

# LETTERS ON DANCING,

REDUCING

**This Elegant and Healthful Exercise**

TO

## EASY SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES.

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION,

TO

**THE MOST NOBLE THE MARCHIONESS OF LONDONDERRY.**

BY

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SI QUID NOVISTI RECTIUS ISTIS  
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HOR.

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TO THE  
MOST NOBLE  
THE  
MARCHIONESS OF LONDONDERRY.

MADAM,

Permit me to offer to your Ladyship my most sincere thanks for the distinguished honor you have conferred on me, in allowing me to dedicate the following pages to a Personage so justly celebrated for her patronage of the arts and sciences ; and gratefully to acknowledge the honor you have done me in intrusting your Noble Offspring to my care, in that branch of their education which this Work is intended to elucidate.

With the most profound respect  
I beg leave to subscribe myself,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's much obliged

And most obedient

Humble Servant,

E. A. THÉLEUR.

It is usual on the introduction of a Second Edition of a Work on any science or art, to present it to the Public with alterations and additions; very often rendering the first (comparatively speaking) valueless, thereby inducing its possessors to become purchasers of the second; this (with the exception of a few notes of little consequence) is not the case with the following pages, and although I have well reconsidered and made continual experiments on the plan originally laid down in the First Edition, have not found any reason to alter my opinion in regard to its correctness, either as to its theory or practice; and am happy to add, that many persons of talent are now studiously following a system, which I shall be happy at any time (when called on so to do) fully to demonstrate.

I cannot close this short Address without expressing the high sense of gratitude I feel towards those talented persons who have so kindly testified by their letters to me, their approbation of this Work,—epistles which I shall always preserve with care as memorials of their esteem; at the same time I beg to present my grateful thanks to the Public Press for its very favourable opinion, and the gratifying terms in which it has thought proper to express itself, in its notices of this Work.

THE AUTHOR.

*“ Les Obstacles au Progrès de la Danse.*

“ Ils n'ont point de loix écrites, de règles constantes, de principes fixes. Ils se gouvernent sur des traditions qu'ils croient certaines. Ils suivent des pratiques que l'insuffisance a adoptées, et qu'ils imaginent la perfection de l'Art. Ils s'abandonnent à des routines qu'ils ont trouvées introduites, sans examiner, si elles sont utiles ou nuisibles.”—M. DE CAHUSAC, de l'Académie Royale des Sciences et Belles-Lettres de Prusse.



# LETTERS ON DANCING

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### ERRATUM.

Page 35—For "Chorography," read "Chirography."

## ADDRESS TO THE PROFESSION.

---

ALLOW me, my dear friends, to say a few words in explanation of my seceding from the long established rules in dancing; and I think, when you have heard my reasons for so doing, you will approve of the effort I have made to bring our art as nearly as possible to perfection, particularly when I state that it will not alter the present style of execution (if correctly performed) in any way, but merely reduce it to systematic principles, so that it may take its place among other scientific arts. Believe me, it is not from a desire to appear as an author that I have attempted this work, but strictly from a love of my profession;—a wish to facilitate the education of dancers, and to snatch the art from the imputation of being illiterate and mechanic.

It has been observed, that a work of this kind would injure the profession, by giving too ready an explanation of the art to the world in general, thereby rendering masters in a degree unnecessary. How this work can affect the profession, I cannot conceive. It will certainly assist the pupil, and he will learn whether he is instructed in a proper manner or not; but still he cannot do without the attentions and example of the master, any more than a person with a musical instruction book can do without the assistance of a professor of music.

It was my intention, on the publication of the following pages, to have made a few remarks respecting the most celebrated professors of dancing of the past and present ages, but, reflecting on the talents of Noverre, Dauberval, Gardel, Milon, the Vestris's, Didelot, Deshayes, D'Egville, Albert, Duport, Ferdinand, Aumer, the Coulons, Paul, Mles. Goslin, Fanny Bias, Clotilde, Bigottini, Brocard, Mercandotti, Taglioni, and many others of the highest eminence, I found it would lead me to an endless dissertation; and, although their merits justly deserve it, I could not resolve to trespass so far on the indulgence of my readers (this work being intended for other purposes), as to describe in detail their respective excellencies, and the high regard I have for their talents.

Believe me to remain

Ever your well-wisher,

THE AUTHOR.

## PREFACE.

---

**THERE** are probably some persons in the world, who, on perusing this work, will examine every sentence, expression, and idea, for no other purpose than to find out its defects, without considering its probable good qualities ; for malice never wants a mark to shoot at. Should such persons be found, I beg to refer them to the following fable :—

“ A famous critic having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who received them very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at in collecting them. In order to this, he set before him a sack of wheat as it had been just threshed out of the sheaf. He then bid him pick out the chaff from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself. The critic applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and after having made the due separation, was presented by Apollo with the chaff for his pains.”

There are likewise persons who are so firmly attached to old principles and methods, that although they know and can see the errors and disadvantages attending the same, are so averse to any encroachment or improvement, that

sooner than deviate from the beaten track, would rather remain unacquainted with any thing that is likely to remove the difficulties incumbent on their system. This puts me in mind of a gentleman who, on being asked what he thought of the advantages of steam packets over sailing vessels, replied—Yes, they are better adapted for expedition, &c. ; but give me the old-fashioned way of sails :—why change our habits? they have answered our purpose for years, and use is second nature.

Readers of this description I beg to caution against perusing the following pages, for to them it would be a great loss of time.

But, there is another class of readers, friendly to the improvement of the arts, who digest the contents of a work without envy or prejudice, and who never venture on an opinion without first entering into the merits, as well as the demerits, of the subject. To these I humbly submit this work.

Having no pretensions to the art of authorship, I have explained as far as I am able my ideas upon dancing, in a plain and distinct manner, and have endeavoured to avoid all superfluous matter, my intention being to make the subject as concise as possible, and not to swell it to a voluminous size;—I merely wish to state clearly what I consider the foundation of dancing, and after many years of persevering study, observation, and trying the truth of my principles on all occasions, I believe I have succeeded in laying down a simple and just theory for its correct execution. I have been induced to this effort by



several hints thrown out in the writings of some of the most celebrated authors : among others, Sir Richard Steele, who, in that admirable work, the *Spectator*, writes, as from a correspondent, in the following terms :—

“ Since there are scarce any of the arts or sciences that have not been recommended to the world by the pens of some of the professors, masters, or lovers of them, whereby the usefulness, excellence, and benefit arising from them, both as to the speculative and practical part, have been made public, to the great advantage and improvement of such arts and sciences, why should dancing, an art celebrated by the ancients in so extraordinary a manner, be totally neglected by the moderns, and left destitute of any pen to recommend its various excellencies and substantial merit to mankind ?

“ The low ebb to which dancing is now fallen, is altogether owing to this silence : the art is esteemed only as an amusing trifle ; it lies altogether uncultivated, and has unhappily fallen under the imputation of illiterate and mechanic : And as Terence, in one of his prologues, complains of the rope-dancers drawing all the spectators from his play, so may we well say that capering and tumbling are now preferred to, and supply the place of, just and regular dancing in our theatres. It is, therefore, in my opinion, high time that some one should come to its assistance, and relieve it from the many gross and growing errors that have crept into it and overcast its real beauties ; and to set dancing in its true light would shew the usefulness and elegance of it, with the pleasure and instruction produced from it, and also lay down some fundamental rules that might so tend

to the improvement of its professors, and information of the spectators, that the former might be the better able to perform, and the latter rendered more capable of judging what is (if there be any thing) valuable in this art.

“ To encourage, therefore, some ingenious pen capable of so generous an undertaking, and in some measure to relieve dancing from the disadvantages it lies under, I, who teach to dance, have attempted a small treatise, as an essay towards an *History of Dancing* in which I have enquired into its antiquity, origin, and use, and shewn what esteem the ancients had for it. I have likewise considered the nature and perfection of its several parts, and how beneficial and delightful it is, both as a qualification and an exercise; and endeavoured to answer all objections that have maliciously been raised against it. I have proceeded to give an account of the particular dances of the Greeks and Romans, whether religious, warlike, or civil; and taken particular notice of that part of dancing relating to the ancient stage, and in which the pantomimes had so great a share. Nor have I been wanting in giving an historical account of some particular masters excellent in that surprising art. After which I have advanced some observations on modern dancing, both as to the stage, and that part of it so absolutely necessary for the qualification of gentlemen and ladies; and have concluded with some short remarks on the origin and progress of the character by which dances are written down and communicated from one master to another. If some great genius after this would arise and advance this art to that perfection it seems capable of receiving, what might not be expected from it? For, if we consider the origin of arts and sciences, we shall find that some of them took their rise from begin-

nings so mean and unpromising, that it is very wonderful to think that ever such surprising structures should have been raised upon such ordinary foundations. But what cannot a great genius effect? Who would have thought that the clangorous noise of a smith's hammers should have given the first rise to music? Yet *Macrobius*, in his second book, relates that *Pythagoras*, in passing by a smith's shop, found that the sounds proceeding from the hammers were either more grave or acute according to the different weights of the hammers. The philosopher, to improve this hint, suspends different weights by springs of the same size, and found in like manner that the sounds answered to the weights. This being discovered, he finds out those numbers that produced sounds that were consonants—as, that two strings of the same substance and tension, the one being double the length of the other, give that interval which is called *diapason*, or an eighth; the same was also effected from two strings of the same length and size, the one having four times the tension of the other. By these steps, from so mean a beginning, did this great man reduce what was only noise before, to one of the most delightful sciences, by marrying it to the mathematics, and by those means caused it to be one of the most abstract and demonstrative of sciences. Who knows, therefore, but motion, whether decorous or representative, may not (as it seems highly probable it may) be taken into consideration by some person capable of reducing it into a regular science, though not so demonstrative as that proceeding from sounds, yet sufficient to entitle it to a place among the magnified arts."

