

CITY CHIMES.

The concert of the Halifax Oratorio Society which took place at Orpheus Hall, on Thursday of last week, drew out a small but appreciative audience. The 1st. part of the concert consisted of Mendelssohn's arrangement of the forty second Psalm in which Mrs. H. B. Hagarty took the solos. This lady's rendering of No. 3 "My Soul Thirsteth," was particularly pleasing, and displayed careful study. The second part consisted of Rossini's well-known Stabat Mater which is deservedly popular. No. 4, "Pro Peccatis" was most ably rendered by Professor Currie, who entered fully into the spirit of the solo and sang with great expression. The other soloists, Miss Gussie Taylor and Mr. George Burgoyne, both of whom were in good voice, sang acceptably. The Oratorio Society deserves credit for its endeavor to cultivate a taste for high class music, and the patient plodding zeal of its director is worthy of a more general public support. The director's inflexibility is stamped upon every chorus rendered by the Society, and speaking broadly the chorus work is good. But unfortunately, Halifax is not a large city, and, as the Orpheus Club monopolizes most of the good voices, there is scarcely room for a second musical organization such as the Oratorio Society. One drawback which the Society might well overcome is in its accompanist, or ists, which, at the concert in question, played quite independently of the voices.

It is a genuine pleasure to attend performances like those of the Orpheus Club at the Academy of Music on Monday and Tuesday evenings last, and have everything go off with such a swing. Eichberg's comic opera "The Doctor of Alcantara," is fresh, bright and pleasing, many of the solos are sweetly pretty and the choruses impressive. The dialogue is vivacious and laughable. Miss Laine's first solo as Isabelle was a perfect gem and was sung with exquisite finish, but this lady's acting was unfortunately stiff and unnatural, and the music is apparently the only part of her role in which she was interested. Mrs. Hagarty took the part of the Doctor's wife with ease and grace, her sweet voice never sounding better. Mrs. Taylor as Inez (the maid) was superb, and it is quite evident that this lady has a full appreciation of humor as well as the power of perfect representation. Mr. King Pooley made an excellent Doctor and the clearness of his articulation was fully appreciated by his hearers. Messrs. Gillis, Currie, Norman, Tremaine and Johnstone performed their parts acceptably, the latter deserving special mention. The choruses were well sung, and were most effective, particularly the closing one, which would have done credit to professionals. The second part of the programme was "The Trial by Jury," which was rendered with much spirit, but the chorus work was inferior to that of "The Doctor of Alcantara," there being a want of precision and time in several places. Mrs. Hagarty made the most plaintive plaintiff that we have ever heard, and won the hearts of many besides those of the judge and jurymen. The bridesmaids sang sweetly, and were evidently skilled in the art of flirtation. Mr. George E. Boak made a capital judge, singing his difficult part with ease and appropriate dignity. The other soloists performed their parts in a pleasing manner, Mr. J. B. Currie, as usher, making a decided hit. The jury entered fully into the gravity of the situation, their seriousness magnetizing the audience. The orchestra was somewhat light, but its playing was a great improvement upon many that Halifax audiences have heard. Mr. C. H. Porter, jr., who conducted the performances, and to whose efforts their success is mainly due, is deserving of the thanks of the public. Mr. A. D. Johnstone deserves credit for the stage setting, which was pronounced first-rate. The audiences were large and the monetary returns will no doubt prove satisfactory.

Spring, albeit this year it has advanced with lagging tread, seems to be upon us at last. With its advent drives and various other forms of excursions to pleasant country resorts near the city will be in order, and by and by families will be taking up summer quarters out of town. Bedford is always well patronized in this way, and its attractions and resources are much increased by the improved state of the "Bedford Hotel." It has been recently thoroughly put to rights, to a great extent refurnished, and the grounds are fast assuming a new and trim aspect. Mr. Morrison, the lessee, is known to many who have frequented the "Myrtle House" at Digby, for which hostelry he made quite a reputation, and it is certain that that of the Bedford under his management will not be second to it. We do not know any hotel where greater comfort can be enjoyed by permanent guests. The genial kindness and desire to make their guests thoroughly at home of Mr. and Mrs. Morrison, the orderliness and good style of the management, and the excellent table of the Bedford must be experienced to be understood.

PARLIAMENTARY SUMMARY.

A number of public buildings are to be erected throughout the Province, and appropriations for this purpose have been made by Parliament.

A larger sum than usual has been placed in the estimates for immigration, and it is probable that a large number of Icelanders will be induced to settle in Canada during the next six months.

The members of Parliament who have been distributing printed copies of their speeches among their constituents are called upon to pony up, it having been reported that a number of them had forgotten to settle their bills with the Printing Bureau.

