

HALF HOURS WITH THE POETS.

L—gf—w.

A SONG OF SKATES.

Tell me not in toothless mumble,  
Roller-skating is a snare;  
For you've had an awful tumble—  
Left your teeth behind you there.

Rinking's not a base delusion,  
And to tumble you must learn;  
Showing not the least confusion,  
And evincing no concern.

Not enjoyment, and not pleasure,  
Is the end we have in view;  
But to skate! And thus our leisure  
Use as is our duty to.

Now the days begin to lengthen,  
Soon the winter will be past;  
Come! your resolutions strengthen,  
Skate on, brethren, to the last.

Great men's records all remind us,  
We may also make a mark,  
And, in tumbling, leave behind us  
Scratches on the asphalt dark;

Scratches, that perhaps another,  
Skating down the slippery floor—  
An unskilled and nervous brother,  
Seeing, may take heart once more.

Let us then be up and skating,  
With an ankle stiff and strong;  
Ever moving with unsating rapture  
Through the gliding throng.

—L. G.



The Holman Opera Company presented *Bunthorne Abroad* in London recently with great success, Miss Sally Holman appearing as *Ethel*. Mr. Christian, the new tenor, made a great hit as *Frederick*. This gentleman formerly sang with D'Oyly Carte's company. The piece will go on tour shortly.

Don't overlook the Etchers' exhibition at the Art Rooms. The collection is exceedingly interesting, as showing the encouraging progress that has been made in this dainty art by our own artists, as well as for the specimens of foreign work by acknowledged masters.

Saturday's *Globe* contained a detailed description of Mr. J. W. Bengough's new comic opera, "Hecuba, or Hamlet's Father's Deceased Wife's Sister," together with a solo selected from the score. The music is by Mr. G. Barton Browne, the well-known musician of this city, and competent critics who have examined it are agreed that it does him high credit.

Of Madame Eugene Pappenheim, who is to appear here on April 8th, at the Pavilion, the *Birmingham Gazette* says: "She has great dramatic power, grandeur of style and firm accuracy. Her success in London was immediate and decided. As a great dramatic artist she has filled the place left vacant by Mlle Titiens." This distinguished star will be supported on the occasion by Madame Teresa Carreno, the beautiful pianiste, Madame Chatterton-Bohrer, harp-soloist, and Dr. Carl E. Martin, basso profundo. It would be hard to suggest a more brilliant musical list. The plan of seats may be seen at Suckling & Son's.

Mr. Geo. C. Rankin, brother of the well-known actor, McKee Rankin, sends *GRIP* a copy of the *Democrat of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.*, containing a full account of the performance of "L'Habitant," an original play of which he is the author. The piece introduces prominently, for the first time so far as we are aware, the character and dialect of the French-Canadian,

the part of *Robidoux* (L'habitant) being played by Mr. Rankin himself. The play is in four acts, and, judging from a careful perusal of the plot and business, we predict for it a success such as few American plays have enjoyed. Mr. Rankin is a Canadian, and appears to possess the dramatic talent of the family in full measure.



SELLING A PIANO.

A short, thick set, bearded man, in rough farming clothes, had entered our warehouse by the front door, and stood smoking an outlandish looking pipe, and regarding a new piano-forte which had come into stock a few days before.

The Firm saw him from the door of the private office, and trotted down upon his unsuspecting prey with creaking boots and bulbous coat-tails bobbing in his rear. Like Moses, The Firm had an impediment in his speech, but unlike that celebrated Israelite, his confidence in his own eloquence never wavered for a moment on that account. In person he was short and rotund, with a pair of breezy white whiskers, and a head whose stretch of bald and shining crown appeared to be regarded as a sort of Canaan by all the flies in his immediate neighborhood. When The Firm waxed eloquent, a large cameo ring, adorning the little finger of his left hand, played a prominent part in the conversation, both for purposes of gesture, and for the re-securing of his teeth which had an embarrassing trick of breaking loose from their moorings in moments of exaltation and in the fervor of climax: it will be necessary to describe these accidents by means of asterisks, as it is quite impossible to do so verbally. His voice, a fine, looming bass, and the reckless annihilation of his aspirates when excited, gave an added flavor to the idiosyncrasies of his speech.