It may be objected by some persons, that I have omitted to mention what is

commonly called the third position ; I have so, and for this reason—all that can be done in the third, may be performed with double effect and brilliancy in what is generally designated the fifth : the feet likewise appear shorter and more compact in this than in the third ; independently of this, the third position is now nearly expelled from dancing, no persons on the stage use it, and very few in ball-room dancing : in fact, I consider that the fifth has entirely superseded the third position.\*

\* The original number of positions named by Beauchamp were ten, namely, five with the feet turned out, and five with them turned in ; but the latter being found useless, were consequently soon expelled.

## LETTER I.

---

### ON THE ORIGIN OF DANCING, WITH AN ABRIDGED HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF ITS PROGRESS, UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.

---

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have long since promised to give you my ideas on Dancing: having now a little leisure, I shall devote it to that purpose; not that I consider them perfect, or beyond improvement, being fully aware that all opinions may be in error, more or less, and that there is no rule without an exception.

There is little doubt that Dancing derives its source from pleasure and gaiety of heart, for instinct teaches us, as in all the animal creation, when we are delighted, to express our *allégresse* by laughing, singing, and by different motions of the body and its members: our features become animated, our eyes more brilliant—they express our inward feelings, and joy lifts us as it were off the ground: we demonstrate our happiness by clapping our hands and throwing our body into divers positions, sometimes bending, then jumping, &c. In fact, gesticulation and motion are the natural consequences of joy; and this is dancing in its *primitive state*.

This, I believe, fully proves the long-formed opinion, that bending and rising are the two principal movements in dancing.



Nature, unassisted by art, was, at the time I speak of, the only instructor; but as mankind grew refined, it became an art.

Dancing is made mention of as in use as far back as the ancient Egyptians; they gave festivals, where music and dancing pantomime made the principal features of the entertainments. This art was performed in most of their religious ceremonies and offerings to heathen deities.

The Israelites, likewise, practised it at their ceremonies and offerings.\*

To the Greek nation, particularly to the city of Athens, we are indebted, in early times, for great advancement in the art.

The Lacedemonians made it one of the principal studies of their youth. According to Athenæus, they had a law, compelling them to exercise all their male children, above the age of five years, in the Gymnopedic Dance. This was used to prepare and strengthen them for the war or Pyrrhic dance, an exercise of the most active kind, describing the art of attack and defence, in which they danced with their arms.

Dancing was thought so indispensably necessary to education throughout Greece, that Socrates, who was so greatly famed for wisdom and valour, did not disdain acquiring this accomplishment from the instructions of Aspasia, of Miletus, who settled at Athens during the administration of Pericles. This courtizan was so celebrated for her

\* Vide Bible, Exodus chap. xxxii. ver. 19.

It has been said, that the word used to indicate Dancing has been confounded with that of Gesture, and that David, King of Israel, and others, did not dance, but merely gesticulated before the ark. This I consider a mere matter of opinion: words vary so much in their meaning, in different ages, that it is next to an impossibility to ascertain what they really implied during the time I allude to. All authorities, however, agree, that David expressed his joy by animated motion; therefore, I conclude he must have danced. Probably his actions were only dictated by nature—but still he danced.



intelligence and her great knowledge of the arts, sciences, and politics, combined with astonishing personal accomplishments, that her house became the resort of men of the greatest celebrity. It is said of this surprising woman, that she was so favoured by the Muses and Graces, that the old and young were equally captivated by her intellectual and personal attractions.

The Romans were celebrated for pantomime and dancing. We have on record, that in the reign of Numa Pompilius, an establishment was formed of dancing priests, under the name of *Salii*. They were attached to the Temple of Mars, had the care of the famous golden shield, and danced armed.\*

In the reign of Augustus, this art and pantomime appear to have been cultivated with the greatest enthusiasm: it was then that pantomime or ballet of action was first introduced on the theatres of Rome, in the personification of the most celebrated characters, by two highly talented rival actors, of the names of *Pylades* and *Bathylus*, the former a native of *Celicia*, the latter an *Alexandrian*. After their death, these arts gradually sank into obscurity; and *Trajan*, soon after his accession to the throne, abolished them altogether.

Dancing was revived in the fifteenth century, at a magnificent entertainment given by a nobleman of Lombardy, at *Tortona*, on account of the marriage between *Galeas*, Duke of Milan, and *Isabella*, of Arragon; but its reign was of short duration. It was revived in France in the reign of Francis I., but it was not until the reign of Louis XIV. that the art was passionately encouraged.†

\* "It is likewise recorded of *Cato*, who learned dancing in his youth, that when upwards of 60 years of age, he still occasionally exercised himself in it."

† "In the year 1651, Louis XIV. danced in a ballet given at the *Thuilleries*, and continued to dance in divers ballets until the year 1669."

At this time the minister Mazarin established several academies : among others, l'Academie de Danse ; unfortunately, he did not survive long enough to see his desires accomplished. It was after his death that dancing merited to be classed among the arts.\*

It is to Beauchamp, who was composer of his Majesty's ballets (in which the court of Louis XIV. occasionally performed),† that we are indebted for reducing, in some degree, to rule, the art of dancing, by introducing, or rather naming, the Positions. Since then, several works have been written on this art, but none tending to bring it down to scientific principles ; which I attribute principally to the idea that there were exactly five positions in dancing (but of this I shall have occasion to speak hereafter). Among others, Noverre has written a most voluminous and excellent work on the imitative arts, in which he has treated most ably on ballets—their formation, and in a general manner on dancing.

It is difficult to decide which is the best and truest style : almost every nation has its own ;—some partaking of voluptuousness, others of character, &c.

But as it is not my intention to tire your patience by enlarging on the differences of style, but to condense the subject as much as is possibly consistent with the explanation of my principles, I shall confine

\* The Cardinal Mazarin died on the 9th of March, 1661.

† "On the 10th of May, 1681, a ballet, called *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*, was given at St. Germain en Laye, wherein females were introduced for the first time, and in which danced Monseigneur le Dauphin et Mme. la Dauphine, Mlle. et Mme. la Princesse de Conty, M. le Duc de Vermandois, and several others of the first distinction : until then, all the female characters were personated by Castrati. The same ballet was afterwards given at Paris, in which professional female dancers were introduced for the first time : the most remarkable of them was Mlle. la Fontaine."

myself to one, viz., that which you and I have practised, commonly called "*La Danse Française*," which, when executed in a perfect manner, combines correctness, ease, grace, and brilliancy. A movement more or less truly executed, gives the excellence to the dancer, and imparts that to the eye which sound does to the ear.

Thus, a good dancer in this style can, like a good musician, either astonish or delight, as circumstances may require.

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## LETTER II.

---

### ON THE POSITIONS OR STATIONS.

---

I have no doubt it will appear presumptuous in me to dissent from the long established rules, that there are exactly five positions of the feet in dancing, and that the movements are innumerable—entirely depending on the performer or composer; but during my practice as a dancer and ballet master, I have as yet discovered but *one position*; the others, commonly known under that name, are nothing more than stations, their utility being to direct or determine us where we are to commence, change, or finish our movements, while in the performance of an *enchainment*, the first and only position being that in which we should place the body, so as to enable us to balance ourselves while performing any movements that may be required of us, as far as regards dancing; but at the same time I do not lay this down as a rule so perfect that we are never to deviate from it, as the eye may tire on the most perfect picture that can be placed before it: judgment in our compositions must therefore direct us where it ought or ought not to be deviated from. The position to which I allude is as follows:—(See plate 1.)



