

boats tied to the piles danced about, the water trembled, the thousand small objects above the houses swung to and fro, the arms of the wind-mills whirled more rapidly; a wintry chill seemed to run through the whole city and moved it as if with mysterious menace. After a moment, the sun bursts out again, and with it come colour, peace and cheer. The spectacle made me think that, after all, Holland is not, as many call it, a dreary country; but rather, very dreary at times, and at times very gay, according to the weather. It is in everything the land of contrasts. Under the most capricious of skies dwell the least capricious of peoples; and this solid, resolute, and orderly race has the most helter-skelter and disorderly architecture in the world."

Winter in Holland is not altogether unlike winter in parts of our own Dominion. Abundance of snow and ice, and protracted cold, cause careful preparation for the winter months. To the hardy Hollanders the cold season is one of much enjoyment. Skating is a general accomplishment, two "schools of skating" being in existence. Sleighs of every size and form abound. Holland's finest festival occurs in the winter, and is held upon the ice. Rotterdam somewhat resembles Montreal in her carnival attractions. It is a curious fact, that at the International meetings of the Dutch Skating Association, held at Slikkerveer, in 1886-7, English skaters won the prizes in both amateur and professional races.

BEATRICE PORTINARI.

BY MARY S. DANIELS.

O LADY with the calm and holy eyes,
 Fixed ever steadfast on the Light Divine,
 What happy fate, what noble lot was thine,
 Thyself secure among the blest and wise,
 To draw thy poet-lover to the skies—
 Teach him the secret meaning 'neath the sign,
 And lead, through realms where sun doth never shine,
 His errant soul at last to Paradise.
 Now in the clear effulgence of the Day,
 Close drawn together by a deathless love,
 Thou and thy Dante, glad, serene alway,
 The joy of being and its fulness prove.
 O peace unmeasured, deep and high and broad!
 O hallowed union, perfected in God!

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont.