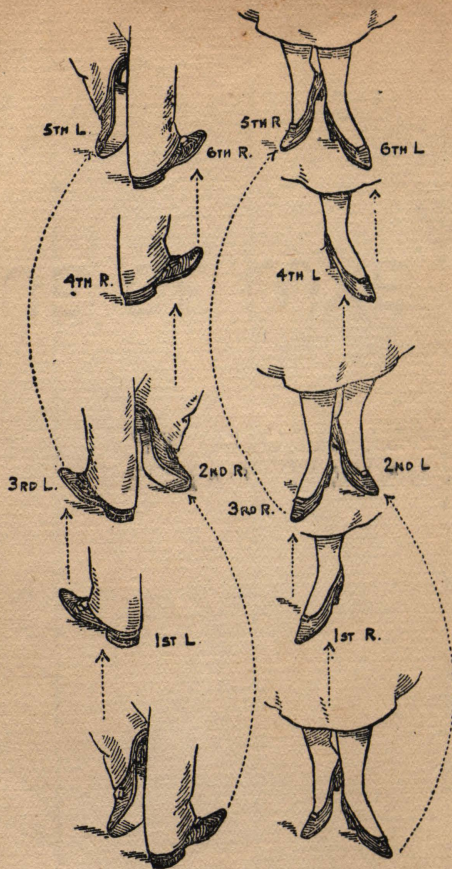


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ALL ABOUT THE
LATEST DANCES

RECTILINEAL STEPS



POSITION IN STARTING

NOTE. THE FEET IN THEIR PASSAGE OVER THE FLOOR DESCRIBE HOGARTH'S "LINE OF BEAUTY."

All about the Latest Dances

A CRITICAL & PRACTICAL TREATISE

INCLUDING THE "BOSTON," WALTZ VARIATIONS, THE
ONE-STEP, THE TWO-STEP, THE FOX-TROT, THE
SO-CALLED 'JAZZ,' THE HESITATION WALTZ, ETC.

By
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All England Series, "Dancing in all Ages," etc.

London
George Routledge & Sons, Ltd.
Broadway House : 68-74, Carter Lane, E.C.

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FOREWORD

MODERN DANCING

SOCIAL dancing at the present time being, so to speak, in a transition state, it is impossible to say which of the dances included in this little treatise is likely to survive the longest. Probably the "Jazz," or practice of "jazzing," as it is termed, although the last to come, will be the first to go; while the Two-Step, which is, in a sense, the oldest of them, is likely to remain with us when the very name of "Fox-Trot" will be heard no more. The movements and steps used in these dances

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are, of course, by no means modern. The arm interlacements of the American "Hesitation" were also employed in the Allemande more than two hundred years ago, and the side steps of the Fox-Trot are as old as the Reel. Also it may be remarked that the manner of executing these dances, and the movements employed, vary according to the social status of the dancers. Moreover, what is considered "correct" at one time may be quite "bad form" a few months later. Again, there is so much similarity in so-called "modern" dance movements that it is sometimes difficult to determine to which particular *dance name* they rightly belong. In any case, a good deal must depend upon individual discretion and taste.

The male dancer would be well advised to

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remember Byron's observation concerning his hero in "Don Juan":

"And then he danced—he danced, I say, right well,
With emphasis, and also with good sense—
A thing in footing indispensable;
He danced without theatrical pretence. . . ."

One thing at least, I think, is certain—that there is a strong reaction in favour of waltzing. For this reason, under the heading "Boston," I have included many movements which might, and indeed more correctly, be described as belonging to the genuine waltz.

EDWARD SCOTT

ROCHESTER HOUSE,
HOLLAND ROAD, HOVE.

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A LITTLE CANDOUR

A GREAT deal of that confusion of ideas which has until quite recently existed with regard to present day dancing, had its origin in the fact that people did not at first realise that the steps of the genuine rhythmic waltz could be taken in any conceivable direction across the floor. Their ideas of the waltz were associated only with the idea of turning round and round. Consequently, for want of a better term, they proceeded to designate every kind of rectilinear movement they chanced to see danced to waltz music, by the very in-apposite title "Boston."

The word is herein adopted not by any

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means with approval, but simply because it has been so widely used.

The kind of movement at present known as the "Boston" is like the little girl of whom we are told :

*When she was good she was very good indeed,
But when she was bad she was horrid !*

For instance, what could be better than the long, graceful, gliding "Boston" sometimes exhibited by really good waltzers ?

And what could be worse than some of those vulgar freakish practices to which the term "Boston" is also, perhaps wrongly, applied ?

There would seem to be three kinds of so-called "Boston"—the graceful, the ungraceful and, I regret to add, the disgraceful.

Needless to say, our practical illustrations will be only of the first mentioned.

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Freak dances of any kind are in the nature of things ephemeral, while the rules of art are enduring. As the kind of information to be gleaned from this book is in conformity with these rules, it will be of equal service ten years hence, even though the *term* "Boston," as applied to dancing, should again have fallen into disuse.

It is of course advisable, in studying any art, to take lessons of a good teacher. This little book will at least place you in a better position to judge if you are being properly taught or merely humbugged.

It may seem paradoxical, but if I were not myself a teacher of the art of dancing, and wished to learn a really good form of "Boston," I would go by preference to some teacher who did not announce to impart it.

Because it may be assumed that *bona*

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fide teachers of dancing know, and are able to impart, any dances that are worth learning. Consequently they do not need to proclaim what particular ones they can teach, or display a list of supposititiously *new* dances in advertisements, like wares in a shop window.

Teachers who advertise their terms clearly seek to attract pupils rather by the modesty of their fees than the excellence of their instruction. The best teachers, of course, rely mainly on recommendation.

It is true that teachers of high standing will sometimes announce standard or classical dances like the waltz or minuet, but dance teachers who specify the "one step," *as if it were something to be proud of*, appear to have a nice sense of their own qualifications; for they let the public know that they can at least impart a movement

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of so primitive a nature that, as Mr. Gerald du Maurier rightly says, it needs not to be learnt at all.

I wonder if there are any teachers of music, even among the smallest fry of the profession, who could bring themselves to announce that they were prepared to impart the "one note" to their pupils, or variations on "Ragtime Tommy"?

There are, we know, people who, when playing the piano, appear to think that anything will do for a bass; but is there a single teacher of music, however lowly, who would encourage such an idea, or would allow his or her pupils to wilfully defy the laws of harmony?

So with genuine teachers of the art of dancing, who are something more than mere dance teachers. It is not their province to impart every crazy deformity of movement that finds its way into the

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ball-room, or every decadent practice introduced by vicious or bad dancers. They try rather to prevent their pupils from falling into like errors of style and taste.

But while the more cultured teachers, to their honour be it said, are strenuously striving to improve the tone of social dancing, and are consistently teaching only the *best of what should be done*, other teachers of a more venal type are content to drag their art through the mire by persistently promulgating the worst of what *is* but *should not be done*.

There are also teachers who when they have, as they think, exhausted the possibilities of a movement in its simple and most genuine form, begin torturing it through the multiplication table, first doubling, then tripling it, and so on. Then they "drop one," "drop two," "drop three," etc. Silly as all this may appear,

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such things are or were actually advertised.

Of course if this is the kind of thing you wish to acquire, these are the very teachers to whom you should apply. You can be fooled to the top of your bent. You are in the right hands. But if you wish to acquire a really good style of doing the so-called "Boston," or any other dance, you are more likely to get it in a single lesson from a genuine teacher of the art than in a dozen from the mere dance teacher.

There are, in fact, not a few teachers of whom the more lessons you take, the worse will your style become.

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WHAT IS THE "BOSTON"?