*P\_e I.*



The head should be erect, but not stiffly placed, the back of the neck being perfectly straight, the upper part of the chest raised, which will cause the back to be hollow between and under the shoulders, and will draw the stomach in; this will not only give more freedom in breathing, brace and give strength to the loins (a thing absolutely necessary in dancing), but will cause the weight of the stomach to ascend, a most essential principle in balancing; the higher the weight is placed, the more easy becomes the balance. The shoulders should be as low down as possible, as length of neck is necessary to elegance and figure. The arms should be rather rounded at the elbows and wrists, and projecting outwards, which will cause the waist to appear small; the backs of the hands should be in a line with the points of the elbows, the little fingers towards each other, the first joint of the thumbs should be placed on the first joint of the first fingers, the second fingers should cover about one half of the first, and the third fingers about one half of the second, the little fingers rather more extended, and the arms rather forward.\*† The legs should be turned outwards from the hips, the caps of the knees as much as possible in a line with the great toes, the little toes should grasp as it were the ground; by so doing, the body will have the bearing of full three parts of the feet, viz., the whole of the heels, the outside of the feet, and the great toes—whereas, bearing on the inside of the feet, it would rest only upon two points, viz., the joints of the great toes and the inner side of the heels—the inside of the feet being hollow, and no bearing to be found until the insteps reach the

\* N. B. The arms thus placed is sometimes used in *La Danse de Société* with good effect.

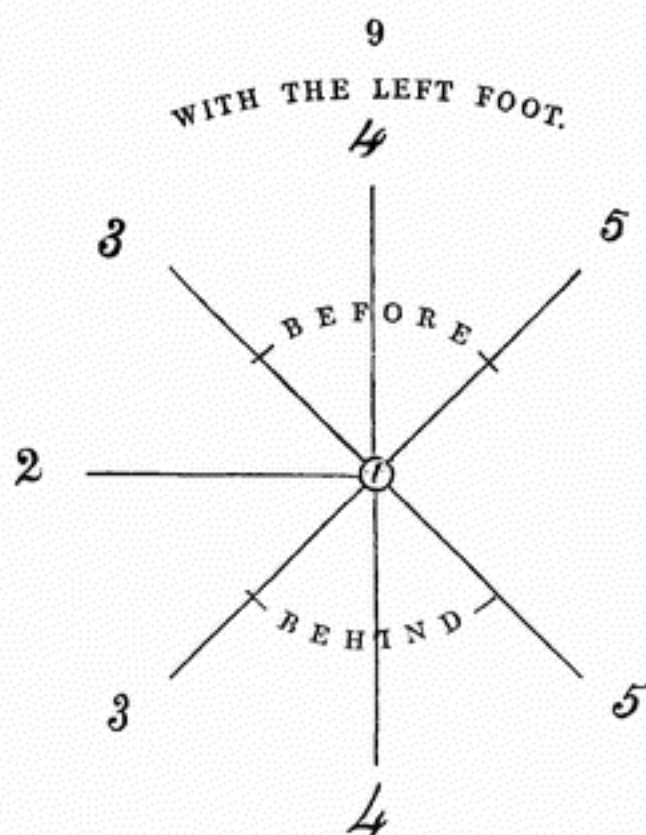
† The hands may, in animated voluptuous attitudes, for the stage, be sometimes extended; but this liberty should not be prodigally exercised.



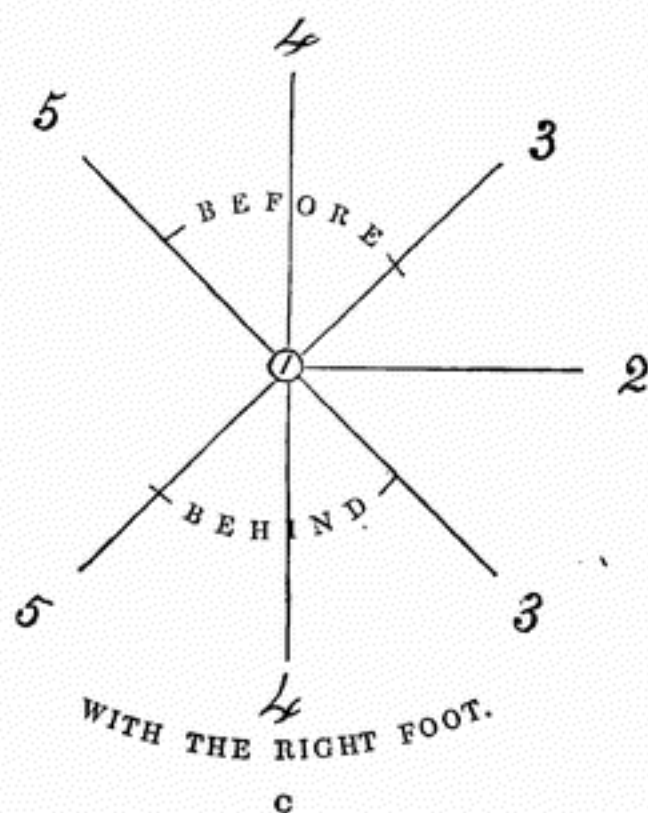
ground, which is commonly attributed to weakness, but is merely the effect of not putting the little toes to the ground: in fact, this position should be as nature intended us to be, with the exception of the position of the arms, and the thighs, legs and feet, being turned outside.

The above, I consider, is the only position in dancing; the others, for reasons already assigned, I shall call stations, and shall class them as follows, making use at the same time of the principles of the above position—thus, five ground stations, eleven half aerial, and ten aerial.\*

\* It may be remarked by some persons, that I am making the art more complicated, by introducing so many stations: let them observe carefully the present style of dancing, and they will perceive that the whole of the stations I have mentioned are used in the art, and that the present system of the five positions is so far from being a sufficient guide, that we swerve considerably from it in almost every step we do, particularly when we go in an oblique direction.



**THE PLAN OF THE STATIONS,**  
 SHEWING THE JUST PROPORTION OF THE DIVISION OR SPACE BETWEEN THEM.



### THE FIRST GROUND STATION

Is when both feet are on the ground, one foot being crossed before the other, the heel of the front foot joining the great toe of the other, and the heel of the one behind joining the little toe of the one in front, the front foot entirely covering that behind.

See plate 2.



*P—e 2.*



*P—e 3*

**THE SECOND GROUND STATION**

Is when the feet are separated, as in what is commonly called the second position, with both heels on the ground ; the distance between the feet should be about the length of the foot.

See plate 3.



### THE THIRD GROUND STATION

Is when one foot is placed exactly between the second and fourth stations, with both heels on the ground.

This station is used in taking *pirouettes*, &c., where the second might probably be inconvenient.\*

See plate 4.

\* It has been observed by a friend, that the third station is nothing more nor less than the second advanced a little, according to the convenience of the dancer; but this I deny, for the very soul of science depends on exactness, and in proportion to our correctness is our approach to perfection—for example, in the science of music, if a note deviates more or less from the exact sound, it is either false or becomes another distinct note: so in dancing,—it is the correctness in executing the movements, stations, and positions of the arms, that gives the excellence to the scientific dancer; if it were not so, adieu to all science: but, independent of this, this station is no trifling deviation from the second, it being at least one foot distant from either of the other stations.—See Plan of the Stations.





*P—e 5.*

#### THE FOURTH GROUND STATION

Is when the feet are placed in what is commonly called the fourth position, but with both heels on the ground ; the distance between the feet ought to be about the same as in the second station.

See plate 5.

**THE FIFTH GROUND STATION**

Is when the feet are still more crossed than in the fourth station, and with the heels on the ground.

See the Plan of the Stations and plate 6.



*P. c. 6.*





### THE FIRST HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the feet are as in the first ground station, but with both heels off the ground, the body resting on the balls of the feet or on the points of the toes.

See plate 7.

### THE SECOND HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the weight of the body is on one foot, the other heel rose up, the toe slightly resting on the ground and close against the leg supporting the body.

See plate 8.

N. B. This may be done behind or before, as circumstances may require; it is sometimes used as a preparation for the *Coupé* to the fifth, ninth, or eleventh half aerial station, likewise in the *Pas Grave*, &c.



*P—e 8*



*P. et 9.*

### THE THIRD HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the weight of the body is on one foot, or on the ball of the foot, and the other placed above the ankle.

See plate 9.

N. B. This can be done behind or before, as circumstances require ; it is used for the *little battemens*, *pirouettes* on the insteps, &c.



#### THE FOURTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the feet are placed as in the second ground station, but with the body resting on the balls of the feet or on the points of the toes.

See plate 10.



*P—e 10*



*P. e. II*

**THE FIFTH HALF AERIAL STATION**

Is when the weight of the body is on one foot, or on the ball of the foot, the other off the ground or at the height of the hip, and in the direction of the second ground station.

See Plate 11.

### THE SIXTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the feet are placed as in the third ground station, but with the heels off the ground, the body resting on the balls of the feet or on the points of the toes.

