

ICE HOCKEY.



THE alterations suggested in our pages at the end of last season were incorporated too laxly, by rules of discretion, rather than absolute mandatory directions, by the American Hockey League in the rules governing the play for this season. The interpretation at present placed upon them has failed to insure the fair play so desirable for the future of the game. It is to be hoped that time will modify this unfortunate tendency.

The second of the two championship games, already played on January 5th and 6th, showed the value of the question of goal-cages. A very doubtful goal was shot in the second game, and many disinterested spectators declared that the puck passed many inches outside the goal-posts. In both games the play, both on and off side, was the subject of very adverse criticism.

Two important events have transpired in the hockey world—the formation of an intercollegiate hockey association, and the decision of the Amateur Hockey League to hold itself open to championship challenges from winners of other amateur leagues. Both strengthen the game materially, and the latter puts the A. H. L. in a better light, since its winning team may fairly be considered the amateur champions of the country unless they are challenged and beaten for the honor. The date limit set for such challenges, March 20th, is amply late enough for even the Western players to send a team East, if they decide to look for championship honors. The St. Louis Hockey Club has threatened to make an Eastern campaign in search of championship honors, while the Quaker City Hockey Club, of Philadelphia, may also challenge for the championship at the end of the season. The winners of the Intercollegiate championship might also furnish another aspirant, and then a championship tournament would almost surely be necessary at the end of the winter.

Both the St. Paul and Philadelphia clubs applied for admission to the A. H. L., but the league wisely declined to admit them to their championship series, since this would entail their transferring part of the schedule of games to these distant cities, and would ultimately threaten the game with the same spirit of professionalism that exists in baseball. When the

League would have a "circuit" and the players would have to travel so far to play schedule games, they could not well attend to any legitimate business and still play hockey. A similar point came up in the formation of the Intercollegiate Association, and Harvard and Cornell are both likely to stay out of this organization because of the distance their players would have to travel to play their championship games. The Intercollegiate schedule will probably include only New York, Brooklyn, and Philadelphia, and five clubs are expected to compete, Yale, Pennsylvania, Columbus, Princeton and Brown.

This question of generalizing instead of localizing the Leagues and their championship matches is one that involves the amateur life of the game, for it is only a short step from the purest amateur standing to full-fledged professionalism when a game attracts crowds to see it played: and the gate receipts are considerable. This step is generally first taken by the formation of a "circuit" schedule that requires players from one city to visit another to play. For the outcome of such a move it is only necessary to look at roller polo, which has become almost wholly professional within a year or two by similar steps; or basketball, to which the leech of professionalism has already attached itself.

The annual meeting of the Amateur Hockey League was held at the New York Athletic Club-house, December 8th. The following officers were then elected for 1899: President, Bartow S. Weeks, New York A. C.; Vice-President, William A. Larned, St. Nicholas Skating Club; Secretary and Treasurer, Howard Drakely, Brooklyn Skating Club; Executive Committee, A. Knowlson, Hockey Club of New York; W. H. Truax, Montclair Hockey Club; J. S. Garvin, Brooklyn Skating Club, and the officers above.

Three new clubs applied for membership in the League, the Quaker City Hockey Club, of Philadelphia, the St. Louis Hockey Club, and the South Orange Field Club. After considerable discussion, none of the three was admitted, but the following resolution was passed: *Resolved*, That the winner of the League championship holds itself open to a challenge from the winners of any organized league in the United States, up to March 20th.

The schedule for the season follows:

- February 2—Montclair H. C. vs. Hockey Club of N. Y., at Brooklyn.
- February 7—Brooklyn H. C. vs. New York A. C., at New York.
- February 9—St. Nicholas H. C. vs. Montclair H. C., New York.
- February 14—Brooklyn H. C. vs. Montclair H. C., at Brooklyn.
- February 16—New York A. C. vs. Hockey Club of N. Y., at New York.
- February 21—Brooklyn H. C. vs. Hockey Club of N. Y., at New York.
- February 23—New York A. C. vs. St. Nicholas H. C., at New York.
- February 28—Brooklyn H. C. vs. St. Nicholas H. C., at Brooklyn.
- March 2—Hockey Club of N. Y. vs. Montclair H. C., at New York.
- March 7—New York A. C. vs. Montclair H. C., at New York.
- March 9—St. Nicholas H. C. vs. Hockey Club of N. Y., at New York.

J. PARMLY PARET.