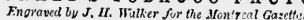


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This popular winter amusement of nearly all classes in a position to witness the glories of the expenses of a rink, broke out in its present form among the gay belles of Quebec, in or about the year 1853. It rapidly extended throughout the Province and the adjacent States—ultimately growing to the proportions of an extensive commercial undertaking, in which, of course, the social elements of the community were engaged. The bright-eyed, beautiful and inventive ladies of the rink, originally displayed their graces and agility upon a flashing steel on a space enclosed within one of the wharves on the St. Lawrence, where, from

the nature of the place, they were subjected to much inconvenience, "outsiders" frequently rushing in with all the *hautes* and semi-importance of the true born American, and doing many a little manoeuvre intended for the entrance of some promising commercial, be jewelled and be whiskered D'Ursay, or some gruffer and uglier pedigreed marching lieutenant. Smiles of the truest benignity could not well be thrown away on an intruder of the kind, or aimed at the susceptible heart of the unknown, who would scolded about on borrowed skates, and change for the better was therefore determined upon at a council of war, in which some of the prettiest heads in the city solemnly came together, and finally hit upon the exclusive, but successful, and convenient scheme, since so successfully carried out, of "no built in a day," and neither was the rink to be built in a day. It rose to its present proud shape from a very humble beginning—a bar-like shed run up in a hurry, and dingy, narrow and obscure, which was erected outside of St. Louis Gate, and the sign presently called "the cattle shed." The fair dames, who grunted at the sight of the syphilis-damels, who grunted at the sight of the fantastic toe, "had long ere this invented the new costume, and fearlessly claimed it as their own when accused by a bold, shameless, bachelor of our acquaintance, with copying Miss Lucy Stone's toilette. They were not evidently ashamed of the proportions of their ankles, and although through the movement displayed a courage in invention truly masculine. The original Rink had five windows on a level with the ground, through which the *gentles* of the town would peep to see "ladies and gentlemen skate in a house;" and every now and then would shout, "There goes the girl with the golden boots." "Look at that swell with the glass." Here comes the belle with the feathered plumes." The basso profundo of an attendant would presently Sergeant "There you are, you with, "Clear out, boys, or I'll throw you in the ebokey. So much for a beginning ultimate, y, and, shortly, destined to lead to the erection of palatial edifices over half a continent, in which the merry game of the ring could be played by night and by day, and the arts of the drawing-room and dazle now on a field calculated to attract and dazzle now on a floor. Montreal, Boston and Halifax, soon followed in the wake of Quebec, the first rink erected in this city springing into existence in 1859, the year in which the Montreal club erected its building on upper St. Ursin Street. Since then the Victoria Rink has been constructed in a style and manner which surpasses all the other edifices of a similar character and design. The reason for the belief that the "institute" is the most permanent beneficence for the "institution" is the fact that it is a knowledge of skating being full of practical and as the gentler but less healthful practice" at the piano or the accomplishments