

A STRATFORD CARNIVAL.

On Lake Victoria's frozen brink,  
Stands the stately pile of Strat-  
ford's rink ;

This massive work of builders' skill,  
Is humbly placed below the hill.  
Its broad facade is cupola-crowned,  
Fit ornament for loftier ground.  
And many the skaters that gather  
there,

Whose mirth and laughter fill the  
air ;

Free from studies, free from cares,  
The happy hours pass unawares.

But this the night of all the year,  
The Lord of misrule reigneth here.  
And why this rout,—this festive  
throng,—

These peals of laughter loud and  
long ?—

A Carnival,—a Masquerade,—

A time of frolic for youth and maid,  
For many bachelor, beau and belle,  
For all who love the sport so well.  
Prithce, who is it cometh here,  
A noble Prince, or Cavalier ?

Oh no ! 'tis courtly Page in crimson  
dress,

Belonging to time of " Good Queen  
Bess ; "

The rustle of regal robes you hear,  
As Elizabeth herself doth now ap-  
pear.

Sir Walter's gallantry might be dis-  
played,

Towards his ruler, queenly maid,  
But crystal pavement, formed of ice,  
Prevents the following of such de-  
vice.

The Quakeress prim, in gown of  
grey,

Sweetness personified, they say,  
Goes gliding by with armored  
Knight,

His coat of mail all gleaming bright,  
The sombre Nun in black array,  
Escorted by Mandarin from Cathay,  
Skims swiftly down the lighted hall,  
Admired, adored, by one and all.

But what are these, the Fairy  
sprites ?—

Lovely children, dainty mites,  
Disguised as maid, elf, and fay,  
Come from fairyland to stay  
This one glad night with mortals  
gay.

Witch and wizard, hobgoblin ghost,  
From elfin realms there troops a  
host ;

From history's page, they are a few ;  
Crusader, Black Prince, now we  
view,

Here Friar Tuck, in garments  
coarse,

Richard III, without his horse,  
Mary Scotia's well-loved Queen,  
Joan of Arc of martial mien.

Arts' devotees, too, we find,  
Music and painting brought to  
mind.

Soldiers, sailors, jolly jack-tars,  
Middies, admirals of many scars ;

The impish clown, the jester merry,  
The gypsy girl as brown as berry ;  
Many nations swell the throng ;

Peasant maidens rush along,  
Italian, Spaniard, famed in song,  
Swiss, Norwegian, in the dance,

None more gay than her of France.  
Highland chief in tartan plaid,  
Dashes past with Turkish maid.

Creations of the poet's dream,  
Juliet, Titania, Portia seem

With human life endowed,  
The shifting scene's a motley crowd.

'Twas out a transient sight,  
And naught is left but ebon night.

The clash of skates, the glint of steel,  
The gladsome shout, the merry peal  
Of laughter gay and bright,

The music soft, and radiant light,  
All are gone. The thickening  
gloom

Is dark and silent as the tomb,  
Vanished e'en those of magic lore,  
And the fantastic pageant is no  
more.

"Pessica"