See plate 12.



*P. e. 12*





*P. e. 15.*

### THE SEVENTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the weight of the body is on one foot, or on the ball of the foot, the other off the ground or at the height of the hip, and in the direction of the third ground station.

See plate 13.

N.B. This station, as likewise the ninth and eleventh, can be done behind or before, as circumstances may require.

### THE EIGHTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the feet are placed as in the fourth ground station, but with the heels off the ground, the body resting on the balls of the feet or on the points of the toes.

See plate 14.



*P e 14*



### THE NINTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the weight of the body is on one foot, or on the ball of the foot, the other off the ground or at the height of the hip, and in the direction of the fourth ground station.

See plate 15.



### THE TENTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the feet are placed as in the fifth ground station, but with the heels off the ground, the body resting on the balls of the feet, or on the points of the toes.

See plate 16.

N. B. I am indebted to my friend Deshayes for the suggestion of this being called a distinct station; his observation was just, in saying, that since it is in constant use, and known under the name of the fourth position crossed, why not call it a distinct station?



*P. e. 16*



*P. e. 17*

### THE ELEVENTH HALF AERIAL STATION

Is when the weight of the body is on one foot or on the ball of the foot, the other off the ground or at the height of the hip, and in the direction of the fifth ground station.

See plate 17.

Omitting the second, the aerial stations are exactly the same as the half aerial, but in the act of jumping.

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The foregoing stations I believe you will find to answer every purpose in regulating the justness of the movements, at the same time being careful never to change any movement or movements you may be in the act of making, (except while in the air performing an *entrechat*) until you have gained the next station you intend to arrive at. I shall now take my leave until to-morrow, when if you are not tired of me I will write to you on the subject of the movements.

## LETTER III.

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### ON THE MOVEMENTS.

---

MY DEAR FRIEND,

According to promise, I have again taken up my pen, and will now explain to you the number of the movements required in dancing, which, after trying numberless experiments in the decomposition of *enchainmens*, I find consists only of seven, viz., five principal and two minor; and shall class them according to their qualities, as follows:—\*

1st.

The Bending Movement.

2nd.

The Rising Movement.

3rd.

The Sliding Movement.

(SLIDING THE FOOT FROM ONE STATION TO ANOTHER.)

4th.

The Circular Movement.

(THE LEG, DESCRIBING FROM ONE STATION TO ANOTHER, PART, OR THE WHOLE OF A CIRCLE.)

5th.

The Compound or Jumping Movement.

\* N. B. I believe this is the exact number that the human frame is capable of using, and this I have proved to the satisfaction of several of the medical profession.

This movement is composed of the two first, and partakes of brilliancy; the others are complete of themselves, and partake of gracefulness.

The minor movements are—

1st.

The Movement of Extension. †

2nd.

The Movement of Adhesion. ‡

The foregoing are all the movements I can discover in dancing: the repetition, in conjunction with the stations in different ways, forms steps, and has no doubt given rise to the apparent multiplicity of movements in dancing.\* As I do not intend to advance any thing to which I cannot produce a proof, I shall now decompose a few steps, in order to shew the applicability of the foregoing rules.

#### The *Battement* to the side

Is composed of two movements, viz. the movement of extension, from the first ground station to the fifth half aerial, then the movement of adhesion to regain the first ground station.

#### The *Battement* before, or behind,

Is composed of two movements as above, viz. the movement of exten-

\* Merely passing the leg from the ninth half aerial station behind to the ninth half aerial before, or vice versa, I do not consider as a distinct movement, it being composed of the movements of adhesion and extension, and sometimes in conjunction with the bending movement at the knee joint, while in action.

† To separate the legs from each other, to straighten the knee, &c. without the assistance of the sliding movement.

‡ The act of closing the legs, &c.



sion from the first ground station to the ninth half aerial, then the movement of adhesion to regain the first ground station.

### The Little *Battement*

Is likewise composed of two movements, thus :—supposing the right or left foot is in the 5th, 7th, or 9th half aerial station, then the movement of adhesion (the action being at the knee) with the leg to the third half aerial station, then the movement of extension to return to the station from whence the *battement* was begun ; this, by being continued before and behind, forms the little *battement*.

### The little *Rond de Jambe*

Is composed of one movement, viz. the circular, commencing and finishing at the fifth half aerial station, the place of action being at the knee joint.

### A Change of the Feet

Is composed thus : the bending movement in the first ground station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the movements of extension and adhesion, to regain the first ground station with the other foot before.

### An *Assemblée*

Is composed of two principal and two minor movements, thus : the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the fifth half aerial station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the movement of adhesion to regain the first ground station.

### *A Glissade*

Is composed in the same manner as the *assemblée*, with this exception, that it is divided by jumping on the extended foot, while in the fifth half aerial station, and finishing by the movement of adhesion to the first ground station with the other.

### *An Assemblée Soutenue*

Is composed of four movements, thus: the bending movement in the first ground station, the sliding to the ninth half aerial station, then the circular movement round to the opposite ninth half aerial station, the sliding movement to regain the first ground station, and finishing with the rising movement.

### *A Temps Courant*

Is composed of the bending movement in the first ground station, then the rising movement; the sliding movement with one foot to the fifth half aerial station, the circular movement to the ninth half aerial station, place the heel on the ground, and stand on the foot that has done the circular movement, then the movement of adhesion with the other foot, to regain the first ground station.

### *A Temps Courant double*

Is composed of the bending movement in the first ground station, then the rising movement, the sliding movement to the fifth half aerial station, place the heel on the ground in the second ground station, then the bending and rising movements, raise the heel of the foot that performed the

sliding movement to regain the fifth half aerial station; the circular movement to the ninth half aerial, then place the heel on the ground and stand on the foot that has done the circular movement, then the adhesive movement with the other foot to regain the first ground station.

### *An Echappée*

Is composed of two principal and two minor movements, viz. bending in the first ground station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the movement of extension with both feet to the second or fourth ground station, then the bending and jumping movements, and at the same time the movement of adhesion to regain the first station.

### *An Entrechat, four or six,*

Is composed of two principal and two minor movements, viz. the bending movement in the first ground station, then the jumping, and at the same time the repetition of the movements of extension and adhesion while in the air, from and to the first aerial station behind and before.

### *An Entrechat seven*

Is done in the same manner as the *entrechat* six, but finishing by the movement of extension to the fifth or ninth half aerial station.

### *An Entrechat five,*

Taken from the ninth half aerial station, is composed thus: the bending movement in the ninth half aerial station, at the same time the sliding movement to the first ground station, then immediately the

jumping movement, at the same time the movements of extension and adhesion to gain the first aerial station (bringing the foot that was behind, before), as in the *entrechat* six, &c. ; the same movements repeated to regain the first ground station.

#### *A Sissone*

Is composed of two principal movements and one minor, viz. the bending movement in the first ground station, then the jumping movement, at the same time the movement of extension to the fifth or ninth half aerial station : or thus, the bending movement in the first ground station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the movement of adhesion with one foot to the third half aerial station.

#### *The Ballonné*

Is composed of three principal movements and one minor, viz. the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the fifth or ninth half aerial station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the movement of adhesion to the third half aerial station.

#### *The Jété before*

Is composed of three principal and one minor movement, thus, bending in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the fifth half aerial station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the movement of adhesion, finishing on the foot that did the sliding movement, and the other in the third half aerial station behind.

The same rules for the *Jété* behind.

#### *The Jété forward*

Is composed as above, of three principal and one minor movement ,

thus, the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the ninth half aerial station before, then the jumping movement forward on the extended foot, finishing with the other foot in the ninth half aerial station behind.

### The *Jété* backward

Is composed thus: the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the ninth half aerial station behind, then the jumping movement backward on the extended foot, finishing with the other foot in the ninth half aerial station before.

### The *Pas de Bourrée*

Is composed of three principal and two minor movements, thus, the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the fifth half aerial station, (this is to prepare for it) then the sliding movement to the first ground station, the rising movement, the movement of extension with the other foot to the fourth half aerial station, concluding by the movement of adhesion to the first ground station with the foot that was first in motion.

### Or thus,

The bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the fifth half aerial, (this is the preparation) then the adhesive movement, and at the same time the rising movement to the first half aerial station, the movement of extension with the other foot to the fourth half aerial station, and conclude by the



adhesive movement to the first ground station with the foot that was first in action.

*The Pas de Bourrée* behind and before,

Is composed of four principal and two minor movements, thus: the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the sliding movement to the fifth half aerial; (this is to prepare) the sliding movement to return to the first ground station behind, then the rising movement, the movement of extension to the fourth half aerial station with the other foot, and conclude with the movement of adhesion with the foot that was first in action to the first ground station before.