THERE are dancers who declare that the "Boston" is something altogether distinct and different from the waltz.

And after observing the kind of movement which such dancers exhibit as the "Boston," one is inclined to admit the truth of their assertion.

But, again, after witnessing the same dancers' version of the waltz, one is forced to the conclusion that it is equally remote from the genuine thing.

The fact is, all movements employed in dancing the "Boston" *are, or should be, analogous to those employed in genuine waltzing.*

For if the "Boston" were really something distinct from the waltz, it would have no legitimate *raison d'être*—no right

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to intrude itself into waltz music. If a different dance, clearly it should have music of its own, and a separate place on the programme.

It must be admitted that the "Boston" as it is danced by really good waltzers—I don't, of course, mean "hoppy" waltzers—is something quite different from the kind of "Boston" that is practised *faute de mieux* by people who cannot waltz.

The former may be extremely graceful, even beautiful; the latter is invariably either vapid or grotesque.

This little book is more particularly addressed to reasonable people and lovers of the beautiful. Therefore I start by postulating that the waltz and the so-called "Boston" are analogous in rhythm, form, and muscular action. They diverge only as regards the track and relative positions of the dancers.

GROTESQUE SO-CALLED
"BOSTONS"

IN an appeal which I wrote against the exploitation of certain indelicate styles of dancing in the modern ball-room,¹ I pointed out that the term "Boston" was "often a mere euphemism for incapacity of performance."

This very obvious remark, apart from the main question of degenerate practices, with which we are not here concerned, seemed to arouse a spirit of resentment in the breasts of certain "Bostoners," who immediately started to defend what they were apparently unable to define.

¹ *Daily Telegraph*, Feb. 3, 1913, leader page.

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As an ancient writer observed: "It is of no use discussing a subject unless men are agreed as to the meaning of the terms they employ."

What I wrote in the *Telegraph* was not an expression of opinion as regards the so-called "Boston"; it was a simple statement of fact, as must have been evident to any ball-room frequenter at that time, whose attention was not entirely engrossed with his own dancing.

It seems to me that any intelligent "Bostoner," who is also a capable performer, must, however regretfully, admit that the term is often employed as a euphemism for incapacity.

Are not all manner of absurd and diametrically opposite kinds of movement, from mere walking to and fro, with a half turn at angles, to rushing frantically and aimlessly about, to the inconvenience

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and annoyance of other dancers, done under the general name of "Boston"?

At least this is the kind of thing that was frequently called "Bostoning" when I wrote my protest.

I am willing to admit, however, that the term waltz is also employed to cover all kinds of incompetency.

But, as I recently pointed out in an article on the subject, whereas the word "waltz" conveys a definite expression of movement, the word "Boston" has no Terpsichorean significance whatever.

It is merely the name of a town.

Therefore one cannot rationally aver that any particular movement is or is not the *correct* "Boston." But it is both reasonable and consistent to maintain that this or that particular form of so-called "Boston" is good, bad, or merely silly, according to the recognised principles of

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gracefulness, the dynamics of dancing, or the exercise of *common sense*.

Possibly if the last named quality were allowed a little wider scope in the modern ball-room, many salutary changes would be effected.

It is my intention to describe at length only the graceful and artistic kinds of "Boston," to which the more definite and descriptive terms Rectilineal and Diagonal Waltzing might advantageously be given.

Before proceeding to explain practically the more correct movements, I will, however, briefly allude to certain practices which have somehow come to be connected or confused with the "Boston," mainly through the instrumentality of bad dancers, and indeed I may also add of bad teachers.

And these I give you, in the words of Junius, "not as an example to imitate, but as a warning to deter."

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First, there is the simple walking or creeping to and fro at angles, with a half turn at the corners, so to speak. The diagonal figure, when executed with the *proper waltz step* and *rhythm*, is not open to objection, but when done with a kind of "one step," and accompanied by a squirming action of the body it is simply grotesque.

This is the kind of so-called "Boston" that is generally exhibited by people who are too indolent to learn to dance properly, and may well be designated THE LAZY BOSTON.

Again, there are people whose interpretation of the "Boston" consists of so many bars of "two step" or *chassé à trois pas*, and a little run, necessitated by the fact that the *chassé* movement brings their feet into the wrong position for resuming the turn.

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This movement, because it commends itself to so many who have failed to acquire the true feeling of the waltz, because it is necessarily done contrary to the genuine rhythm of the music, and is pre-eminently the "Boston" of bad dancers, should be known as **THE DUFFERS' BOSTON**.

The kind of "Boston" in which the couples rush about the room at various angles, darting hither and thither, crossing the track of other dancers, and making themselves an unmitigated nuisance, may consistently be described as **THE ROWDY BOSTON**.

All these are forms of "Boston" that should be avoided by well-bred people, especially the last mentioned, as its practice shows want of consideration for the rights of others.

THE GRACEFUL BOSTON will come under consideration in another section, as being

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the only kind likely to endure, or worth taking seriously. Nothing would be gained by describing movements that only excite ridicule and contempt.

But as a specimen of the "multiplication Bostons," to which I have already alluded, let us take the so-called "DOUBLE BOSTON," of which a description was given not so very long since in the *Royal Magazine* by a teacher who claimed to have introduced it, and at the same time was frank enough to admit that it was a "freak dance." "The Double Boston," he says, "consists of three steps, with one step to the bar, so that the complete movement takes three bars of music."

That is all I need quote. It is sufficient. Three steps to three bars! Every waltz melody is composed of sixteen bars, sometimes elaborated to thirty-two, but generally merely repeated, the odd bars—one,

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three, five, &c.—being more strongly accented than the even ones. This being so, to dance a continuous movement complete in three bars, to ordinary waltz music, is an *absolute impossibility*. You cannot divide sixteen by three without a remainder. Besides, each recurring dance movement would take a different accent, the steps would come all out of accord with the musical phrases, and no one, unless totally deaf, could endure such a thing. It may be that the writer himself did the movement in *two* bars instead of three, but was not sufficiently acquainted with the principles of musical rhythm to perceive it. Only a like assumption can make this “Double Boston” even intelligible. As it stands, according to the description given, it is *simply impracticable*.

Of course if you went to another teacher for the “Double Boston,” he or she would

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show you something quite different. In fact, if you went to a dozen, the probability is they would *all* show you something different; so you would have twelve "Double Bostons" to go on with, and when you went to a dance you might find none of them of the slightest service.

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ORIGIN OF THE "BOSTON"

It is almost impossible to arrive at any really satisfactory conclusion about the origin of a dance or movement which presents such varied aspects, and admits of such conflicting interpretations.

One teacher claims that "the 'Boston' is danced—as all dances should be—strictly in time with the music"; while another is willing to admit that it is "danced against time," and Mr. William Boosey says "a 'Boston' in which the steps are against the rhythm of the music is an affectation."

Some of the letter-writers in the *Daily Telegraph* who—apparently without much sense of humour—expatiated on the beau-

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ties of their own particular "Boston" under the heading "Decadent Dancing," a title which I had chosen to express my views on another phase of the subject, seem to have had very different ideas concerning the object of their admiration. One section evidently had in mind a swift running movement—something lively and exhilarating, while another pictured something slow and dignified—"Since the days of the minuet no more elegant, graceful, and scientific dance has invaded our ball-rooms."

Now if such conflicting opinions obtain with regard to the present-day "Boston," what are we to say respecting its past history?

Mr. Hayden Coffin, while admitting that "experience latterly in ball-rooms inclined one to side very much with Mr. Scott," pointed out that between twenty-

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five and thirty years ago "Boston" was the name given to reversing while dancing the original Viennese waltz.

