrs. Russell's lecturettes are wildly enthusiastic over Delsartism, while all who have become personally acquainted with this charming lady are most favorably impressed. Your humble servant was indeed favored this week, when armed with a letter of introduction, I was granted an interview with Mrs. Russell at her apartments. I was very kindly received and assured that I was not intruding, nor asking too much in begging for a little information for the benefit of my readers. After a short preliminary conversation, during which I found that my hostess was delighted with Nova Scotia, and although at first blush she had thought Halifax to be a very unattractive spot, she had now, after having seen more of it, changed her opinion, and was prepared to enjoy her sojourn in our midst. "In which of my subjects do you think your readers would be most interested?" was asked me. To which I replied that I really could not say, but that as personally I was intensely interested in the Delsarte methods of physical culture, I would like to obtain a few points. "Let us then take that for our subject this morning, and if you so wish I will show you a few of my gymnastic exercises." To this proposal I gladly assented, having oft desired to see for myself the form of gymnastics which could produce such soft grace and perfect symmetry of motion as are possessed by the followers of the great Delsarte. "You see," continued Mrs. Russell, "we have so much to undo. The lack of training of the muscles, through which the men and women of to-day have become stiff and unnatural, the self-consciousness with which we are all more or less afflicted, and the tendency to be other than nature would have us be must all be overcome, and this Delsartism only can do. The reckless extravagance of nervous force is the secret of many of the ills of the race, and easily accounts for the numerous cases of nervous prostration and kindred diseases from which so many students, business men, society women and others suffer. The large majority of people do not know how to stand or sit, how to lie down or to walk." This seemed a strange statement, but after having seen the ease and grace with which the lady before me performed these every day acts, I was prepared to wholly agree with her that we didn't, and was filled with an almost irresistible longing to immediately throw off myself and become a pupil of this wonderful woman. "Utter relaxation of all the muscles is the first step towards grace, and without which the soft easy rhythmic motion which is natural to the human body cannot be attained. A nature illustrates this grace. The limbs of the elm tree wave softly back and forth in the breeze, the waves of ocean come flowing in, nothing is stiff, all is but repetition of the movement suggested by the natural human body. And, too, the gymnastics which produce this grace also give strength to the muscles more effectually than the 'punching' methods so popular. The girls who are taught this energetic punching as a means of developing muscle, rarely if ever have occasion to use it in after life. It is not fashionable," quaintly remarked Mrs. R., "to punch a ch other's heads in society. Why not practise methods which while developing muscle will at the same time be useful to you in practical every day life?" This was a new thought to me, as I have no doubt it will be to many who read these lines, and it struck me as containing food for thought. At school and college girls and young ladies, as well as many young men who never have occasion to "strike out from the shoulder," waste an abundance of nervous and physical force in the "punching gymnastics," to use Mrs. Russell's term, when the exercises prescribed by the great Delsarte are in every respect more practical. As Mrs. Russell explained, it stands to reason that having overcome the bad effects consequent upon the lack of training of our muscles and joints, and having these muscles wholly relaxed, the first move is to let nature have her way. With unconsciousness of self, without any effort to put any part of the body in an appointed place, the force of gravity will cause each joint and muscle to assume a graceful position. Try it and see. Athletes in many parts of the world commend the methods originated by Delsarte for imparting strength and elasticity, and from a physiological standpoint it is altogether in accordance with the principle of that science. When Gladstone had seen these methods of physical culture demonstrated by Mrs. Russell, (who by the way studied and taught with the younger Delsarte in Paris) the grand old man gave as his opinion that the system should be introduced into every school in Britain. Mr. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews*, was much impressed by the practical and yet scientific system of Delsarte as illustrated by Mrs. Russell, and exclaimed, "Oh, you're a prophet, the women of the future will be what you tell us of." These opinions of great men were not given by Mrs. Russell in any other spirit than that prompted by her faith in and love for her art. That the complexity of motion set forth by Mrs. Russell is necessary to beauty ladies of high degree in England, France and America have fully realized, and Mrs. Russell numbers among her pupils the leaders of social and artistic circles in Paris, London, New York and other large cities, while many famous men have listened with marked interest and profit to her instruction in the art of physical grace, of which she herself is an embodiment. Among her friends Mrs. Russell has counted many of the lords and ladies with whose names we are familiar, and has been royally entertained wherever she has gone. I have given but a very faint outline of the information gleaned from this clever woman, whom it was my privilege

and pleasure to have conversed with for over an hour on Tuesday morning, but I find that the space allotted me is more than filled, and I must desist. In answer to a question prompted by comparing the graceful ease with which Mrs. Russell performed every act with the movements of even the most graceful women of my acquaintance, I received this emphatic reply. "I boldly assert that I can make any woman graceful no matter what her physical training or lack of training has been." In my opinion as I stated at the opening of this screed, Halifax society ladies are in luck. I am promised another article for *THE CRITIC* next week on "Art in Dress," when I may be able to give those who are interested, and what one of my lady readers is not, some valuable hints.

