

THE HISTORY OF SKATING.

It can only be conjectured that skating was first practiced, but it is certainly very long ago. In that ancient collection of Scandinavian songs and legends known as the "Edda," Uller, the handsome god, is described as being the possessor of a pair of skates. This proves that skating is, at least, a thousand years old. It is supposed to have been introduced into England about the twelfth century and into central Europe somewhat earlier. It is curious, that although all northern nations possessed the sledge, those of America knew nothing of the skate, while the people of Europe did not have the snow shoe.

The earliest skates were nothing but the shankbones of oxen or other large animals, pierced with holes to receive the cords or leathers which bound them to the feet. Fitzstephen's "History of London," written in the thirteenth century, is the earliest English book in which skating is spoken of; and we learn from its description, that the performers upon these home skates kept themselves in motion by striking against the ice with an iron shoe pole. Sometimes specimens of these home skates have been discovered in the progress of excavations, in several European countries; and a very well preserved pair, so found in England some years ago, can now be seen in the British Museum.

It is unknown when or where iron was first employed in the construction of skates. It was probably in Holland; for skates, of a pattern very much like that of the ones we have mentioned only were known in that country, but were extensively used by all classes of its people, long before the practice of skating became general elsewhere. Skating is something more than a pastime in Holland. There it is one of the national arts, and is universally practiced and highly esteemed. It was a very convenient mode of travel in winter over the canals that almost entirely supply the place of roads in the land of Dykes; and people skated from farm to farm, and from town to town, and to church, and to market, often carrying heavy burdens. The Dutch have constructed an ingenious contrivance, with rounded driving wheels, to hold of the slippery surface, and it has proved a success; but in Holland every man is his own locomotive. And such is every woman here-for it has long been customary for ladies to skate in Holland; whereas in other countries, until recently, this most excellent of outdoor exercises for them has been almost tabooed.

The first skaters in our part of the world were the lowest Dutchman of the "Province of New Netherlands," who doubtless brought their skates with them in that celebrated vessel, the "Goede Vrouw"-which we are told by the learned Dietrich Knickerbocker, "had one hundred feet in the beam, one hundred feet in the bottom of the stern to the stern post of the tiller." The Dutch certainly deserve high honor for having introduced skating into America, if for nothing else. As they did so, the worthy Dr. Anshelm must be esteemed the patron of all American skaters.

A CONVENTIONAL LAND MEASURE- To aid farmers to attain economy in estimating the amount of land in different fields under cultivation, the following table is given:

- Five yards wide by 100 long contains one acre.
Ten yards wide by 154 long contains one acre.
Twenty yards wide by 242 long contains one acre.
Forty yards wide by 121 long contains one acre.
Seventy yards wide by 99 long contains one acre.
Eighty yards wide by 90 long contains one acre.
Sixty feet wide by 725 contains one acre.
One hundred and ten feet wide by 350 long contains one acre.
One hundred and thirty feet wide by 260 long contains one acre.
Two hundred and twenty feet wide by 154 long contains one acre.
Four hundred and forty feet wide by 77 long contains one acre.

An enthusiastic breeder of poultry says: "Farmers will find a brood of hens to produce six pounds of pork, while the same amount of corn will keep a good laying hen one year, and also will produce at least twelve dozen eggs, averaging eighteen cents per dozen, which would equal \$2.16; in addition she would rear a brood of chickens worth as much more, making a total of nearly five dollars, against six pounds of pork at ten cents, equaling sixty cents; or, in other words, the hen will yield seven times as much as the pig fed on the same quantity of food." Aside from the profit, which is an important consideration in the keeping of poultry, it affords a healthful recreation and enjoyment to all classes. Those who enjoy toil in the counting-house, factory or mill, each and all need some light, attractive, health-producing employment.-Am. Cultivator.

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