Mr. Henri Zay wrote: "I have danced the 'Boston' for twenty years (I am an American), and say emphatically that there is no set figure that can be called the 'Boston.' It is a series of steps or figures—such as the ordinary waltz-step, the 'dip' the 'run,' the 'reverse,' etc." He pointed out that the charm of the "Boston" consists in the fact that the movements are taken *ad libitum*, and not in any prescribed order.

Now let us turn to Mr. B. Gilbert's American work on Round Dancing, published in 1890, and we find the "Boston" thus described under the heading *Waltz*.

"Step backward with left foot—1; rise on the toe of left—2; descend upon the heel—3; one measure.

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“Step forward with right—1; rise on right toe—2; descend upon the heel—3; one measure.

“Counterpart for lady.

“The turn is made by changing the angles of the steps and pivoting upon the foot at the rise.”

What could be simpler? Clearly the “Boston” as danced in 1890 was no other than our old friend the slide and a twist, or what was once known as the Kensington Crawl, a movement which has done yeoman service for tired or lazy men-waltzers ever since the waltz has been in vogue, a movement still popular, and always likely to remain so. It is introduced in what some people call the *double* “Boston”—Heaven knows why!—at the present time.

What was called the “Boston Dip” was only the slide and twist movement with a very pronounced bend of the knee,

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which, it is scarcely necessary to say, did not add to its beauty.

About twenty years ago I happened to be in Paris, and observed that the teachers there were imparting a very elongated three-step movement in turning, with the feet almost parallel, which they called the "Boston."

Ten years since the Parisian teachers were again teaching what they called the "Boston" in much the same form as it is danced to-day, but the partners danced facing each other instead of to the side.

The fact is, the "Boston" is a recurring thing. It disappears, and is lost sight of for a time, then it comes round again like a comet—not Halley's, but a short-period one, Encke's, for instance. The term has been usually applied to some passing innovation or extravagance in waltzing, and if it falls out of use now, it would

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be safe to predict that it will crop up again in something less than a decade. For some inexplicable reason, the word "Boston" possesses a marvellous power of attraction. It has been applied, as we have seen, to all kinds of movements—good, bad, and indifferent.

As I have already pointed out, the word "Boston" has no Terpsichorean significance, and perhaps for this very reason it is such a favourite among both dancers and teachers; because, you see, in a sense, *anything* may be taught or danced as a "Boston," and no one can assert positively that it is not a "Boston," even if it appears more like an inspiration from Kumassi.

At the present time the term "Boston" is applied to the kind of movement that in its best and most graceful form would be far more consistently described as Rectilinear or Diagonal waltzing.

STEPS OF THE "BOSTON"

THE steps of the "Boston," as exhibited by its best and most graceful exponents, and as taught by the best teachers of dancing, are all based upon the rectilineal steps of the genuine gliding Viennese waltz, which, it should be understood, is a very different thing from that fatiguing, inelegant "hoppy" movement often practised by bad dancers and taught *faute de mieux* by teachers who are themselves unacquainted with the true scientific principles of waltzing.

Whether the partners dance directly facing, looking over each other's shoulders, or side by side in the American style, one looking forward, and the other backward,

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or sideways, facing the same direction, or diagonally in a zigzag track, *the steps should always be taken in the manner here shown*. If the steps are taken otherwise, the symmetry of the curves described by the feet in their passage over the floor¹ is destroyed, the movement becomes æsthetically imperfect, and, for scientific reasons, to be explained as we proceed, the dancing entails more effort and is less pleasurable.

STEPS OF THE "BOSTON"

Let us assume that the partners are standing side by side, as shown in Plate, the gentleman facing the direction of movement, the lady dancing backward.

FORWARD FOR THE GENTLEMAN, OR *vice versa*

Starting from the position shown, left foot in front, toe only on the floor.

¹ Hogarth's "Line of Beauty." See Plate.

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One :—Slide the left slowly forward, and *in finishing* the glide let the heel descend, the left leg then taking the entire balance and weight of the body.

Two :—Let the right *toe* skim very lightly over the floor, describing *an arc* in its passage, until it is a little in advance of the left or supporting foot.

Three :—Without removing the balance from the left leg, by a slight flexion and muscular contraction, draw the left foot close to the right heel, which must still be raised, so that the foot is free to immediately resume the step.

Four :—Slide the right foot slowly forward, and *in finishing* the glide let it rest boldly on the floor, transferring the entire weight of the body to the right leg.

Five :—Let the left toe skim very lightly over the floor to a point *in advance* of the right foot, describing *an arc* in its passage.

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Six:—Without shifting the balance of the body, draw the right foot up to the heel of the left by a slight flexion and contraction of the muscles above the knee of the right limb.

REARWARD FOR THE LADY, OR *vice versa*

Starting from the position shown, right foot behind, toe only resting on the floor :

One:—Slide the right foot slowly backward, and, *in finishing* the movement, allow it to rest on the floor taking the entire weight of the body.

Two:—Let the left toe skim very lightly over the floor in describing an arc, till it reaches a point a little behind the left.

Three:—Without change of balance, by a slight flexion of the limb, and sudden contraction of the muscles above the knee, draw the right heel close up to the left foot, *on which no weight must be resting.*

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Four:—Slide the left foot slowly backward, and, *in finishing* the glide, transfer the balance absolutely to the left leg.

Five:—Allow the right toe to skim *very lightly* over the floor, describing an arc in its course, until it reaches a point beyond the left foot.

Six:—By a flexion and muscular contraction draw the left heel close up to the right foot, which must be kept free to resume the gliding movement.

N.B.—The rhythm of these steps must, in all cases, be dactylic, the stress or accent being placed on the first, which should be as long, as regards duration of time, as the other two together.

I have here described the steps of the “Boston” as if the feet were to be placed consciously in the required positions; but when waltzing is *really perfect*, whether in rotary or rectilineal movement, the action

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of the limbs becomes *almost entirely automatic*. If this were a scientific treatise, I could easily explain how by the proper adjustment of the centre of gravity, combined with correct muscular action in the limbs, and co-ordinate movements of the upper body, waltzing in any direction may be accomplished with scarcely an effort.

Few dancers, however, attain this proficiency, because teachers do not usually study the anatomical and scientific aspects of their art, without some knowledge of which it is impossible to impart anything like *really perfect* waltzing.

Although the scope of this brochure will not admit of elaborate explanations, I will presently give a few useful hints under "Dynamics of the Boston."

Note well that if the foot in the second or curved step *does not pass beyond the*

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foot with which the first slide was taken, whether in going forward or backward, the movement is merely what is technically known as a *chassé à trois pas*, or "two step"—note the apparent contradiction of terms—and is not waltzing at all. No matter what those who practise and those who teach such a movement may elect to call it, whether "Boston," "Chicago," or "Philadelphia," it is altogether *wrong* when employed in connection with the waltz. It is, as it were, the very antithesis of the correct waltz movement, quite out of accord with its rhythm, and is never danced to waltz music except by hopelessly bad waltzers.

ON CHANGING THE FIGURE

ASSUMING that you have mastered the rectilinear steps already described, and can execute them with a certain degree of facility, you have now to learn how to resume the ordinary waltz movement without break of time or change of muscular action.

The art of changing from rectilinear to rotary movement, or *vice versa*, quite smoothly, without breaking the continuity of action, without hiatus, as it were, seems to present an almost insuperable difficulty to many dancers, yet it is very simple if you know the correct *modus operandi*.

The rule is as follows :

In changing from the forward step to

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the ordinary rotary waltz, *begin turning to the right* when on the *right foot*.

