

CITY CHIMES.

The launching of a brand-new play is an important novelty in Halifax. The local interest attaching to the first recent presentation of "Peace and War" was enhanced by the fact that it was written in this city, that its gallant authors are well-known in society, and that most citizens of this garrison town can recognize some of the military types and traits portrayed in the comedy. But the size and enthusiasm of the audiences were largely due to the inherent excellencies of the drama, which has no heavy scenes or stilted tirades, but moves briskly and breezily from its opening to its close, giving us fair glimpses at many of the social phases of regimental life.

The character of Courtenay, the polished black leg, is well drawn, and was admirably acted. The same may be said of Ambrey, the drawing subaltern who delights in masquerading as "a dude done up by doing all there was to do," but fails to hide his sterling manhood under the disguise. Should the same company continue to play the piece we believe that Mr. Pouncefort's rendering of this character, one or two crudities being avoided, may become a most popular feature.

Miss Tilbury was charming as Valerie, and the soldier-servant, with his mingled familiarity and respectfulness, is a true representative of a type. This last remark may, perhaps, be made of all the other characters (as they are designed, though not as they are acted) with the signal exception of the curate. The Rev. Mr. Bowles is a burlesque impossibility. He would be excusable in a screaming farce, but he is out of place in a regular comedy. An English parson of the established church might lie as much as any other parson, but he would not say he was a teetotaler if he was not, nor would he suggest to a servant to call his brandy-and-soda lemonade. The bossing intolerance which produces such cowardly hypocrisy does not exist in England. And no parson who goes to balls at all is likely to pose as an ascetic, nor to talk shop all the time. The puppyhood, too, that would lead a man to propose to two cousins on the same afternoon, without a particle of encouragement from either, is certainly not more probable in a clergyman than it would be in an officer. Apropos, is it thought good form in smart regiments for officers to hide behind curtains, to entertain themselves with the sayings or doings of ladies and gentlemen who are their guests?

A very intense and effective scene is where Miss Fellowes is discovered by friends in the act of denouncing the heartless Courtenay, after he has just jilted her and shown her that he holds her brother's fate in his hands. The unhappy young lady, being constrained to follow his cue and to say that they are only reciting their parts in some coming theatricals, is then forced by her friends, abetted by Courtenay, to re-act the torturing scene. The plays on words are not remarkably brilliant, and indeed those portions of the dialogue which are not explanatory of the action consist too largely of society common-places. The authors were able to contribute an excellent band and a detachment of regulars, and they had the advantage of a friendly audience and of a fair company, all of whom appeared to do their very best. On the other hand, some members of the caste were quite unsuited for their roles, for which they can hardly have had due time to prepare; there was no special scenery; and there were no great critics of great papers to announce authoritatively the decided measure of success achieved.

The exhibition of the work of the pupils in the art department of the Ladies' College on Friday and Saturday last drew a large number of spectators. The excellence of the work shown reflects great credit on the teachers and pupils.

The Tilbury Company will play "Rosedale," "The Miser's Will, and Romeo and Juliet, next week at the Academy of Music. Each play will be given twice.

Children's parties, faithful copies of those for older people, appear to be growing in popularity in Halifax. The old fashioned afternoon party, with old fashioned games, such as "hunt the slipper," "here we go round the gooseberry bush," "blind-man's buff," etc., have given place to late hours, long dance programmes, and all the ceremony of grown-up parties. Of course it is eminently proper that children should learn to dance and how to behave themselves in society, but this could as easily be done early in the evening as late. It cannot be other than harmful for school boys and girls, whose time is chiefly occupied with study, to stay up dancing until the small hours. By all means let youngsters have a good time and dance as much as they please, but it should be seen to that they are home in time for plenty of beauty sleep, otherwise we shall have a lot of tired out little ladies making their debut in a few years, instead of the fresh young "buds" they ought to be, and the boys will think they have got all out of life that is to be had, when they ought to be looking forward, instead of backward, to the enjoyment of social life.

The closing exercises and distribution of prizes at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, on Spring Garden Road, took place on Monday. As usual the entertainment was private, not even the parents of pupils being admitted, which seems a pity, as all those sweet young girls dressed in pure white, relieved only with a pale blue ribbon at the throat, presented a very pretty spectacle. Archbishop O'Brien's gold medal for order was secured by Miss Evelyn Gifkins, of Kentville, and the silver medal by Miss Rosa Fairbanks, of Dartmouth.

Our holiday, Monday, was about the finest day we have had this summer, and, to judge by the deserted appearance of the streets, many citizens must have taken advantage of the opportunity to go out of town. A most a surfeit of attractions were prepared for the amusement of the public, but the attendance at everything was good. Horse races, ball games and other

sports took place in the afternoon, and in the evening the band concert in the Public Gardens drew a large attendance. The Academy of Music was filled with an enthusiastic audience to witness "My Best Girl." This piece has been considerably altered since its last production here, is very amusing and pleased the audience immensely. Altogether the day was a great success. Every one seemed on pleasure bent, and every facility was provided for this laudable ambition.

The closing exercises of the Halifax Ladies' College took place on Monday and Tuesday evenings. The entertainments were of a high standard, and speak well for the excellence of the training given in the several departments. The following young ladies received graduating diplomas: The Misses M. Bowyer, B. Burgess, T. Coleman, C. Dickie, A. Garvie, and L. McPherson. Miss Celia Dickie has taken high rank in the entrance examination to Wellesley College in a class numbering 100.

COMMERCIAL.

The improved weather has exercised a salutary influence on trade, and the volume of business has been slightly augmented. Though a quiet movement is in progress no dealer seems to be prepared to launch into any extended operations until there is some material improvement in the general conditions, which has not so far been the case. Payments continue backward on the whole. However, there is a more hopeful outlook, as crop reports are on the mend, which ought to tend in the natural course of events to more business being done. There has been no important change as yet. Although some of the dry goods houses speak of a little more desire towards ordering, enquiry shows that it does not amount to much, and that there is merely a hand to mouth movement in progress. This is evidenced by reports from importers and manufacturers, who speak of exceptionally small orders for the season. Thus, taken on the whole, there can be no doubt that business is considerably restricted in volume. With regard to the city retail trade a little more has been done, consequent upon the more favorable weather, which has, of course, led to a little more movement in jobbing circles also.

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

	Week Prev.	Weeks corresponding to	
	June 20. week.	June 20. week.	
	1890	1890	1889
United States.....	144	149	234
Canada.....	18	18	28
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