*The Chassé* forward

Is composed of two principal and two minor movements, thus: the bending movement in the fourth ground station, then the jumping movement, and at the same time the adhesive movement with the foot that is behind, and immediately after the movement of extension with the foot that is before, finishing in the ninth half aerial station behind with the foot that was first in action.

The *Chassé* to the right or left is done by the same rule.

*The Chassé Plié*

Is composed of one principal and two minor movements, thus: supposing that you are prepared for it by standing in the fourth ground station,—first the movement of adhesion to the first ground station with one foot, followed by the movement of extension with the other to the fourth ground station, using at the same time the bending movement.



*Coupé to the Fifth Half Aerial Station,*

Is composed of one principal and two minor movements, thus : the rising movement with both feet from the first ground station to the first half aerial station, then the rising movement with one foot to the second half aerial station, the movement of extension to the fifth half aerial station, (high or not, as circumstances may require) concluding by the movement of adhesion to the first ground station.

Changing an Attitude from one Leg to the other, supposing it to be in the Ninth Half Aerial Station behind.

Thus: the bending movement, at the same time the movement of adhesion to the second half aerial station, then the jumping movement, at the same time the movement of extension to the ninth half aerial behind, with the same foot, and while in the air, replacing it with the other foot, by the movement of extension ; thus, arriving with the foot that was first in action on the ground, the other taking it's place in the ninth half aerial station behind.

The *Brisé Fermé* or Close, taken from the Ninth Half Aerial Station

Thus : the bending movement in the ninth half aerial station, then the jumping movement, at the same time the movement of adhesion to the first ground station.

The *Brisé Fermé*, taken from the First Ground Station ;

Thus : the bending movement in the first ground station, at the same time the movement of extension to the ninth half aerial station, then the

jumping movement, and at the same time the movement of adhesion, to regain the first ground station.\*

And, by the same rule, you may go through all that can be done in dancing, by paying attention (as I said before) never to begin another movement, or set of movements, until that or those you are about are completed, by arriving at the next station. This is what I call correctness of style, as far as regards the legs, in my next I shall write a few lines respecting the body and arms. Adieu !

\* For other examples, see the Letter on Chorography.

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## LETTER IV.

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### ON THE BODY, ARMS, AND OPPOSITIONS.

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Having treated on the subject of the legs in my former letters, I am bound, as it were, to say something respecting the body and arms.

The ordinary motions of the arms are nearly devoid of grace; they consist of a continued repetition of angles, introducing occasionally parts of circles, but rare indeed are the instances of their occurrence, were it otherwise, nature would be deprived in a great measure of the utility of these members; their action being mostly angular, allows their muscles to act with uncontrolled freedom. It is this construction which renders them capable of lifting great weights, but as it is not required of a dancer to use strength in his arms, but merely firmness combined with flexibility, I shall endeavour to lay down a few rules, by attending to which, it will be almost impossible to be devoid of grace.

#### RULE 1st.

The arms and body should be perfectly supple, so as to be enabled to move entirely independent of the legs.

## 2nd.

The arms should be rounded at the elbows and wrists and projecting a little outwards, and rather forward, (as I shall hereafter explain) the points of the elbows being at the same time in a line with the centre of the backs of the hands.

## 3rd.

The elbows should be the first part of the arms in motion, to ascend, and the last to descend.

## 4th.

Great care should be taken while raising the arms never to heighten the shoulders, but always to keep them as low as possible.

## 5th.

It is not only necessary, but will give a much greater degree of grace while in the action of raising the arms before, to bend the elbows and wrists a little more than when placed in a just position.

## 6th.

The elbows or hands should never be allowed to fall so as to form angles at the wrists or elbows, but should be supported so that almost a straight line might be drawn from the points of the little fingers to the under part of the shoulders.

## 7th.

Never use any strength in the hands ; the fingers should be closed as I have already mentioned in my letter on the first position, not pressed together, nor too much bent, but rather forming a circle, avoiding as much as possible angles at the joints.

## 8th.

Never use the strength of the arms or body to assist the legs.

## 9th.

In the action of raising and lowering the arms at the side, they should be straight, but still, attention should be paid to keep the backs of the hands in a line with the points of the elbows.

## 10th.

In raising and lowering the arms alternately, they should commence at the same time, one ascending, while the other is descending.

## 11th.

With very few exceptions, the arms ought not to pass beyond the line of the back, and those should only be, when it is intended to give more voluptuousness to an attitude, such as in the attitudes *allongées*, &c.

## 12th.

In raising the arms, when the body is in a front position, care

should be taken never to permit the hands to approach each other, so as to hide the body ; they should rise in front, opposite the shoulders.

### 13th.

If it should be found necessary to place the hand behind the waist, (as is sometimes the case to give effect to pastoral dances) then the elbow should be forced forward, care being taken at the same time to keep the shoulders back and down.

### 14th.

Never move the arms from one position to another by sudden jerks : they can be moved quickly, at the same time all sudden or harsh motions can be avoided by having the elbows and wrists supple.

### 15th.

The arms, generally speaking, should be an accompaniment to the legs, and can be formed, properly speaking, into five sections ; but to facilitate the pupil, I shall call them positions, and shall class them as follows :—

First Position, or Half Quarter Arm.

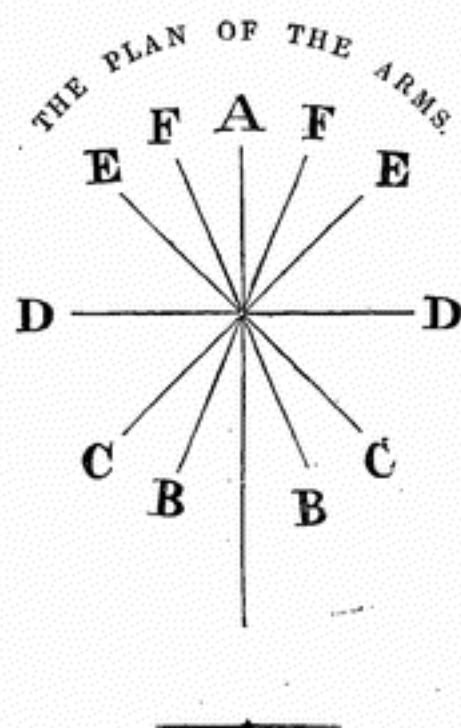
Second Position, or Quarter Arm.

Third Position, or Half Arm.

Fourth Position, or Three Quarter Arm.

Fifth Position, or Grand Arm.





A—THE LINE OF THE BODY.

B—THE FIRST POSITION.

C—THE SECOND POSITION.

D—THE THIRD POSITION.

E—THE FOURTH POSITION.

F—THE FIFTH POSITION.



*P—e 18*

## THE FIRST POSITION.

This position is the half quarter arm, and should be placed exactly between the quarter arm, or second position, and the line of the hip, it is used to prepare for the commencement of a *pas*, and sometimes in the act of dancing, it is the lowest position of the arms.

See plate 18.

If one arm be raised to the second or third position, and the other nearly extended, it will form the opposition to this position. An opposition can likewise be formed to this position by merely rounding and advancing one arm without raising it to the second position, at the same time extending and lowering the other; this is the opposition that should be used in *la danse de ville*.

### THE SECOND POSITION.

This position is the quarter arm, and should be placed exactly between the half arm or height of the shoulder, and the line of the hip.

See plate 19.

If one arm be raised to the third position and rounded, or rounded and advanced and the other nearly straight, it will form the opposition to this position.



*P—e 19*





### THE THIRD POSITION.

This position is the half arm, and should be placed at the height of the shoulder, in this position the arms may be rounded or in a straight line with the shoulders as circumstances may require.

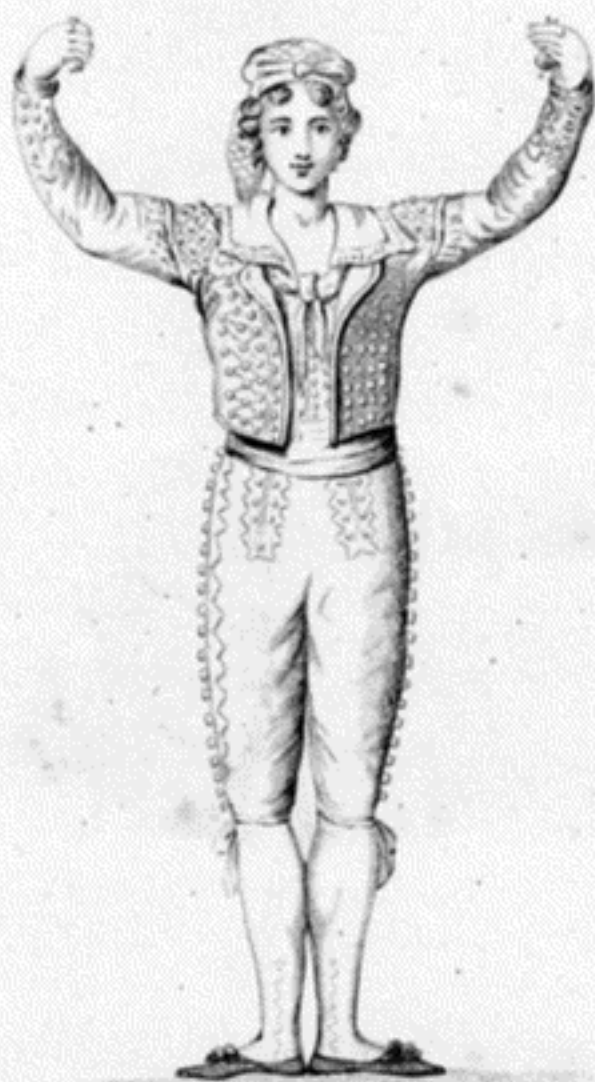
See plate 20.

