selected for the first piece to be presented, followed by the farce "Turn Him Out." Mr. Stubbing showed by his management of the plays produced last year his capabilities for the position of stage manager. A stage manager's task is by no means an easy or a thankful one, and the gentleman who guided the six pieces we saw last year across the troubled waters of rohearsal, must be endowed with the rare gifts of patience, perseverance, and tact. Managers are like actors and poets, "born, not made."

The Christmas sale of Japanese goods at the auction rooms of Mr. R. D. Clarke, attracted a crowd of buyers this week. A monster auction at the late residence of Mr Wm. Esson, on Morris Street, also was well patronized. Many of our citizens will find their pockets somewhat lighter on account of these sales, I fancy, and a great many lucky people will get some very hand some presents from Santa Claus. Opinions vary as to the bargains, or the reverse, one makes at sales. One's experience inclines one to believe that attending them is fraught with dangers and temptations. There is certainly a most enjoyable excitement in bidding for and securing a coveted article, but somehow when the bill comes and the purchases arrive, one has not the same feeling for them—not at all.

Among the things to notice this week are the winter furs and costumes the cold snap forced the ladies to don. Boas still hold their own, and are as often seen as the comfortable, although somewhat clumsy looking "Coachman's Collar," that is the reigning fashion. Light-color furs seem to be the favorite, and some very beautiful full, long, fawn-colored boas have been remarked in the town. Astracan vies with seelskin as an outer garment, and both are much used for trimmings. Long cloaks, fur lined, have a very handsome effect. A great many of these are seen. They appear in crimson, black, dark blue, and various colors, and they are a splendid protection from the cold. In colors we are going back to our grandmether's days, and the old shades of bright blues and greens once more appear in the shops. If the ladies would take the advice of an unfashionable person, and go back also to using the soft white knitted clouds that have disappeared lately, they would, I am sure, find no more becoming articles of wear to swathe their pretty threats. Some styles of these in former days justly went by the name of "fascinators."

No dances, no public entertainments, nothing! What do people all do with themselves? After a calm comes the storm, so I expect by and by there will be plenty to write about. At present everybody seems to be in a sort of retirement, and the quiet is oppressive. The churches will soon be given over to the hands of the decorators, and next week it is supposed we shall be able to see what they are going to look like. Christmas decorations are never as attractive as the Easter ones, as the difficulty of obtaining flowers is insurmountable. The spruce, twisted by artistic hands into various designs, makes a very good show in spite of the want of fresh bloom, and I believe this year the church trimmings are to be more graceful and beautiful than ever.

COMMERCIAL.

The holiday season is now fairly upon us, and, as usual, forms an important factor in temporarily diminishing the volume of trade. In fact, business will certainly be slack till after the advent of the new year.

But besides this matter, which is, of course, of annual recurrence, other influences have had an untoward effect. Heavy downfalls of rain have been nearly continuous, and the land is thoroughly saturated. These rain storms have only been broken two or three times by short periods—merely a day or two at a time—of sharp frost, which have suddenly congealed the mud which the rain had made in the roads. Thus the transportation over the country districts of all kinds of goods has been rendered practically impossible, and the time of the delivery of purchased or ordered goods a matter of conjecture.

The retail shops have been doing very well in the sale of "small" and "fancy" wares, which are specially called for at this season as presents in families and between friends. Most city dealers in these lines report the business better, more brisk and more profitable than ever before.

Remittances, although complained of in some quarters, have, on the whole, shown improvement, though in some instances customers have been provokingly careless in protecting their renewal notes, and have even gone the length of insinuating that they did not care whether they were sued or not. For some time previous to 1884, a firm of general merchants, Messrs.

McAlpine & O'Toole, were doing business in Louisburg, C. B. In January of that year they got into difficulties and assigned to Messrs. Chipman Brothers, of this city. Their liabilities were then about \$4,500, and assets doubtful. Shortly afterwards, the junior member of the firm, Mr. P. O'Toole, made arrangements with Messrs. A. & W. Smith, of this city, whereby Mr. McAlpine retired from all connection with the concern, and Mr. O'Toole carried on the business for the benefit of all interested. Within the short space of less than five years Mr. O'Toole has, by his able and careful management, succeeded in extricating the business from all its difficulties. He was in town this week and paid off all the debts of the old firm with interest. Besides doing this he has built up a splendid trade, and has a well stocked store all paid for. His credit is, of course, fully equal to anything that he may want for the continued successful prosecution of his business. It is worthy of note that Mr. O'Toole is over fifty years of age. Most mcn would have lacked the pluck to attempt, at his time of life, to resuscitute a bankrupt business, and not only to pay off ail past liabilities, but also to meet current expenses, and create a flourishing business within five years.

On the other hand, but for the timely assistance, support and credit given by Messrs. A. & W. Smith, it would have been impossible for Mr. O'Toole to have carried out his honest intention of paying up in full. If creditors generally had more consideration for unfortunate, but not really dishouest, debtors, less loss would in many cases be sustained. The idea of sitting on a man when he is down and giving him no chance to recover himself is wrong in every point of view.

Brailstreet's report of the week's failures:

Week
Prev. Dec. 14
Weeks corresponding to Dec. 14
Failures for the year to date.