THE WEATHER.—I am not wholly taken up with Delsarte and his pupils, although to judge by the length of the foregoing paragraph one might justly think so. There is really very little of interest to write of this week and therefore I have taken liberty of trespassing on the space usually occupied by a chronicle of the week's events in our city. The weather has been perfect and we have all forgotten already the bad treatment accorded us by that despot during the opening of the month. More healthful weather or more thoroughly enjoyable could not be desired. A number of people are still lingering in their summer quarters in the beautiful suburbs of the city and finding genuine enjoyment in long walks, shooting expeditions and other seasonal pleasures. The Park has been visited by large numbers during the past week or so, and the fine exhilarating sea breezes have been much enjoyed. It is wise to make the most of the glorious October sunshine, for November's leaden sky must soon make its appearance.

ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD.—Last Saturday afternoon the devotees of the popular game were out in force at the Wanderers Grounds to witness game I of the trophy series. The game put up between the Wanderers and the United Service furnished good sport for the players and interesting entertainment for the large gathering on and about the ropes. The city boys scored their first victory in the second half of the game when they secured a try—2 points. The teams were well matched and the victory deservedly won. On Wednesday afternoon the United Service met Dalhousie on the Crescents' Grounds and gave a good exhibition of skilful play. The game was won by the Collegians, score 13 to 0. The interest taken in the games this season appears to be quite as great as that evinced in former years, and the result of the series is eagerly awaited. The junior league is getting to work.

DALHOUSIE'S Y. M. C. A. AT HOME.—I find I have made a mistake this season in not making friends with some of Dalhousie's students, in consequence of which unsociability I was left out in the cold when the list of bids for the College Y. M. C. A. At Home was made up. However, although I confess I feel a little hurt, I rejoiced in the success which attended the efforts of the hosts of Tuesday evening, and can well believe the statement conveyed in the flowery language of a daily reporter, namely that "the evening was found to be all too short, loaded as the hours were with social pleasures." The College Y. M. C. A. is a good institution it has done an incalculable amount of good among the students, and deserves encouragement. Young men who come to our city to pursue their studies at our excellent university are surrounded with countless temptations to wrongdoing, and therefore the influence of the Y. M. C. A. is an absolute necessity to every young fellow who desires to do what he knows to be right. Dalhousie's students are as a rule a fine set of young men, but alas, there are always, as in every other such institution, a certain number of unworthy ones, who, perhaps with no evil intent, nevertheless succeed in leading their fellows into the dangerous ways in which they themselves walk. Therefore let the Y. M. C. A. of Dalhousie be encouraged in all its departments.

THE OPERA.—At the Academy this week the Grau Company has been doing some fine work, and has had splendid houses. "Martha" was sung on Monday and Tuesday evenings and was well received. The music is beautiful and it was excellently rendered by the members of the Grau Company. "Paul Jones" has been on for the remainder of the week, and has taken well. This opera is new to Halifax and has many pretty parts. It is on the programme for to-morrow afternoon when no doubt a large audience will enjoy the performance.

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SEALED TENDERS addressed to the undersigned, and endorsed "Tender for Post Office Buildings, &c." will be received at this office until Thursday, 9th November, 1893, for the several works required in the erection of Post Office Buildings, &c., Dartmouth, N. S.
Specifications can be seen at the Department of Public Works, Ottawa, and at the office of C. E. W. Ingwell, Resident Engineer, old Market Building, Halifax, on and after Wednesday, 18th October, and tenders will not be considered unless made on form supplied, and signed with the actual signatures of tenderers.
An accepted bank cheque, payable to the order of the Minister of Public Works, equal to five per cent of the amount of tender, must accompany each tender. This cheque will be forfeited if the party declines the contract or fails to complete the work contracted for, and will be returned in case of non-acceptance of tender.
The Department does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.
By order,
K. F. E. ROY,
Secretary.
Department of Public Works,
Ottawa, 4th October, 1893.