If you would change from the forward step to the *reverse waltz*, *begin turning to the left* when on the *left foot*.

In changing from the rearward step to the ordinary rotary waltz, *begin turning to the right* when on the *left foot*.

If you would change from the rearward step to the *reverse waltz*, *begin turning to the left* when on the *right foot*.

In changing from the rotary waltz to the rectilinear movement, after making the forward or rearward glide, as the case may be, special care must be taken that the foot describing the arc, or second step, passes beyond the one with which the slide has been taken.

If the shoulders at this particular juncture are thrown a little forward, the limb, if released, will automatically swing into the

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required position by the action of gravitation ; but if you throw your shoulders back and bend your knees, you will have to place your foot in its proper position by a conscious muscular effort. I may also mention incidentally that the practice of throwing the shoulders back and bending the knees forward, is one greatly to be deprecated from an artistic standpoint.

STEPS FOR RESUMING THE ROTARY WALTZ

The manner of changing from the rectilinear to the rotary movement is as follows :

If going forward—

One :—Slide the right foot slowly forward, carrying the weight of the body in finishing ; but twist it a little more outward.

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Two:—Let the left skim lightly over the floor to a point well beyond the left, turning the toe a little inward, and bringing the shoulders round.

Three:—By a muscular contraction slide the right foot a little further, simultaneously twisting it round, so that you are in the right position to commence the ordinary waltz with your left foot.

In going backward—*One*: Slide the left foot backward, transferring the balance of the body thereto in finishing, and turning the toe a little inward to the right.

Two:—Let the right foot skim lightly round, with the toe turned *well out*, till it has passed beyond the left, and see that your shoulders turn also.

Three:—By a slight flexion of the limb and sudden muscular contraction, draw the left foot as it were from under you without transferring the balance to the

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right limb, and in doing so, twist the left foot round so that you are in a position to begin the ordinary waltz.

N.B.—When the man goes backward, and the lady forward—as they should sometimes for the sake of variety—the man's steps will be as the lady's here shown, and *vice versa*.

THE ZIGZAG "BOSTON"

OR DIAGONAL WALTZING

THE simple forward and rearward movement already described, may be taken in a diagonal or zigzag direction.

If a couple would do this without turning at all, they have only to dance two bars in a direction towards the centre of the room at an angle of forty-five degrees to the wall; then, scarcely moving their shoulders, back towards the wall at right angles to the line they have just taken, which will, of course, be still forty-five degrees to the wall, only in the opposite direction.

But this is a very primitive kind of movement, and soon becomes monotonous.

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A better and more artistic method of Diagonal Waltzing is as follows :

Facing your partner, as in the rotary movement, each looking over the other's shoulder :

First bar :—Three steps of the ordinary waltz, turning sufficiently for the man to face the centre of the room.

Second bar :—Forward movement for the man, and rearward for the lady, at an angle of forty-five degrees from the wall.

Third bar :—Continue the forward movement in turning the reverse way.

Fourth bar :—Rearward movement for the man, and forward for the lady.

For the next four bars reverse this movement, thus :

First bar :—Three steps of the ordinary waltz, turning a little the reverse way.

Second bar :—Rearward movement for the man, and forward for the lady, going

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back towards the wall at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Third bar:—Continue rearward movement for the man, and forward for the lady, in turning the ordinary way—*i.e.* to the right.

Fourth bar:—Forward movement for the man, and rearward for the lady.

There are, of course, many possible ways of executing a zigzag movement, but you must be prepared to resume the ordinary waltz, or other figure, at any juncture. It is, indeed, better not to try this movement in a ball-room unless you are an expert waltzer, or you may easily become a nuisance to other dancers.

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VARIATIONS OF THE "BOSTON"

OR ORNAMENTAL WALTZING

It is easy to see that practically unlimited combinations of movement may be formed on the basis here given, without in any way violating the true principles of waltzing, and without making oneself ridiculous or objectionable by the exploitation of freakish and decadent practices.

It is not necessary to adhere slavishly to any set form or figure, but, *experto crede*, you will generally find it better to change the movement at the cadences and half cadences.

In rectilinear movement, four bars forward and four bars rotary is a convenient order. Next time it might be four bars

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backward and four bars round ; then, say, four bars diagonally repeated *ad lib.*, two from and two towards the centre of the room.

If, however, you would dance the diagonal movement last described, with semi-rotary movements, it will require eight bars to each figure. But remember that this sequence is liable to interruption at any juncture, and should never be persisted in to the inconvenience of other dancers.

A very beautiful and artistic figure may be formed by waltzing side by side, each partner looking in the same direction and doing the step, as it were, sideways. In this you must be very careful not to break the true dactylic waltz rhythm, or the result will be hopeless failure. The toes must be *turned well out*, or the effort will appear grotesque rather than grace-

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ful. Only *very* expert waltzers should attempt this variation. When really well done, it is, perhaps, the most artistic of any.

As a matter of fact, a *perfect* waltzer can acquire any conceivable form of "Boston" in a few minutes—provided, of course, that it is arranged in conformity with the rules of dancing. But let me assure you that a *really* perfect waltzer is *rara avis in terris*.

It often astonishes me how some mediocre dancers, men especially, manage to acquire a spurious reputation for being good waltzers. I can only suppose that since no one can look over his own head, having no experience of anything better, they begin to imagine their own waltzing to be good. Then, having deluded themselves, they eventually succeed in impressing the fiction upon their partners, who are

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content to take them at their own valuation.

Herbert Spencer in his *Study of Sociology* tells us how "often mere assertion, with emphasis and signs of confidence on the part of the utterer, will produce a fixed conviction where there is no evidence, and even in spite of adverse evidence."

It can only be on this principle that these waltzers' reputation is attained. I have watched many men, and danced with many girls whose waltzing I have been previously assured is "perfect"; yet, according to my standard of perfection, they have proved the merest tyros, who have not even acquired the *correct feeling* of the waltz—the reciprocal feeling about which there can be no possible mistake when once it is acquired.

As I have already pointed out, there is no set order of dancing the figures of

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the "Boston," though some teachers, for obvious reasons, may try to convince you that there is. Of course partners who dance frequently together may arrange between themselves a special "Boston," and delight to show off the offspring of their fancy to admiring spectators, but that kind of thing is of no general service.

If you dance at all, you want to be able to dance with anyone to whom you may be introduced, and this you can only do satisfactorily by learning and obeying the rules of art.

The skilled male dancer knows how to indicate to his partner by the muscular action of his right arm whatever direction he wishes her to take, and whatever kind of movement he wishes her to do. Assuming that she is a good waltzer there should be no difficulty about this. The reverse is indicated by a change from flexor to

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extensor action, the triceps and deltoids being vigorously brought into play, and so on.

But of course in a hand-book like this, I cannot enter at length into anatomical details. If I were teaching you personally, I would make the whole thing so clear that you would see at once what was required, and wonder why you had experienced so much difficulty.

Do not accuse me of having failed to describe sufficient "Bostons," because from the instructions given it is easy to *make up* any number.

A lady professor from Boston, Mass., tells me she discovered that the teachers in New York arranged their own "Bostons." I wonder if anyone has made a similar discovery nearer home?

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DYNAMICS OF THE "BOSTON"

THERE are many facts unknown to, or disregarded by the generality of dancers, and seldom explained or even considered by teachers, which if once grasped would greatly facilitate the movements of even the most experienced waltzers.

I said just now that the change from the rectilinear to the rotary movement, without hiatus or break of rhythm, presents a difficulty which many dancers find it hard and some impossible to overcome. This is partly owing to the resumption of centrifugal action, which of course is absent when the course is rectilinear or angular.