Major-General Laurie, who drew his mileage allowance from London, England, that being his present residence, has made amends for his apparent cupidity by donating the sum thus taken from the treasury to the widows and orphans of the fishermen of Shelburne Co. We think the General made a mistake in over drawing his mileage allowance, but his appropriation of it to such a worthy cause reflects credit upon his heart and head.

Reports of the Committee appointed to investigate the Rykert timber scandal and the Middleton fur appropriation have been received by Parliament. Rykert is handled as he deserves, but he saved his bacon by resigning his seat in the Commons before the Committee reported. General Middleton's conduct is severely condemned, and the only excuse that is offered for his having confiscated and appropriated the furs of a half-breed is that he was engaged in the Chinese and East Indian wars, where such confiscations were regarded as legitimate.

The branches of the I. C. Railway have been receiving more attention than usual, and Mr. Burns, of Gloucester, N. B., has been coming in for a large share of condemnation, owing to his connection with the Caraquet Railway, but, so far as we can gather, Mr. Burns has put his money into an unprofitable railway and deserves to be pitied more than blamed.

About \$4,000,000 have been appropriated towards subsidizing railways throughout the Dominion. \$240,000 of this amount is appropriated towards the construction of a railway between Annapolis, Liverpool and Shelburne, which should insure the speedy commencement of work, and \$50,000 has been granted to the Inverness and Richmond Railway, so that this steam highway should be completed at an early date.

The amendments to the N. W. Territories Act, which the Government has been carrying through Parliament, has given rise to a general discussion upon the constitutions of these territories, and several of the members of the opposition have urged upon Parliament the advisability of at once adopting responsible representation. This, the Premier believes, is premature, and cites the Province of Manitoba as an example of the unwisdom of creating responsible governments before a territory has been fairly settled.

The members of Parliament are fast scattering to their homes, and in a few days the Parliamentary buildings will be, comparatively speaking, deserted.

COMMERCIAL.

Trade has been very quiet during the past week, the rainy weather having a depressing effect on business.

The country roads are in a very heavy condition, and much inconvenience is experienced in forwarding goods to their respective destinations.

The export cattle trade seems to occupy a very anomalous position just at the moment, prices in the consumptive markets of England being low and declining, with the prospects of still lower rates ruling when the glut of the first heavy shipments from this side strike the other shore. On the other hand local prices are comparatively high under a fairly brisk demand for both local and export purposes throughout Canada. After the great rush of exports during the next five or six weeks begins to slacken English dealers will realize that there is not the quantity in reserve that they may expect to back up the first rush, and the situation on the other side may present an altogether altered aspect. Still we advise our exporters and dealers to bear in mind the important fact that all the hazards and risks of the business fall upon them, and, in the interests of the trade at large, they should see that values do not go below a shipping basis, as such an untoward occurrence is the sure precursor of eventual disaster. The price paid to the farmer should always incline towards an under rather than to a full figure, for the extremely evident reason that his risk ceases as soon as he delivers his cattle, sheep or horses and gets his money, while that of the dealer only then commences, and to ensure himself against the numerous hazards that he has thereafter frequently to encounter an ample margin should be allowed him. There is, however, little fear of the farmer not getting the last fraction to which he is entitled in the present severe strain of competition which characterizes the age.

It appears that the railways have frequently cause for complaint at the manner in which dealers and shippers infringe upon their regulations, and thus manage to make discriminations in their favor against the interests of the railways and of the public. It is understood that railways have been frequently victimized by shippers over-loading their cars to the extent of 40 to 50 per cent. Cars that should only carry about 24,000 lbs. have been loaded with 40,000 and over. We note these facts to show that the railways are not *always* at fault, and that discriminations are practiced by the public as well as by the railways.

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

	Week May 9, week	Prev. 1889	Weeks 1889	Weeks 1888	Weeks 1887	Failures for the year to date.
United States.....	152	133	174	177	167	1890 1889 1888 1887
Canada.....	26	23	20	20	29	4290 4570 4069 4155
						724 703 735 500

DRY GOODS.—There is little to note regarding the position of this leading branch of trade during the past week. In the wholesale market the cool weather has materially retarded the sorting business. The city retail trade has also suffered from the same cause, but warmer weather will doubtless bring about a more active distribution of staple cotton goods. Remittances in a few instances are reported to have been very poor, but the majority of dealers acknowledge a slight improvement. Quite a number of small failures are reported, and applications for extensions and compromises are still being made.

IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.—There is nothing but a small jobbing trade moving in this line at present. No change for the better has transpired in pig iron. Buyers continue to hold off in anticipation of lower prices. Foreign advices are weak and business in this and in other Canadian markets is limited. Latest advices indicate a further downward turn in the speculative market for pig iron, warrants having dropped to 44s. 5., and No. 3 Middlesborough to 43s. 3d., which are about the lowest points touched this year. Tin is quoted 15s. higher in London, but prices here have experienced no change as yet. Tin plates are cabled as considerably firmer, makers having disposed of surplus stock, and the fact that some of