If one arm be rounded and advanced, and the other nearly straight, it will form the opposition to this position, and likewise if the rounded arm be raised to the fourth position.

### THE FOURTH POSITION.

This position is the three quarter arm, and should be placed as far distant above the half arm as the quarter is below it, which will bring the hands in a line with the top of the head.

See plate 21.



*P—e 21.*



### THE FIFTH POSITION.

This is the grand or highest position of the arms, and should be placed at the same distance above the half arm as the half quarter is below it.

See plate 22.

This position should never be used unless to express grandeur, extreme voluptuousness, or in grouping, the other four positions being sufficient for all ordinary purposes.

Adieu.

## LETTER V.

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### ON THE OPPOSITIONS.

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Having given in my last a description of the Positions of the Arms, I shall now proceed to the subject of the Oppositions.

Oppositions decidedly derive their origin from nature; the most common observer cannot avoid taking notice that the arms are compelled, as it were, to accompany the legs, for if we advance the right or left leg, as in the act of walking, the opposite arm (unless retained by force) invariably accompanies it. By this arrangement of the human frame, the body is enabled to retain its front position: were it otherwise,—that is to say, if the right or left arm were made to accompany the same leg, the whole of one side would advance, and then the other, greatly to our annoyance. Our Great Creator, for the wisest purposes, has ordained it otherwise; thus it is obvious that nature gives us the first lessons on the oppositions, these are oppositions in their primitive state, and this adduces another proof that it is to nature we are indebted for the foundation of all arts and sciences. We are not the inventors, but in fact merely improvers, and I firmly believe that all sciences derive their origin from natural causes, which we adopt, improve, or arrange according to the circumstances for which we wish to



employ them: thus architecture owes its origin to the mineral and vegetable world, for men in their primitive state, devoid of all other shelter from storms, took refuge in caves and under the branches of trees, but being of a domestic nature, began to attach themselves to particular places of abode, and repaired the depredations committed by time on their habitations by propping, and other artificial means: this gave rise to architecture.

Noise gave rise to music. A shadow, the idea of outline in drawing,—the same thing in dancing; the opposition is not an invention of our's, but simply an adoption from nature's lessons: thus, when the right foot is before, we round and advance the left arm in opposition to it, the right arm at the same time being nearly straight; and thus I believe all sciences can be traced down to their origin.

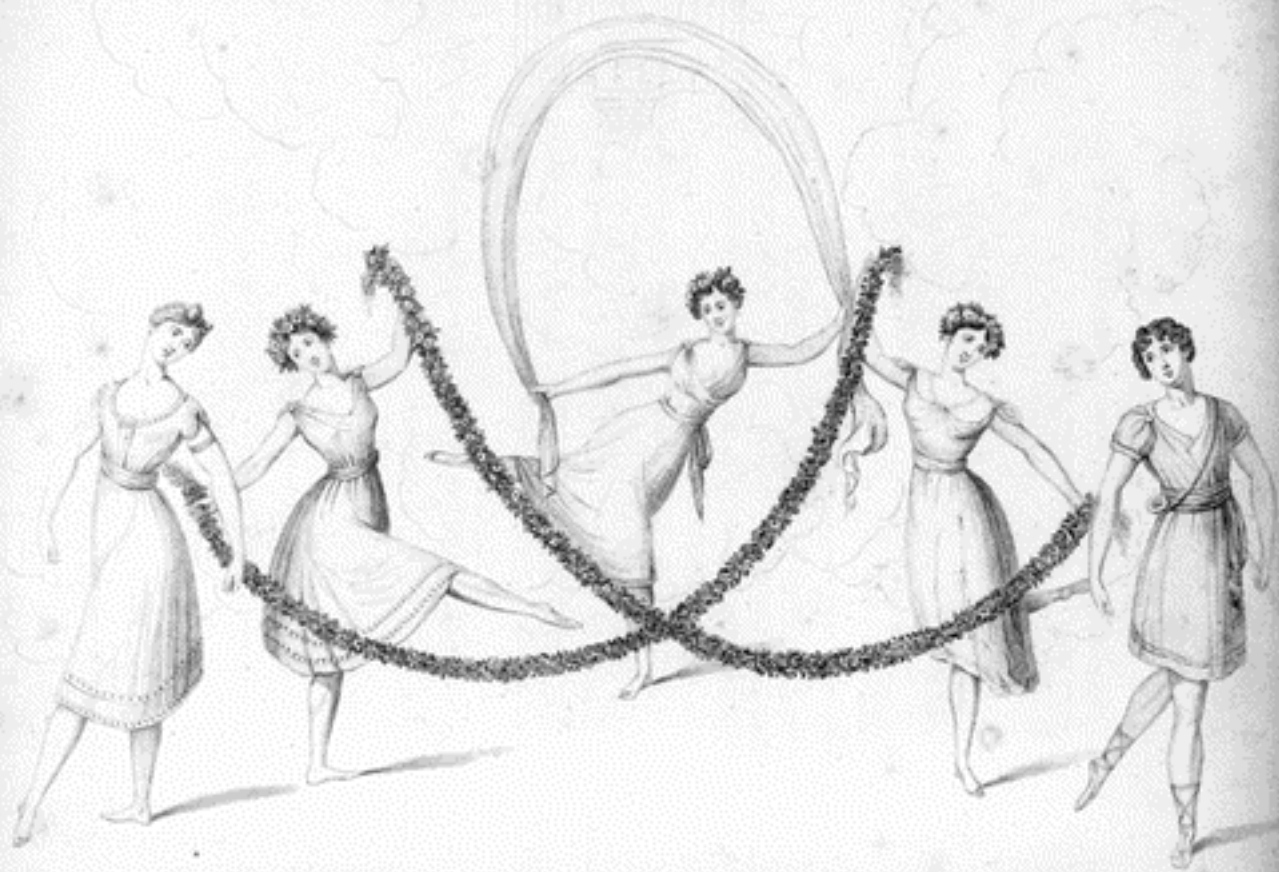
Oppositions are of two kinds, the opposition before, and the opposition behind.

#### The Opposition Before.

When the opposition before is intended, the body should be placed more or less in an oblique direction according to the judgment of the dancer, the side marking the opposition, in front, the whole of the opposition side from the hip upwards (if below the third position or half arm) should be lower than the other, and generally speaking the face turned round and looking over the opposition shoulder, but should it be above the third position, the face may be in a direct line over the hip, the body at the same time being upright.

See plate 23.





### The Opposition Behind.

When the opposition behind is intended, the body should be placed, as in the opposition before, in an oblique direction, but with this difference, the side marking the opposition, behind; the whole of the opposite or front side, from the hip upwards, should be lower than the other, and the head turned round and looking over the opposite shoulder to the opposition; but this rule, as far as regards the head in either of the oppositions, may be deviated from, as circumstances may require, such as looking at the person you are dancing with, &c.

See plate 24.

Oppositions may likewise be made with the body placed exactly in front, by advancing and rounding one arm more than the other, this is sometimes necessary, but they are more graceful when the body is in an oblique direction.

There are likewise, oppositions called *allongées* or lengthened, these are done by extending the arms and legs more than in the foregoing oppositions and sometimes inclining the body forward.

There are likewise, attitudes made with the same arm and foot, and sometimes with both arms, but all partaking of the foregoing principles,\* these are called *les attitudes arabesques* and require judgment and taste in their execution.† In fact no person can delight the eye of the spectator without taste, he may astonish by his brilliancy, but can never please. It is the taste and genius of the dancer that determines the obliquity of the body, and the positions of the head; intimate harmony (in the *tout ensemble*) can only be produced by great attention in perfecting the stations, movements, and the positions of the arms and body; the more minutely he attends to them, the nearer he approaches perfection, but though it is highly necessary to observe the above rules, I repeat that to cause delight in the eyes of the spectator, much must depend upon the judgment and taste of the dancer in the disposition of

\* In this class I include all attitudes that are made to prepare for the purpose of taking *pirouettes*, &c.; it does not follow that the arm should be high to form an attitude.

