

FIGURE SKATING—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25.

particularly the quadrilles. But to perform dances on skates properly requires considerable familiarity with all the various simple movements, and, if in addition to this, a power to skate both simple and elaborate cross-cuts be added, much greater beauty is obtained in the performance. Difficult—far more difficult—such additions undoubtedly render the figures of the quadrille, but the result is more than commensurate with the time and labor expended. No less a personage than Her Excellency the Countess of Minto, is an adept at this fascinating form of skating, and is perhaps the most graceful lady skater in the world. I have seen practically all the best lady skaters, and believe her to be peerless. Fashion certainly will live on skates wherever Her Excellency goes, and her wonderful ability in executing the English rocking and bracket turns creates much enthusiasm amongst the fairer ones, as a more delightful sensation could scarcely be imagined than gliding swiftly over the ice executing at will large rockers (not inappropriately termed by someone "wreckers") changing from forward to backward and vice-versa. These movements are little known in Canada, and, as far as I can ascertain, first originated in England. Many ladies, and even children, may be seen skating them, but it rarely happens that the "rockers" are skated perfectly as they appear very simple, but are extremely difficult to master. To the spectator they appear to skate the turns correctly, but, when the lines are examined carefully upon the ice, it is found that the changes of edge made were not those of the genuine rocker. For example, in executing the rocker proper, the skater starts on the right foot, forward outside edge, and after completing a long stroke in this position, by a quick turn of the whole body and a very sharp twist of the right foot, the heel of the foot now leads, and the skater sails along on the outside edge backward of the right; but the curve on the ice is now turned to the left, and the skater therefore goes to the left instead of to the right. The right was the direction in which he was traveling whilst in the first position. This change constitutes the rocker



THE ROCKER

Beginning the movement on the left foot, the skater immediately upon making the change finishes the backward stroke by gliding around on the outside edge backward, but in the direction of the right. In the rockers we have the following changes:

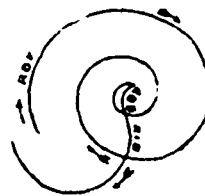
- 1.—Outside forward to outside backward.
- 2.—Outside backward to outside forward
- 3.—Inside forward to inside backward.
- 4.—Inside backward to inside forward.

The above diagram shows correct and incorrect rocking turns. The majority of beginners, instead of holding the outside edge keenly, after completing the turn, come accidentally upon the inside edge, as shown in the diagram of the incorrect rocker. Every care should be taken to prevent the skate from taking the inside edge.

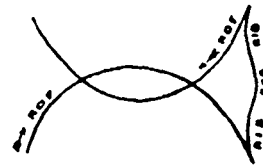
Some other figures which are certain to become more and more popular amongst those who aim to be fancy skaters are "pig's ears," the "ox-horn cross-cut," the double-headed Canadian "cross-cut," and the Swedish "cross-cut." I shall try to describe these in such a way, that, with the aid of the accompanying diagrams, they may easily be learned.

Pig's Ears.—The name of this change of edge is certainly not beautiful, neither is the figure, but there is a certain

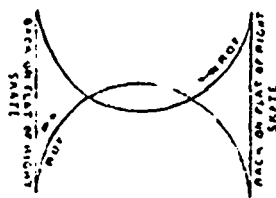
satisfaction for a skater in being capable of executing the movement, seeing it is fashionable! Begin on the outside edge with the right foot forward, and, after completing a good-sized circle (radius of about four feet), wind inwards spirally. Then suddenly change to right outside edge back-



Pig's Ears



Ox-horn's Crosscut



Double-headed
Crosscut



Swedish Crosscut

ward, and immediately again to right inside backward, finishing on this stroke. This figure may be skated on either edge forward or backward.

Ox-Horn Cross-Cut.—Begin as if to execute the Canadian cross-cut, but, instead of crossing the outside edge line at the top, simply change the edge from outside forward to inside backward, outside backward to inside backward, and finally to outside forward, finishing the figure.

DOUBLE-HEADED CANADIAN CROSS-CUT.—These figures in which there is no change of edge whatever are remarkable for their difficulty. Few skaters excel in them. They are supposed to have originated in Canada about the year 1870. To execute the double-headed cross-cut, start on an outside edge curve, say, of the right foot. The curve, if completed, would have a radius of about two feet. When the semi-circle is completed, and, naturally, the skater would continue completing the circle, the right foot is drawn very sharply backwards in a perfectly straight line of about four inches, the skater then continuing forward on the outside edge and crossing the lines in two places, as shown in diagram. The balance foot swings backward with much force as the skater draws backward; and forward as the skater draws forward. To finish this difficult figure, the foot is drawn back again in a straight line which closes the bottom as well as the top of cross-cut.

SWEDISH CROSS-CUT.—This cross-cut, although quite as difficult as our Canadian cross-cut (sometimes called "anvil"), is not so pretty, but is much thought of by the Stockholm and Vienna clubs. The difference between this and the Canadian cross-cut is that, in executing the latter, the skater makes a complete revolution, whereas, in the "Swedish" movement, the skater continually moves in the direction in which the figure was started, the former line being crossed but once, whereas, in the Canadian, it is shown that it is crossed twice.

It seems a pity that Canadians have, within the last few years, lost almost entire interest in figure-skating, and are allowing our cousins across the border and the people of the Continent gradually to creep ahead of us—an American winning last year's championship of America. Owing to artificial ice rinks, many expert skaters are now to be met with, women as well as men, in all parts of the globe, and, I fear, unless we Canadians strive to uphold our good name for this branch of the sport, it will soon be forgotten that Canada at one time led the world in fancy and figure-skating. So keen are the pleasures to be derived from even tolerable proficiency in this art, and so numerous its benefits, that one naturally wonders