But the difficulty experienced in changing satisfactorily from the rotary waltz to

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the forward movement is still greater because the correct rhythm is at this juncture so easily broken.

And for this reason :

Although the figure described in rotation is elliptical rather than circular—the centre being of course a shifting centre, alternately nearer to one and the other partner—we may take it approximately that the diameter of the figure described would be something like a third of the circumference.

Now it follows that directly the partners begin to waltz in a straight line, taking six steps to two bars of the music, they travel during those two bars only about a third of the distance that they travelled during the two preceding bars while they were turning ; *yet their steps must occupy the same duration of time.*

Consequently, in order not to break the rhythm they must be longer in taking

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these steps, moving *apparently at a much slower rate.*

Herein we have a solution to the whole question of dancing "out of time," or against the rhythm of the music.

Some dancers of the so-called "Boston" do this, as already hinted, simply because *they can't help it*, never having been taught to waltz properly; but others who do the long, gliding, graceful movement so much admired, have either been taught or have spontaneously acquired the true feeling and rhythmic action of the genuine waltz.

Again a waltzer or "Bostoner"—I like to consider the terms as synonymous—should remember that he or she can only *continue to slide* either foot so long as the centre of gravity remains over the other or stationary foot.

Thus, considering that the rhythm of the *movement*, though not necessarily of the

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music, is *always dactylic*, it follows that the transfer of balance does not take place till the *second* interval of the bar.

This being so, and seeing that we are *more readily conscious of the change of balance than of the initial slide*, it follows that when the dancers are *really in perfect* time with the music, they are always *apparently* half a bar behind.

And when they are doing what is not very aptly called the "half-time," or counting *two bars as one*, they are apparently a whole bar behind, the said bar being occupied with the long graceful slide, while the balance is sustained by the supporting, non-moving foot.

I am assuming throughout this brochure that you have some acquaintance with the rules of dancing, and are more or less proficient in ordinary waltzing, as explained

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fully in my works, *Dancing as It Should Be*,¹ or *Dancing*, in Bell's "All England" series. If this is so, you ought to be aware that much of that grace and ease of movement which distinguishes *really* good waltzers depends upon the freedom with which the *os femoris* rotates in the cotyloid cavity of the hip bone. This freedom of action can only be attained by the practice of what are technically known as *battements*.

Even without this practice, your waltzing may, it is true, pass muster in the ball-room, but it will not be really *perfect*.

All the same, you are likely to acquire a better and easier style of waltzing in a single lesson from a teacher who understands the true anatomical and scientific principles of waltzing, than you will from

¹ George Routledge & Sons, Ltd.

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dozens of lessons if taken from ordinary dance teachers who show you only the *steps*.

I cannot impress upon you too strongly that the steps of the waltz itself, and consequently all variations to which the general term "Boston" has been applied, must always be danced in *dactyls*. There are, I know, some teachers who will tell you to take three even steps to a bar, thus making the rhythm like the *molossus* of Greek music. That, of course, shows their ignorance of the true nature of the waltz, and if you follow their instructions, your waltzing will always appear like the waltzing of a beginner.

You are not likely to dwell too long upon the first step at any time, but in rectilineal movement you must appear to dwell on it longer than ever for reasons already explained.

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Do not bend your knees in waltzing, whether the movement be rotary or rectilinear. Nothing looks more undignified, as you may see by the first illustration of the "Boston" which appeared in *Punch*. A slight, but almost imperceptible flexion of the limb is of course required at a certain juncture, as already explained, but anything in the nature of a "dip" should be avoided by dancers who do not wish to look ridiculous. A lady teacher writing from Boston, Mass., tells me that "because Russ B. Walker once, many years ago, lived in this city, and taught the 'Boston Dip,' now teachers here are teaching the 'Dip Boston,' and there are," she says, "even more possibilities for vulgar ungraceful movements in this form than in any other."

As a matter of fact, to bend the knees

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forward, without turning the *femur* outward in its socket, is a practice contrary to the rules of dancing ; moreover, it is a practice as indicative of weakness in a man as it is in a horse.

The real exhilarating physical pleasure of the waltz, apart from æsthetic considerations, is produced largely by centrifugal action, which sends a slight excess of blood to the brain. If the girl draws to the right and the man *gives* to the right instead of *resisting* by muscular contraction, as he should, he runs a risk of falling in that direction, and also defeats his purpose by destroying the beneficial effects of the centrifugal force.

In *perfect* automatic waltzing a man brings his partner round mainly by the adjustment of his centre of gravity, thus *utilising his weight* to accomplish his

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purpose without undue muscular exertion. In ordinary *imperfect* waltzing he drags or pushes her round solely by muscular effort.

Which style, think you, is the better ?

All about the Two-Step

ABOUT THE TWO-STEP

THE music to which the so-called "Two-Step" is danced should always be written in six-eight time. The movement goes far better to this measure, which gives greater facilities for smooth, graceful action than does the two-four or galop time. Moreover, the *chassé* movement of the American Two-Step in six-eight time is different from the *chassé* of the old galop. It is less fatiguing, the second action of the foot is more prolonged, and the whole dance is of a more artistic character.

These advantages are nullified by the employment of the two-four measure.

All about the Two-Step

The common practice of writing music and labelling it "One-Step or Two-Step" is of course merely a publisher's or composer's ruse for obtaining a larger sale; but it is a ruse greatly to be deprecated. Strictly speaking, the two movements are *quite dissimilar*. If, however, two-four music of a pronounced type is played, the dancers are pretty certain to fall into the simpler and easier single step.

The Two-Step proper consists entirely of *chassé* movements (so called because one foot appears to be chasing the other), and these movements are made either continuously or, more frequently, in threes, with a change of balance at each bar.

A continuous *chassé* is a step in which the same foot is continually in front. In the alternate *chassé*, or *chassé à trois pas*, the right and left are in front by turns when the movement is made in a forward

All about the Two-Step

direction, and each foot leads alternately to either side when the movement is rotary—the turning being accomplished mainly by the action of the dancers' shoulders.

Melodies suitable for ordinary ballroom dances are composed of equal and even numbers of bars. Generally there are sections of eight, the half-cadence falling at the end of the fourth measure. It is after these half-cadences that changes of movement are usually made.

Composers of modern dance music, apparently unaware of the above fact, sometimes interpolate odd bars by way of modulation to a new key, or introduction to a fresh passage. In a dance like the Two-Step the interpolation of odd bars of music, however defensible from a musical standpoint, must necessarily tend to throw the dancers out, and put them

All about the Two-Step

on the wrong accent. It is true that many modern dancers do not trouble to keep time with the music—perhaps do not even listen to what is being played ; but, all the same, composers should understand the true nature of the dances for which they undertake to write music, should emphasise rather than disguise the rhythm, and avoid whatever is likely to interrupt a continuity of movement.

The following is the most simple way of dancing the Two-Step :

The man takes his partner by the waist, and holds her either to the right side in the hip-to-hip position, or, as is now more usual, straight in front of him so that each partner is looking over the other's right shoulder.

They then do the *chassé à trois pas*—

left ; right, left—right ; left, right—four

All about the Two-Step

times, the man forward and the lady backward.

In this step one foot is *slid* forward, the other brought up lightly behind, and the commencing foot again slid forward. Then, during a slight pause, the opposite foot is brought round ready to be slid forward at the beginning of the next measure.

The lady begins by sliding backward with her right foot, the left being closed lightly in front, and the right again slid back. This is repeated, beginning with the left foot.

At the end of the fourth measure the gentleman should begin to turn his shoulders, while still on his right foot, so as to bring himself a little round in front of his partner. Then he continues the *chassé à trois pas*, as it were, sideways in turning, during the next four bars.