"A fine instrument that, sir," said The Firm, with a graceful and indicatory wave of his hand.

The man spat in a corner. He continued to smoke.

Now The Firm hated smoke, and he detested people who spat upon the floors of his warehouses. Cleanliness was his hobby; but customers must be excused a little, so he proceeded:

"That, sir, is the-cr-finest specimen of 'igh art ever produced in this country! The design is by a -er-celebrated architect. A combination of the modern and antique, sir."

The man spat as before.  
"The tone-quality is-er-lovely! Just listen to this." The Firm, extending his right arm toward the key-board, stiffly executed a passage in sixths from the treble end downward, and finally pummeled the bass notes vigorously with the first finger of his left hand. Then, starting back hastily from the instrument, he

exclaimed "*Exquisite!*" in a tone of ill-concealed rapture, and suffered his left hand to hang down in front, with the cameo in full view.

The man seemed moved. He began to ex-pectorate in a circle all about him.

The Firm looked disgusted. He was growing impatient. But he repressed his bile, went on with his ovation, and continued at it for about fifteen minutes. By that time he had caused every known musical celebrity on the globe, living or dead, to burst forth into raptures of admiration on the merits of his piano as compared with those of all other makers whatsoever; he had clearly and undeniably proved that for any other piano to attempt rivalry with the one before them, would be a piece of the most sublime impudence and fraud; and between these floods of argument he had taken out the front panels of the instrument, and explained every detail of the action. His discourse concluded in words like these:—

"It is, sir, an instrument with a-er-soul in it! We do not \* \* \* merely put wood and iron together! Er-*other* makers \* \* \* may do that. If," asked The Firm, wildly triumphant, "if a manufacturer 'as no soul, 'ow can he put it into his piano?"

\* The man took his pipe from his mouth, and attempted to spit through a crack in the floor. He missed that, and hit a piano leg. He was placidly contemplating the effect of his aim, when he seemed suddenly to become aware of The Firm's existence, and calmly expressed himself thus:—

"I will kein piano kaufa, und I vasteh' nit Englisch. I bin den gauz'n wog von Schneiderville g'lafa mein vettern Emil Puppenbach z'buscha. Wo isch a?"

"Haymeal!" yelled The Firm, " \* \* \* come down and \* \* \* attend to this man!" Then he retired to the seclusion of the private office.

Emile (the tuner) came down and greeted his cousin with German warmth. After an interval of hideous babel they both went out and flooded themselves with lager.

And The Firm sat in the private office, disordered as to his countenance.

"I don't want to buy a piano, and I don't speak English. I have come all the way from Schneiderville to see my cousin, Emil Puppenbach. Where is he?"

Talk about the Spring Robin, but the *Spring Overcoats* selling at *R. Walker & Son's* at \$7.50, \$9.75 and \$12.00, are just the things to make a man fancy everything is lovely.

SAM'S CONUNDRUM.

Sam Jinks is enjoying a quiet chat with his respected granddad over his favorite breakfast of coffee and hot rolls. Sam has lately joined an amateur opera company and thinks he can beat Campanini, Sims Reeves, or any other tenor fellow to fits. Suddenly a bright thought strikes Sam. With a piece of roll poised between his finger and thumb, en route to his mouth, he says, solemnly, "Granddad, what's the difference between me and this delicious bread?"

"Pshaw! boy, you're always up to this sort of thing. *Difference!* Surely more difference than s'milarity, eh?"

"True, O King! but that's not the answer. Listen. To-night I shall be in my favorite role. This morning my favorite roll is in me!"

Granddad nearly executes a non-favorite roll out of his easy chair. Sam straightens him up, and taking granddad's appreciation as a guide for public ditto, seriously meditates giving up acting and becoming, instead, a formidable rival to Mark Twain, Josh Billings and two or three other (Sam thinks) over-rated humorists.

—Humpty Dumpty.