

thirty-eight yards apart. There are four players on either side, each of whom plays two stones alternately with his adversary, the object being to get the stones as near the centre of the circle as possible, and to prevent his opponent from doing likewise.

Seven yards in front of the centre of the circle is a line called the "hog score," and all stones which do not pass that line are removed from the ice. Stones which pass through the circle do not count.

The Rinks consist of four players on each side. First, *The Skip*, who is captain of the rink and stands in the circle to direct the game until his turn comes to play. The skip is supposed to have great skill and judgment, as he decides which is the best shot to call for. He also gives the player the direction or "borrow" in taking aim by placing his broom on the spot, for it must be understood that the stone being delivered with a twisting motion does not go straight to the point aimed at. The skip almost invariably plays last taking the direction from his mate, and on the skill with which he delivers his stones the success of the game mainly depends. Second, *The Mate*, who directs the skip while playing his stones. He plays third or just before the skip. Third, *The Second Player*, who plays next before the mate. Fourth, *The Lead*, who plays first. The latter post is usually assigned to the newest players in the rink—I suppose because it is less fun trying to put your stones into an empty ring than playing to knock out your adversary's stones or guard your own; but notwithstanding all that, the lead is a most important man, and many a game has been lost that would otherwise have been won but for his inefficiency.

To describe fully the game with its ever varying changes and chance, the curling dinners with the accompanying songs, speeches and good fellowship, and the health, strength and happiness that follow in the train of the noble game, would require far more space than has been placed at our disposal.

I will merely mention two of the characteristics which account for its high standing as a game of skill, namely, the absence of the professional element with its usual accompaniment of betting and gambling, and the fact that old and young can participate in it with equal enjoyment. One rarely sees a man past middle age taking part in a cricket or football match, and gray hairs are seldom connected with snowshoes and never with a toboggan, but it is a common sight to see two generations taking part in a curling match. Nothing to my mind speaks more strongly in favor of the game of curling than the never failing interest felt in it by those who have once enjoyed it. F. O. ALLISON.

#### USHERS AND USHERING.

In another column will be found a communication from Mr. H. C. Tilley, the energetic chairman of our Ushers' Committee. Without a doubt something must be done to remedy the present state of affairs, and it is clear also that

the pew owner and owner of sittings in our church will have to be the actors in any proposed change.

We fear that too many of our pew owners are inclined to be hostile to the Ushers' Committee because strangers are sometimes introduced into pews when the owners happen to require the sitting themselves. The committee has been told a number of times by different well known pew owners that the ushering was performed in a much more satisfactory manner before it ever existed, quite forgetting that the average attendance of strangers has slightly increased since that time.

It will be found in the majority of cases that the pew owners who consider that they have most cause for complaint are those who are not invariable attendants of the church. At present mistakes are natural; the ushers to guide themselves in the selection of stray seats must rely upon their powers of observation, upon stray rumors, or else must draw their information from that encyclopedia of useful knowledge on all congregational matters—the sexton. Of course, occasionally, even the most punctual attendant gets crowded out, for now and then a stranger walks past the usher with perfect assurance of ability to escape danger, or sometimes an usher forgets a number, or believes that pew 88 is pew 89. Often the stranger himself objects to the sitting allotted to him and quietly selects one more after his liking. It was not very many evenings ago that one of our most obliging committee-men walked nearly to the head of an aisle to a vacant sitting, only to find that the stranger whom he was accommodating had calmly ensconced himself in a seat much nearer the door—that stranger is now a marked man.

We need not stop to discuss the advantages of the Ushers' Committee. Take any fine Sunday evening when visitors fairly throng to our doors—remove the ushers and picture the result! The important question is, what shall be done? Two paths are clear, either discourage the visitor and stranger from coming, or else accommodate him as best we can. Who will champion the former plan?—certainly we will not.

How then can the pew owner best accommodate our visitors with the least inconvenience to himself and other pew owners? Clearly by notifying the ushers of those occasions when he will not require his seat. Could not a pew owner who knows that he will only require one or two seats in his pew on any particular occasion mention the fact to the ushers at the door as he passes in? More than one pew owner does that already, and their forethought is greatly appreciated. Again, a pew owner at morning service might well state that he does not intend to return that evening, or when, on leaving the city or from sickness in the family or from any other reason, he knows that he will not be at church on Sunday, a simple post-card to the Chairman of the committee would be a great favor not only to the ushers but also to those pew owners who do not intend to be absent. Simple consideration for the wants of others, is, we think, very largely the solution of the difficulty.

We would be glad to have the opinion of any pew owners on the subject.