When one becomes proficient in this simple movement it is easy to arrange the

All about the Two-Step

steps so that the lady moves forward and the man backward by way of variety. This is accomplished by turning either a little more or a little less, according to the partners' relative positions.

The changes from rectilineal to rotary movement may be made at each two bars if preferred; but this method only goes well to music in six-eight measure, played, as it should be, at a moderate *tempo*.

Other variations of the Two-Step may be introduced by good dancers. The continuous *chassé*, for instance, may be used, changing the relative positions of the feet at the half-cadences in turning partly round to face opposite directions. It must be remembered, however, that the *chassé* step is the foundation of the dance, and this should always be employed, otherwise it cannot consistently be described as a "Two-Step."

All about the One-Step

THE ONE-STEP

THE dance just described doubtless owes much of its popularity to the fact that a *chassé* is the simplest and perhaps the most natural of all movements that *actually belong to the Art of Dancing*. It is the step spontaneously adopted by a delighted child who, with hands uplifted, dances in anticipation of something he is about to enjoy.

The so-called "One-Step" is a movement even more primitive than the Two-Step; but as we see it frequently exhibited in the ball-room, I doubt if it could properly be described as belonging to the Art of Dancing at all.

All about the One-Step

According to Mr. Gerald du Maurier the popularity of the One-Step is largely owing to the fact that it is a dance which anyone can do without instruction.

Be that as it may, the One-Step is just a go-as-you-please affair. The "One-Stepper" is not confined to any rules as to the number of bars in which a particular figure must be completed. He is a law unto himself, and may continue any movement for as long or as short a while as he pleases.

The step usually exploited is something between a walk and a run, which of course looks better if the dancer keeps his toes turned down and outward. The relative position of the partners is chosen according to their individual caprice. Some prefer to dance hip to hip, others face to face.

The movement is continuous—left, right, left, right, in any direction *ad lib*,

All about the One-Step

a step to each count. When one partner steps forward the other steps backward.

When the hip-to-hip position is chosen, the man usually treads, as it were, four times forward, inclining to the right, and slightly turning his shoulders. Then he continues the movement in a backward direction, still turning his shoulders, thus making a zig-zag track along the room.

Meanwhile the lady moves backward as her partner moves forward, and *vice versa*. Sometimes, however, the partners move in a direct line parallel with the ball-room wall, and sometimes they move sideways.

This latter movement is familiarly known as "crabbing."

If done properly with the knees and feet turned well out, as in what is technically termed a *pas de bourrée*, the effect of

All about the One-Step

this figure is not bad. An expert might even make it appear artistic ; but as it is usually done by indifferent ball-room dancers, the effect is more often grotesque.

In the so-called “ crab step ” one foot, say the left, is placed a little to the side, then the right foot is drawn behind it, toe to heel ; the left foot is again placed to the side and also a little backward, and then the right is drawn, this time before it, heel to toe. This movement, alternately before and behind, is continued at pleasure. The lady may draw her foot behind when her partner draws his in front, and *vice versa* ; or, provided they keep sufficiently apart, they may let their feet come together and apart by turns.

It is almost impossible to treat such a go-as-you-please movement as the One-Step seriously. The attitude of present-day ball-room dancers towards the Art

All about the One-Step

of Dancing is thus expressed by a modern writer of verse :

“ Our Gaby waltz
It may be false,
Our run step one step wrong ;
But nobody frets
In vain regrets,
As long as he gets along.”

Quite so, and it may at least be admitted in favour of the One-Step that its practice is less likely to upset a beginner's waltzing, than does the practice of the Two-Step *chassé*, which, as I have already pointed out, the inexperienced dancer is apt to mix up with the proper rectilinear waltz step, although really it is quite different.

I may also hint, in passing, that what is known as the “ pump-handle ” arm action, “ dipping,” rocking the shoulders, and swaying the hips from side to side are all

All about the One-Step

considered "bad form," either in the One-Step or any other dance. These movements, generally of negroid origin, are entirely out of place in the British ball-room.

All about the Fox-Trot

THE FOX-TROT

It has been stated that this dance derived its name from that of an American music-hall artist whose performance of a dance, composed alternately of slow and rapid movements, "caught on," and was practically the original of the modern Fox-Trot. There are people, however, who profess to discover certain vulpine characteristics in the steps and movements of the dance. Perhaps they are reminded of the cautious manner in which the animal pursues its predatory instincts, and its hurried retreat when surprised in *flagrante delicto*.

Be that as it may, the true basis of the

All about the Fox-Trot

American Fox-Trot is an alternation of *four slow* and *four or eight quick* movements, depending on the step chosen.

The music of the Fox-Trot, according to Mr. H. E. Pether, the composer, is written in common time—four crotchets to the bar—and should be played slower than that of the One-Step, which is in two-four time.

Many variations of step and movement have been introduced since the Fox-Trot first became popular; but the fundamental steps may be taken as follows, though not necessarily in the order here given.

Holding the lady before you so that each looks over the other's right shoulder, begin by taking four long gliding steps with a slight rise and fall on the sole of the foot, *each step occupying two counts of the music*, that is, two bars for the four glides, the lady gliding backwards.

All about the Fox-Trot

Now change the movement to the *chassé à trois pas*—already described in the Two-Step—and do four of these, either straight forward, at angles to right and left, or in turning.

This completes four measures, bringing you to the half-cadence of the tune.

The next four bars may be taken in a similar manner, only changing, if you like, the method of dancing the *chassé* steps, or treading one step to each count.

A simple variation is to do the *bourrée* step at angles, as follows :

Step a little to the left with the left foot, cross the right before it, heel against toe, then step again a little to the left and, at the fourth count, rise and fall on the sole of the left foot. Then make a similar movement to the right, finishing with a slight rise and fall on the right foot. This occupies two bars of the four-four time.

All about the Fox-Trot

The lady meanwhile steps with her right foot a little to her right, passes her left *behind*, toe to heel, steps again a little to her right, rises and falls on the sole of the right foot at the fourth count, and repeats the movement to her left.

This may be continued during the next two bars, or *chassé* movements interpolated at the dancers' pleasure.

Care should be taken that all sideways movements are made at angles, and executed in such a manner as not to interfere with the progress of other dancers.

A more artistic, but also more difficult way of doing the *bourrée* step is for the man to begin by crossing the left foot before, or even over the right for the first count, *thus moving to the right*, then step out a little with the right, cross the left again before it, and rise and fall on the

All about the Fox-Trot

sole of the left foot, meanwhile throwing the right a little out, and crossing it in turn before the left to begin the movement in the opposite direction.

The lady begins by crossing the right foot behind the left, toe to heel (as in the Hornpipe or Reel, only smoothly), then she steps a little out and back with her left, and again crosses the right behind the left, and rises on the right ready to repeat the movement, stepping the opposite way, left behind right.

If in this step the man moves backward, he begins by crossing his left foot behind, toe to heel, while the lady crosses her right before the left, heel to toe.

These movements should be attempted in the ball-room only by good dancers, because in such steps as those last described, unless the knees and feet are turned well out, the artistic effect is entirely lost.

All about the Fox-Trot

I am told, however, by an American, that good dancers frequently adopt this method of varying the Fox-Trot in the States, and I have myself seen Americans practise it at hotel dances.

Some fox-trotters spin round at intervals on the soles of their feet; but in the interests of other dancers this is not a practice to be recommended.

The movement known as the "Twinkle" may be done in various ways. For instance, the dancer, while going in a forward direction steps a little back at a given juncture thus :

Forward *slowly* with a long gliding step, left—right—left, then *quickly* right left, the right level and the left a little back, counting one, two, three, *and* four, the right foot taking the *and*. The dancer is then in a position to continue the step, beginning this time with his right foot, and so on.

