

scarcely a winter elapses without half-a-dozen fatal accidents on every sheet of water within the metropolis. This is a melancholy fact, but we can readily understand the eagerness evinced by London skaters for a recreation which the English climate accords them so rarely. When once the ornamental waters of the London parks are frozen over, no precautions can restrain the Londoners from endangering their lives. They may not have another opportunity throughout the winter, so they buckle on their skates and take their chance. Now, oddly enough, the skating mania is as strong in Halifax as in London, albeit we can reasonably calculate upon some four months skating every winter. We confess ourselves surprised. Why should we not take skating as a matter of course, seeing we are as sure of a long spell of it, as we are sure of a long winter? Year after year we can skate to our heart's content; yet, year after year we are almost childishly anxious regarding the exact hour we may hurry upon the ice! One poor child has already perished, and a warning, in the shape of a very cold bath, has been given to several individuals—not children. Whether we will be warned in time against accidents which may prove fatal, and which must prove highly uncomfortable, remains to be seen. However, one thing is certain, the skating mania has within the past week taken strong hold upon the minds of young persons of either sex: indeed, it would seem that there is among us a tolerably large class of individuals whose thoughts at this period of the year rarely go beyond Steele's Pond. Well, let it be so,—it is no affair of ours—let mankind and womankind indulge whatever thoughts they please. But,—why the class of individuals under consideration should take it for granted that their thoughts must necessarily be the thoughts of every one around them,—is a point whereon we cannot altogether make up our minds. It is hardly fair to obtrude upon a man, deep in his house accounts, the fact that, “the smaller pond will almost bear, but not quite.” Equally unfair is it, to rush up to a respectable paterfamilias, pondering the *pros* and *cons* of the Federation Scheme, and tell him that,—“it's all right, the thermometer is going down!” Poor man! his mental troubles should be respected at such a time: to him everything seems invested with a downward tendency. However, due allowance must be made for the impulsive tendencies of youth, and the skating mania is harmless, provided people will not venture on the ice until it is perfectly safe—as indeed it generally is for about one-third of the year.

✕ RETURN OF THE DELEGATES.

LAST SCENE.

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED FARCE BY THE CLERK OF THE PEACE.

! Scene.—The property room of the Temperance Hall. Fragments of Farini's spangles, broken paraphernalia of the escamoteur Simmons, and damaged models of the human frame once the property of Professor O'Leary, lie scattered about the apartment. Other curious relics of exhibitions once calculated to attract the public eye, and extract dollars from the public purse, are seen on all sides.

Enter the P——l S——y and the A——y G——l.

A. G. *Sinking into a chair.* “I can't speak.”

P. S. *Gaily.*—You have just done so—this nervousness must be overcome—a people waits upon your voice.

A. G. *dolorously.*—I tell you I can't do it. I hear the voice of the enemy outside! Listen!

A voice is heard outside, quoting from the Chronicle, of Oct. 11th.

But hark! did you ever hear such soft sweet music! List, list, it is HENRY and TUPPER, and all the rest of them, changed to wee folk. How delicious the music! How dulcet the strains! And the words, here they are;

Won't you walk into my parlor
Said the spider to the fly—

By Jove I will walk in.

Enter the L——r of the O——n. Good evening gentlemen! A great moment is at hand—Ha! The A——y G——!

is unwell! A National misfortune! He will doubtless, however, do the best he can to perform his part of the programme.

A. G. *Modestly.* I am of no importance. You yourself, have called me a ponderous speaker.

L. o. O. Never my dear Sir. Never! How comes it honored Sir, that you are so modest?

A. G. I pray you pardon me, I cannot speak.

P. S. *Authoritatively.* What the A——y G——l says is but too true, we love his services to-night—turning to A——y G——l—You had better go to bed.—Quiet is all that you require.—*Exit A. G.* Very sick indeed poor man! We must now consider who is to open up the Confederation Scheme. You Sir, I fancy, will do it admirably.

L. o. O. Too much has already been forced upon us Opposition people. All the showy parts of the speechifying you reserved to yourself and your sick friend. We have already too many disagreeable facts to combat—and figures to torture to our ends.

P. S. I only offer you, that which you desire. The opportunity of a rhetorical display, in which close reasoning is totally unnecessary. Come, come!—by a voluntary effort give us a living proof that you are loyal.

L. o. O. *rather pleased.* Well, since you murder Shakespeare, I will for once, follow a bad example. I do not like the office, but sith I'm entered in this cause so far, pricked to it by no foolish honesty but love of self, I will go on. I will do my best. The people shout. The great moment is come—remember our pass-word—OTTAWA.

A period of 3 hours elapses—after which re-enter P. S. the L. o. O., and the Speaker of Finance. They seat themselves and a long pause ensues.

S. o. F. *yawning.* This is rather stupid. I shall go home. You two gentlemen have always lots to say to each other.—*Exit S. o. F.*

P. S. A good speaker, but totally wrong in his figures.

L. o. O. *angrily.* Why did not you undertake that most difficult part of the exhibition? You are pledged to bring in this Scheme as a government measure.

P. S. *coaxingly.* “Surely my dear friend you must be aware that clap-trap is more pleasing to our people than argument. Since our Scheme is of equal interest to both Opposition and Government, and will be brought before the people in the spring as a Government measure; it is imperative that at this meeting the Government should produce the greatest impression. Do you understand me? We have both worked in a common cause and you spoke very well to-night. Our impression on the public mind has been made, and we may now retire with satisfaction to rest. Your history by-the-bye —”

L. o. O. *petulantly.* Before we retire, I would ask that the Annapolis election be no longer delayed —”

P. S. I was saying that your historical information requires refreshment. Mrs. Markham's work is admirable and very simple. Any child —”

L. o. O. Avard Longley, I understand, will not, risk his seat. If you do not issue the writ due since Mr. Johnsons retirement, I shall expose the unconstitutional conduct of the Government. Mr. Ray —”

P. S. Is ready. I understand. Mr. Reed is not ready. I shall wait a little longer.

L. o. O. Do so at your peril! Thank Heavens our connection here terminates. We have hitherto joined with Ottawa in our eyes—we have done our best to secure a place there. Our party made two speeches to your one—Good night Sir. I go to expose your unconstitutional conduct. Impeachment—imprisonment—a bloody death may follow.

P. S. *imploringly.* Don't be silly; look at these spangles on the floor. Once Farini's, I imagine. All the world is a stage, and this is only the green-room. Our stage dear friend is Ottawa.

L. o. O. *reassured by the imploring tone of the P. S.—and feeling his own strength.*—Ottawa, yes! but suppose Ottawa unattainable! My course is clear. Your behaviour in this great Federal coalition I fully expected. To-night finishes our engagement, and I am thankful. Ottawa we may never reach, but I shall soon turn you out of office. You have degraded your office. Jobbery—bribery —”