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The following are the Assignments and Business Changes in this Province during the past week:—J. P. Chapman & Co., Kentville, dissolved, Henry Lovett, business continued by John P. Chapman and P. E. Lloyd, under the old name; C. W. Knowles, publisher, Windsor, sold out the Windsor Tribune to Rev. S. McCully Black; Fred. H. Parker, genl. store, Aylesford, N. S., offering to compromise at 25c. on \$; A. W. Brown & Bros., planing mill, Springhill, N. S., assigned to F. B. Robb; P. J. Chisholm, clothing, etc., Truro, Nova Scotia, sold out; Drysdale Bros. & Co., New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, dissolved, Gordon Drysdale withdraws, business continued by Robt. Dickson under the old name; H. B. Ward, jeweller, Canning, assigned to A. E. Calkin in trust for benefit of creditors; Daniel McDonald, Linwood, Antigonish Co., consent to Annie McDonald to do business in her own name, Thos. G. Dundas, Grinnard, Antigonish Co., assigned to Henry H. McCurdy in trust for benefit of creditors; H. McKay & Co., genl. store, Baddeck, N. S., dissolved, Hedley McKay retires, business continued by R. J. McKay & Ewen McAskill under the old name.

Day Goods.—During the pist week this trade has been remarkably dull. Wholesale houses have improved the leisure opportunity thus afforded by devoting their time to stock-taking. The result of this process has been to show—as a number of leading houses say—that the stocks on hand are lighter than at any former period in the history of the trade. This is, however, due to two causes, a more conservative feeling among dealers and the facility with which depleted stocks can be replenished from the producing points at very short notice. If we have a cold spell with plenty of snow it will help country dealers to reduce their supplies. No change has occurred in cotton goods, but some dealers look for a slight advance in mill prices. On the other hand rumors are rife that there is steady cutting between some of the leading mills. It is impossible to reconcile these conflicting statements. There is a steadier feeling in woollen goods caused by the late appreciation in the price of the raw material which, it is contended, must lead to an

advance in the manufactured goods at no distant day.

IRON, HARDWARE AND METALS.—The trade in iron and hardware has been quiet as usual at this time of the year and little or nothing is doing. Stocks of pig iron throughout Canada are moderate and prices are well sustained, while in other descriptions of heavy goods there has been no quotable change. Warrants in Glasgow are cabled at 41s. 10d., Middlesborough No. 3 foundry iron 33s. 9.1; late London cables are:—"Spot tin £98 10a.; do three months futures £99 10s.; market quiet. Chili bars, spot, £77 10s., do. futures, £78; G. M. B. copper, spot, £77 10s.; do. futures £78; market quiet. Soft Spanish lead, £12 15s." Philadelphia—"The iron market is quiet. The Pennsylvania railroad will soon order a large number of cars and material and two or three railway companies will be in the market for rolling stock in January. Large ship material orders will be placed about the same time. Enquiries are in receipt from bridge-builders and an active winter demand is imminent: Pipes and tubes are dull. Muck bars are weak. Morchant bars are quiet but no concessions are offered in view of the heavy orders expected next month. Merchant steel mills continue busy. Sheet iron is quiet. Pig iron production continues heavy although there is no accumulation of stock. Forge, foundry and bessemer irons are all strong. Steel blooms and billets are active."

being quiet under a very limited demand. Beerbohm's cable says:-"Cargoes off coast—wheat a turn dearer; corn steady. Cargoes on passage and for shipment—wheat strong; corn quiet. Liverpool: wheat, spot, firmer; corn, do., steady. Weather in England, hard frost. American mixed maize ox ship 23s. 9d.; Minneapolis straight flour 26s. 6d. California wheat firm at 7s. 11d. December; 7s. 111d. January; 8s. February; 8s. 14d. March, April and May. Mixed maize firmer at 4s. 51d. December; 4s. 31d. January, 4s. 57d. January now. English country markets firm. French country markets steady. Wheat in Paris firm; flour firm at 39s. December, 39s. 6d. January. Antwerp spot wheat firm. The Mark Lanc Express, it. its weekly review of the grain trade, says: "Good dry English wheats have maintained prices, but the bulk of the offerings is of poor quality and has New wheat, mixed good foreign, has dropped 6d. difficult to sell, the mildness of the weather, the abundance of vegetables, and the fall in the price of putatoes limiting the consumption of bread. Foreign wheat is depressed; Russian has declined 1s., and Californian 6d.; Indian is steady. Liverpool records a fall of 2d. per cental on American white and Russian red wheats, and 1d. per cental on Indian. At to-day's market Euglish wheats were firmer; foreign wheats were steady. Corn was quiet." There was a decidedly strong tone to the Chicago wheat market at the opening, but later a weak feeling set in, and prices fel! off. Late quotations were \$1.06\frac{5}{5}\$ January; \$1.11\frac{1}{7}\$ May. Corn was quiet but firm, and moved up \{c., except for May, which eased off \{c.} Quotations were: 34\frac{7}{3}c. January; 35\{c.} February; 37\{c.} May. Oats were about steady at 26\{c.} January; 29\{c.} May. At the seaboard wheat was stronger and improved somewhat. There was also a strong tone to the Toledo and Milwaukee markets. world's wheat supply may now be regarded as almost moxhaustible, for if the crop falls short in one, two, or three corners of the earth, it is balanced