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But this kind of "twinkle" does not always recommend itself to other dancers coming along behind. They may, in fact, find the "twinkler's" heel upon their toes, unless he happens to be an expert dancer who knows how to steer and control his own and his partner's movements.

The "twinkle" has also been done after the manner of the *Tango el corte*.

But the most brilliant and of course the most difficult kind of twinkle is to raise, say, the right foot and bring it down over the left with a lightning triplet action thus: Slowly gliding, left—right—left, then, *very quickly*, right left right, the right falling smartly over the left twice as it is rapidly withdrawn to continue the long sliding step at the next bar. The triplet action is performed to a single

All about the Fox-Trot

count, thus the bar would be divided :
one—two—three—four and a one—two
—three—four and a one—etc.

Meanwhile at the “twinkle” juncture the lady raises her left foot a little behind the right, passes it under the right heel (if not too high to lift) and does the triplet in a forward direction so that her foot takes the same angle and direction as that of her partner.

But “twinkling” of any kind is not so much in favour just now. Movements of a gliding nature are more popular, and it is quite usual for fox-trotters to intersperse steps of the genuine waltz with those originally associated with the Fox-Trot.

All about the "Jazz"

THE SO-CALLED "JAZZ"

It cannot be too widely known that the word "jazz" refers to a peculiar kind of "music," if such it may be termed (?), originally exploited by nigger bands in the States, and afterwards imitated in our own country. It has no reference to any particular dance. Certain steps and movements already in practice may be more or less adaptable to "jazzed" music, but that is all.

Before proceeding further on my own account, I will venture to quote a few observations by people who are presumably acquainted with the facts.

Mrs. Vernon Castle says: "It is

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difficult to define 'Jazz.' The nigger bands at home 'jazz' a tune; that is to say, they slur the notes, they syncopate, and each instrument puts in a lot of little fancy bits on its own. . . . On one point I am definite: there is no such dance as the 'Jazz' and anyone who tells you there is, is wrong. In the States they dance to 'Jazz' music, but there are no fixed steps."

Mr. P. J. S. Richardson, editor of the *Dancing Times*, writes: "The so-called 'Jazz,' as has been explained in these columns, is not a dance, but a method of dancing these existing dances." That is the "One-Step," "Two-Step," "Fox-Trot" and "Hesitation Waltz."

The *Gentlewoman* says: "The present fashion is to collect a handful of 'coloured persons' and to extend to them permission to do anything that pleases them

All about the "Jazz"

with whatever so-called 'instruments' they may select, provided that a sufficiently loud and discordant noise is produced. The result, strident and ear-splitting, has to be accepted as 'dance music.' "

So much, then, for the *name*. Now let us turn our attention to the kind of dancing best adapted for such musical, or shall we not rather say unmusical, accompaniment ?

There are different kinds of "jazzing." I have heard a band of real niggers whose music is reputed to bear the strongest resemblance to that of actual American "jazz" bands. There were only five or six performers, but from the noise they made one would have thought there were fifty. Sometimes there were interludes during which the violinist could be distinctly heard playing something suggestive of real melody and rhythm ; but

All about the "Jazz"

this was quickly drowned in a din of triumphant cacophony during which the "musicians" yelled and howled like so many wild beasts in the jungle.

And I have also heard and danced to "jazz" bands in which there has been no yelling or howling by the performers, nor have the efforts of the "artist" who has control of the drum, bells, motor-horn, tin plates, and frying-pan been nearly so much in evidence. But although in such cases the ear-splitting effect has been somewhat modified, whenever the melody appeared to require a pause or rest the banjo thrummers have taken good care to "carry on," so that one could scarcely tell when the tune—or what did duty for such—began or ended.

As for the dance, my advice to those who would fit their steps and movements to such a capricious accompaniment is

All about the "Jazz"

simply to banish all idea of regulated sequences, not to wait for any suggested start-off by the band, because it will never come; but they may begin a step or figure just when they please, and change to some different kind of movement whenever the spirit so moves them. They may keep a strict rhythm of their own, disregarding that of the band, which varies the time generally when a change is least expected.

In the first part of this little book, when considering the "Boston," I ridiculed the idea of dancing against the rhythm of the *music*; and no teacher worth his or her salt, so to speak, would instruct pupils to dance out of time. Surely, then, you may think, the advice above given is inconsistent. But it is not. My former remarks referred to the genuine rhythmic music of European bands; my present

All about the "Jazz"

advice refers only to nigger vagaries. When there is no perceptible rhythm to which one can dance, the only course is to dance independently of whatever noise the band may be making.

The prevailing feature of all "jazzed" music seems to me to be its continuity, with never a welcome and prepared-for pause.

Broadly speaking, when the band is "jazzing" along in dupal time, one-step movements may be chosen; when in triple or six-eight time, gliding *chassé* or two-step movements; and remember, *you may put in waltz steps at any juncture.*

I will again quote Mr. Richardson, who says, and rightly: "In spite of all innovations the smooth gliding valse is still the foundation of all good dancing."

All about the "Jazz"

THE "JAZZ ROLL"

I have stated, and it cannot be too strongly insisted upon, that there is no special "Jazz" dance. The "Jazz Roll," the "Murray Roll" (or, as Mr. Punch suggests, "Why not the Sausage Roll?"), is neither anything new nor remarkable. An idea of the movement may be gained if I tell you to take three steps, the first as long in duration of time as the other two together, or even longer. Dance the first measure, beginning with your left foot, as if you were trying to reverse in waltzing, gliding, or "rolling" if you like, round to the left, till you face the interior of the room; then take the next measure, beginning with the right foot, as if you were resuming the ordinary method of waltzing till you face the wall. Then again you turn towards the interior

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of the room, and so on, turning or "rolling" as it were, this way and that, while moving generally in a forward direction.

To make such a movement appear really graceful it is better to take two bars for each "sway," making the first glide occupy three valse counts, or one measure, and the two shorter steps the next measure.

Unfortunately this movement may be, and indeed frequently is, grossly exaggerated, until, to quote the *Gentlewoman*, February 8, 1919, it suggests "the gyrations of a drunken nigger." It is also said that some teachers instruct their pupils to accept this suggestion as an ideal on which to model their movements in the dance.

So if you see any person doing the so-called "Jazz Roll" in the manner

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above referred to, you will know that it points to one of two things: either he or she must have learnt of a very vulgar teacher, or is a person of very vulgar tastes, no matter to what social position he or she may happen to belong.

If people really like "jazzing"—and presumably there are some who do—pronounced "rolling" and "dipping" movements are just the kind of things they should avoid, as they tend to bring the pastime into discredit. All good "jazzers" should see to it that their own movements are not suggestive of vulgarity, and should strongly discourage such exhibitions on the part of others.

All about the "Hesitation"

THE "HESITATION" WALTZ

IN treating of the "Boston" I have already given many hints that apply equally well to such waltz variations as are generally included under the now more popular name, "Hesitation."

In this waltz, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say mode of waltzing—the side-by-side position is only taken in a somewhat difficult, but really graceful, figure to be presently explained. For the most part the dancers move facing the same direction, or else looking over each other's right shoulder, as in the ordinary waltz.