† I have not succeeded in discovering the authentic origin of the *arabesques* attitudes, but am inclined to think that we borrow them from the Spaniards, who for the most part do their steps with the same arm and foot. They, I conjecture, copied them from the Moors, who, in the eleventh century infested their country: this leads me to suppose that they derive their origin from the Arabians, and are thence called *arabesques*.

N. B. The whole of the foregoing oppositions and attitudes can be done while performing the *pirouette*, and when well executed produce very agreeable effects.



his steps, attitudes, &c., so as to give the best effect, grace, and brilliancy to his performance; the same principle applies to the architect, who, although he has sound rules to work upon, yet he must show his genius and taste in their distribution and the manner of employing them, thus it is that one artist is more celebrated for his designs than another, the rules are the same for all, but their combination differs according to the talent and taste of the operator.

Allow me, my dear friend, to observe here, that it is only by continued study and unremitted attention and patience in practice, that a dancer can ever arrive at, or near perfection: he must first strictly attend to, and never deviate from the theory, by which means he will be enabled to surmount almost any difficulty that may be opposed to his advancement, and will gain that firmness and balance (without which it is impossible to dance) which will enable him to execute all his steps with justness and precision: thus at once avoiding all violent contortions, very often causing the most ridiculous effects, which young dancers who employ an undue force are so often subject to, in the attempt to gain applause, at the expense of the beauties of the art; therefore permit me to say that to form a good dancer, he should be first well grounded in the good steady principles and practice of the art, and believe me, in due time, taste will follow.

Adieu.



## LETTER VI.

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### ON THE HEAD AND BODY.

---

I mentioned in my letter on the positions and stations, that the head should be erect, but not stifly placed,—it is the same with regard to the body, but at the same time it must be completely under control, and should never be influenced either by the action of the legs or arms.

In bending, particularly in the first station, the body should never be permitted to lean forward.

In *pirouettes*, the chest and head should be extremely elevated, the loins well braced, and the thighs forced out as much as possible : thus placed, the body will be perfectly balanced ; when a *pirouette* is missed, it is mostly on account of some one or more of these principles not being attended to.

When the body is required to be bent, such as in an *entrechat cambré*, &c. it should be effected at the loins, the chest remaining elevated and the head thrown back.

If it should be required to add voluptuousness to an attitude by bending the body to the side, it should be done at the loins.

In doing the *ciseaux*, the effect may be heightened by advancing the body in a line with the legs; this will cause the legs to appear more elevated.

In all cases where the body is required to be bent more or less to the side, as in the oppositions, it should be done at the loins, and not at the hips as some dancers unthinkingly do, thereby causing the other hip to project in a most ungraceful manner.

I believe the above observations will be sufficient to shew the necessity of obtaining to the utmost degree a good position, and full command over the motions of the trunk of the body, and in particular firmness in the loins, for without this quality it is absolutely impossible to dance with any degree of effect, grace, or elegance; so essentially necessary to a dancer is this solidity of the loins, that I have seen persons of great muscular strength who, for want of attention to this point, dance with great difficulty and without the least effect, an appearance of debility being observed throughout the whole of their motions, while it is even in the power of a person not endued with great muscular strength to appear to be so in dancing, by having the loins well braced. It is astonishing that this is not more strictly attended to, particularly as it is so easily obtained, by attending to the remarks made on the first position.

I think, with very few exceptions, the above short rules may be applied in all cases where the body is required to be bent.

Adieu.



## LETTER VII.

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### OBSERVATIONS ON PRACTICE.

---

I shall now proceed to give you a few observations on practice, which I have found fully to answer the purpose of rapidly advancing a pupil in dancing.

In bending, I have always made it a rule to make him cease going lower when he could no longer retain his heels on the ground, being perfectly convinced that when a dancer bends so low as to cause the heels to quit the ground, he loses in a considerable degree his steadiness, and the power of springing he would otherwise have, were he to continue with them on the ground, independently of its being devoid of grace, it would look extremely ridiculous in a dancer, if he were to bend in the second, third, or fourth ground station with his heels off the ground. I cannot see that it can promote the least flexibility or any other good in dancing, therefore should not recommend it under any circumstances.

Bending in the first position, or in the second ground station (when carefully done) is a very useful exercise: it produces great steadiness and balance, it assists in turning out the thighs, and gives flexibility to the hip joints.

I assuredly do not admire the system of throwing up the leg in the act of making the *battement*, to loosen the hip: this is the contrary to what we are aiming at, firmness is required; therefore I have always found it better to raise the thigh by the *rectus*, (a muscle at the hip joint,) at the same time being attentive to keep the knees straight, the hips turned outwards, and the inactive leg, hip, and loins, perfectly steady, neither suffering the side to project nor to bend in, but to act as in the *coupé* to the fifth, ninth, or eleventh half aerial station, forcing it more and more every *battement*, until it is raised as high as it is required. This, I am sure, is the best way to acquire flexibility and firmness in the hip joint, which is of the utmost consequence in dancing, as neither elegance, grace, nor execution, can be obtained without having a complete command over it.

To gain strength on the balls of the feet, you should rise gently from the ground, employing the strength of the muscles of the calves, (or, as the anatomists call them, *the gastrocnemius vel gemellus et gastrocnemius internus vel soleus*,\*) the place of action being at the ancle and toe-joints, and continue to walk on the balls of the feet; by which means, great strength and perfect steadiness will be acquired.

To gain strength on the points of the toes, the strength of the joints of the great toes should be added to that of the ancles, keeping the joints of the toes perfectly straight from the commencement of the movement, rising gradually from the ground, then in the same manner permitting

\* "The gastrocnemius is the great muscle of the calf of the leg: its two heads are very large and fleshy, which arise from the tubercles of the thigh bone. The inner head is the larger, and arises by a strong tendon from the back of the inner condyle, and a little way up to the rough line; and it has also a strong adhesion to the capsular ligament of the knee."

John Bell, F. R. S. E., on Anatomy.



the heels to descend. By continuing this practice, strength will be obtained on the points of the toes.

In standing on one foot, the hip of the leg supporting the body should never be suffered to project to the side, but that and the loins should be perfectly steady.

In doing the *coupé* to the fifth, ninth, or eleventh half aerial station, care should be taken, while raising the leg, not to raise the knee above the line of the hip; if the leg is raised higher (a thing I should not recommend to be done) it must be performed with the knee straight.

The points of the toes should always be the last part of the feet to quit the ground, and the first to reach it.

When the feet are in the air, the toes should be forced down as much as possible, at the same time straightening the ankle joint in a line with the shin.

In the rising movement, and indeed at all times, the heels should be forced forward as much as possible, being careful at the same time that the caps of the knees follow the direction of the toes, forcing the thighs out from the hip joint.

In the jumping movement, the force should be taken principally with the feet, and under no circumstances assisted by the arms.

The practice of the change of the feet is absolutely necessary: it gives firmness, elasticity, and steadiness in all steps where vigour is required in their execution. Care should be taken in the descent to arrive on the points of the toes, and not allow the heels suddenly to reach the ground, but to take sufficient strength in the joints of the toes, and in the insteps, to support the body, permitting the heels to approach the ground gradually.



The practice of the change of the feet, with the knees and toe joints straight, executed by the force of the ankle joints, gives likewise considerable elasticity and strength to the feet; it produces great firmness on the points of the toes, and equilibrium in the body.

The exercise of rising gradually on the points of the toes, then changing the feet—(that is to say) replacing the foot that is before with the one that is behind, and finishing by lowering the heels slowly on the ground, likewise causes great firmness on the points of the toes.

In practising the little *battemens*, I have found it by far the best way to commence and finish each *battement* from the fifth half aerial station, at the same time keeping the hip joint perfectly steady, moving only at the knee; this will give freedom and justness in passing the foot from the third half aerial station before to that behind, and the same from behind to that before: the practice of the little *battemens* has the quality of greatly increasing the strength and suppleness of the knee joint; it facilitates the passing of the foot before and behind, and conduces materially to the ease and brilliancy of the *entrechat*; it likewise causes great play and increased strength at the insteps and joints of the toes, thereby assisting greatly the elevation in the *entrechat*, &c.

I have found great benefit from the *échappée*; it considerably assists the elevation, and gives great freedom and strength to the insteps, &c.

In *pirouettes*, it greatly facilitates the turning by advancing a little the opposite arm to that side on which you are turning; for example, supposing the *pirouette* is made to the right, then you should advance the left arm, and stop it by advancing the right, at the last turn, while the back is turned towards the spectators, this will moderate the speed of the last half turn, and cause the *pirouette* to finish in front without any sudden or harsh motion.