As regards the step from which the

All about the "Hesitation"

dance takes its name, there seems to be some difference of opinion. The "Hesitation" being a purely American dance, let us note what Miss Elsie Janis has to say about it in the *Boston Sunday Globe* :

"The count is one, two, three, just as in the old-fashioned waltz, but you do not take three steps. Think three, but take two. So many people that I see dancing this dance seem to take two little steps—and then hesitate. What I advise is this : Man steps forward with left and girl with right. Just lift these feet off the floor, not hopping, but rising at the same time on the toes of the feet that are still on the ground. Count it like this : as you lift the left foot—or if you are of the weaker sex, right foot—from the floor, count a short one, two; and on three drag the other foot along the floor, bringing it over in front of the first foot,

All about the "Hesitation"

which is by this time on the floor. . . . That is the hesitation step; from that one the dance gets its name. I like to go all round the room doing that step, but the popular way of the dance is—do that first step twice, then go into the plain Boston for four beats." (?)

The last word of above description should, I think, be "bars." I have only quoted it, *verb. et lit.*, to show how the step is explained by a well-known American dancer.

There are several figures included under this name of "Hesitation," and many different ways of taking the steps, but I expect that really good dancers who are also perfect waltzers will do them in much the same manner when it comes to actual practice. All people who cannot waltz properly may be said to "hesitate" about their mode of procedure. They

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always have done so. A very old-fashioned manner of starting was for the partners to rock to and fro while waiting for the beginning of the next musical phrase. Some bad waltzers still do this, but to other dancers the practice is most inconvenient; it has a silly appearance, and is quite unnecessary.

The term "hesitate," as regards the waltz we are now considering, implies merely that you pause, or move in what appears a faltering manner at a given juncture.

I will now describe a few of the more ornamental movements, but, to be candid, the best of them are done more frequently on the other side of the Atlantic than on this.

Take your partner by the waist, holding her not too closely, and together face the direction in which you intend moving,

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but looking a little towards each other. Your left and the lady's right-hand should be joined and held down with the arms a little extended and slightly rounded to avoid all appearance of stiffness.

In this position each dancer slides the *outside* foot (girl's right, man's left) forward, draws the inside foot a little beyond it, pointing toe towards partner's toe, meanwhile rising and falling a little on the outside or supporting limb to mark the waltz rhythm of the music.

This movement is continued by sliding the *inside* pointed foot further forward and pausing thereon while the outside foot is carried round beyond it and pointed outward, a slight rising and falling action being made on the inside or supporting foot to mark the rhythmic measure.

The above steps may be repeated and continued at pleasure, but, provided the

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music is rhythmic and well marked, it is better to change at the half or full cadence, and then—the man turning a little, while on the right foot, to face his partner—turn as in the ordinary waltz during the next equal number of bars.

The man, if he prefers it, may do the "hesitation" step that used, when I was a boy, to be called the "Kensington Crawl"; but in any case I would advise the lady, whenever turning, to do the proper triple waltz step. This will go better with the man's, even if he merely makes a stride and a turn on the sole of his foot.

Sometimes, instead of turning, the partners stop and make what is termed a *balancé*, or rising and falling movement, to and fro, instead of making progress. But this is not, as I have already pointed out, a very satisfactory figure so far as

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other couples are concerned. Unless all the dancers happen to be making a retrogressive movement at the same time—which is not just now the practice in the society ball-room—it is better to keep moving either round or onward.

A graceful figure of the "Hesitation Waltz," but perhaps more suitable for the stage than the ball-room, is done thus :

The man moves his partner a little before him, while continuing the rhythmic waltz movement, so that both face the direction in which they are dancing, he looking over her shoulder, their hands lightly joined, and arms a little curved and outstretched. After taking two or four "hesitation" steps thus with opposite feet, the man turns the girl under his right arm, which, if done correctly, brings them into a position to do a few turns of the ordinary waltz.

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Instead of turning the lady *inwards*, as it were, towards him, beneath his arm—which must, of course, be well curved—the man may turn her *outwards*, as it were, away from him. In either case if they are expert dancers they will come into an equally good position to dance the ordinary arm-to-waist waltz.

But in all such movements, which I recommend rather for home than public practice, the step and rhythmic action must never for a moment be dropped, or the dancers will find themselves on the wrong foot, or out of step, which is practically the same thing.

There is another really fascinating variation which perhaps you may have seen on American films. In it the man and his partner dance facing opposite ways, as in the "Boston" already described, moving all the while in a direct

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line, when, suddenly, the man by an adroit action of his arms and body simultaneously turns himself and the lady so that their positions are reversed, the one who was going forward continuing the movement backward, and *vice versâ*. Then, after a few measures, by another adroit movement the original position is resumed, and so on without any break of step or rhythm, and always moving in the same direction as that taken by the other dancers.

Miss Elsie Janis, whom I have already quoted, says of this step that it is "a sticker, but can be done."

It is not, however, really difficult, provided you are a good waltzer, can keep perfect time, and know how to manage the arms. When this movement is done with the gliding single "hesitation" step it is comparatively simple, but if

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done while yourself and partner are executing the proper triple waltz step, *without the slightest hiatus* or break in the time, it has, of course, a far more brilliant effect.

THE GENUINE WALTZ

A FEW CONCLUDING WORDS OF ADVICE

THROUGHOUT the pages of this little book I have assumed that the reader has some knowledge of the genuine *Valse à Trois Temps*. If, however, it should chance to fall into the hands of a purchaser who is either ignorant of waltzing or not very proficient in the art, he or she may gain many useful hints from the section treating of the "Boston."

I have considered this dance at greater length because it was the first, and in some ways the most important of recent innovations. The *name* has ceased for a time to exercise the marvellous fascination

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on the public mind that it did before the war ; but the movement has survived the Tango and a host of other and later innovations. But whether you dance the " Boston " or do not dance it, you might as well study the chapters on " The Dynamics " of the dance, and on " Ornamental Waltzing."

If you would really enjoy dancing, by all means *learn to waltz*, but be very careful in your selection of a teacher. Note well the observations in my first chapter—" A Little Candour." Some anatomical knowledge is absolutely essential to the teacher who would successfully impart the *true feeling* of the waltz. It is not a mere matter of steps. These may be easily learnt from the plates in " Dancing as it Should Be," which also contains a long and instructive chapter on the Waltz. Or you may acquire the *steps*

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from even an indifferent teacher, but when you have learnt them, no matter how correctly, it does not follow that you can waltz with a partner—at least not so that your waltzing is conducive to the real enjoyment either of her or yourself. The scientific method of imparting the waltz is from the *shoulders downward*, rather than from the *feet upward*. It is the correct muscular action of the limbs and the synchronous movements of the whole body that are all-important. That is why really perfect waltzers are indeed such *rare aves* in the modern ball-room. But how much the indifferent waltzers miss! Those who have acquired the real feeling of the waltz—and they cannot get it by pushing against their partner, but by centrifugal action only—possess an accomplishment that will enhance their pleasure in life. It is all very well for bad dancers

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and unskilful teachers to aver that the waltz is going out of fashion. I think you will find that it is already resuming its prestige in the ball-room. There is abundant evidence of this.

You may have remarked that Miss Elsie Janis, whom I quoted a few pages back, speaks of the "old-fashioned waltz." But that is a misnomer. There is no such thing as the "old-fashioned" waltz. The waltz is a dance that flourishes in perennial youth. It is the Ninon de l'Enclos, the Helen, the Cleopatra of dances. Age cannot wither it nor custom stale its infinite variety. Why, even as I write, its supremacy is being asserted in the fact that its fascinating steps and graceful movements are insinuating themselves into the prosaic measure of the Fox-Trot and the discordant jingle of the "Jazz." Without the waltz where would be the "Boston" and the

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“Hesitation” ? Believe me, the ever youthful waltz will continue to delight generations of dancers to whom even the names of many now-styled “up-to-date” dances will be unknown.

THE END