Care should be taken never to employ an undue force in the preparation, or in the commencement of a *pirouette*; a degree of firmness is necessary throughout the whole frame, but no misplaced effort, which might probably disturb that just equilibrium so essential to the *pirouette*.

Except while changing from one station to another, the heel should never be allowed to touch the ground during the time of the *pirouette*, but continue to turn easily on the ball of the foot, it forming the pivot of the whole frame.

I consider that in the PRACTICE of all steps where vigour is required in their execution, no preparation should be made before them, as is commonly done: for example, an *entrechat* four, six, or seven, should be taken immediately from the first station, making use of no preparation, such as a change of the feet, a *coupé* or rising on the points of the toes, &c.; for when a dancer can make an *entrechat*, &c., without a preparation, he can always do it with more facility with one; the same rule should be observed for the little *rond de jambe* in the air.

An *entrechat*, to be brilliant, should be always well crossed and done with great firmness, returning to the ground on the points of the toes, the heels descending gradually on the ground.

In the practice of the little *rond de jambe* on the point or in the air, a circle should be described as large as possible, taking care at the same time, as soon as the thigh is placed in its proper position, never to move the hip joint, the place of action being only at the knee.

With few exceptions, steps should terminate with the knees straight, if both feet are on the ground, or if the step terminates on one foot, then the knee of the leg supporting the body should be straight, thus making each step perfect in itself before the commencement of another. The

whole of a *pas* can never be perfect, if the details are not done with precision.

A dancer should be careful never to allow any portion of the weight of his body to rest on the foot in action, while in any of the following half aerial stations, viz: the second, third, fifth, seventh, ninth, or eleventh, nor while doing either of the following movements, viz: the sliding, the circular, or the movements of extension and adhesion: the whole weight of the body should be on the stationary foot; this will give more freedom to the foot that is in action, while performing any of the above movements or stations, than it otherwise would have.

A dancer should never allow one leg to be enabled to execute better than the other, for there is nothing more annoying than to see a person continually making his *pirouettes, coupés*, &c., with the same leg; to avoid this, (if he finds that he does any exercise more easily with one leg than with the other) he should give more practice to the one that is less active.

A dancer should do more while practising, than what he intends to do before the public—it is not the quantity but the quality that should be shown the spectator: thus, if a dancer can remain in the fifth, seventh, ninth, or eleventh half aerial station at or above the height of the hip, during the time of eleven bars, he should remain only eight while before the public; the same rule applies to every thing in dancing, not any thing should go before the spectator until it can be done with the greatest ease to the performer—be vigorous, without stiffness.

It is of the highest importance that a dancer should obtain firmness in the loins; if they are relaxed, it is impossible to remain upright; he will immediately lose his equilibrium, to regain which, he will be obliged

to make an effort which will naturally be devoid of grace, and therefore displease the eye of the spectator. This important quality in a dancer can only be acquired by a constant practice and strict attention to the principles, as aforesaid, in my letter on the first position.

The features ought not to be devoid of animation, but should express the sentiment of the character of the dance, either gay, noble, voluptuous, &c., according to the circumstances of the situation.

The articulation of every station, movement, &c., (in dancing) ought to be distinctly visible, avoiding all confusion; nothing should be introduced which is likely to displease or annoy the beholder; every motion, &c., should, as the words in a language, be correctly pronounced, without any apparent or studied effort on the part of the performer; this is (if I may be allowed the expression) the fluency of the dancer, and will gain on the minds of the spectators in the same manner as an address would do from an eloquent speaker.\*

Adieu.

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\* This similitude might be carried much farther by comparing the movements to the letters, the stations to the pauses, the steps to the words, the *enchaînemens* to sentences, and the whole to a work.

## LETTER VIII.

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### ON CHIROGRAPHY, OR THE ART OF DESCRIBING DANCES IN WRITING.

---

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Although it is possible to describe on paper any *enchainment* or dance that can be composed, as in the examples of my letter on the Movements, yet it is desirable to contract the space required to do so as much as possible, it being not only inconvenient to carry large books about, but a great loss of time to write those dances at full length which you may desire to commit to paper; I have therefore sent you a new kind of Chirography,\* which I have composed purposely to be applied to the foregoing system, which, in conjunction with the principles already laid down in my foregoing letters, can be adopted with freedom and expedition, and at the same time with great exactness, in describing the minutiae of the *enchainmens* in dancing: as for example—

The Ground Stations being five in number, can be written thus :  
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

\* The origin of writing down dances is not clearly ascertained : Thoinet Arbeau, Beauchamp, and others, have written Treatises on Chirography, but failed in a degree in the attempt. How could it be otherwise, when the art of dancing itself was any thing but scientific ?



The Half Aerials are eleven in number, and can be written thus:  $\dot{1} \dot{2} \dot{3} \dot{4} \dot{5} \dot{6} \dot{7} \dot{8} \dot{9} \dot{10} \dot{11}$  If they have four dots, thus,  $\ddot{2} \ddot{3} \ddot{6} \ddot{7}$  it denotes that they are to be done behind; if underlined, thus,  $\underline{\dot{2}} \underline{\dot{3}} \underline{\dot{6}} \underline{\dot{7}}$  it denotes that the leg should be high in the air, as in an attitude or *coupé* to the fifth half aerial station, &c.

The Aerials are ten in number, and can be written with dots below, thus  $1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4$  &c.

The Movements are seven in number, and can be put down by signs, thus :

- 7 The Bending Movement.
- ✓ The Rising Movement.
- The Sliding Movement.
- ) The Circular Movement.
- ⊥ The Jumping Movement.
- = The Movement of Extension.
- ⇒ The Movement of Adhesion.

When two or more movements, or a movement and station, are to be done at the same time, they should have over them a sign, thus  $\frown$  as in music: for example, supposing the bending and sliding movements are to be done at the same time, they should be put down thus,  $\frown -$

If you are to advance while performing any movement, it should have a sign under it, thus  $\wedge$ ; if to retire, thus  $\vee$ . If you are to go to the right in any movement, it should be marked thus  $>$ ; if to the left, thus  $<$ ; if in an oblique direction, thus  $\searrow$ , or  $\swarrow$ , or  $\nearrow$ , or  $\nwarrow$ : in fact, it is intended that you should go in the direction that the point of the sign indicates.





or is to go into any station, there should be a line drawn across it, thus  $\dot{\phi} \dot{\phi} \dot{\phi}$ ; if to indicate the left, thus  $\dot{\phi} \dot{\phi} \dot{\phi}$

If it should be found necessary to indicate that the heels are closed together, as in the first position, or that the heel of the foot in action should be brought close to the other, a sign thus  $\dot{\phi}$  can be used: as for example, to pass the leg from the ninth half aerial station behind to the ninth half aerial before, touching the heels while passing, should be written thus:  $\dot{\phi} \dot{\phi}$

If it should be found necessary to indicate merely passing the leg from the ninth half aerial station behind, to that before, as in the act of walking, it can be written in short thus  $\dot{\phi} \dot{\phi}$  which in full would be thus  $\dot{\phi} \dot{\phi} = \dot{\phi}$

If to pass the foot from the ninth half aerial station before to that behind, then the cross should be reversed.

If a sign thus,  $\circ$  is placed over any station, it denotes that the right hand should be given while in that station; if thus,  $\ast$ , that the left hand should be given: if it is intended that the hands should continue joined during any number of movements, then a dotted line should be drawn from the sign to the station where the hands are to be disunited; and lastly, if both hands are to be given, then both signs should be used.

The usual signs of reference can (as in ordinary writing) be used in any part of the dance, should it be found absolutely necessary to explain any particular point, such as  $\ast$ ,  $\dagger$ ,  $\ddagger$ , &c.

N. B The positions of the head, body and arms should be regulated by the principles laid down in the preceding letters.

The following are a few examples of the steps written according to this system.

The *Battement* to the side is composed thus:  
the First Ground Station.

1.

The Movement of Extension to the Fifth Half Aerial Station.

=  $\dot{5}$

Then the Movement of Adhesion to return to the First Ground Station.

= 1.

Together it will form thus :

1. =  $\dot{5}$  = 1. or 1. =  $\dot{5}$  = 1.

The *Battement* before thus:

1. =  $\dot{9}$  = 1. or 1. =  $\dot{9}$  = 1.

The *Battement* behind thus:

1. =  $\dot{9}$  = 1. or 1. =  $\dot{9}$  = 1.

The little *Battemens*, thus,

$\dot{5} \rightarrow \dot{5} = \dot{5} \rightarrow \dot{5} = \dot{5} \rightarrow \dot{5} = \dot{5}$

in continuation.

The little *Ronds de Jambe*.

Inside  $\dot{5} \circ \dot{5}$  or  $\dot{9} \circ \dot{9}$  |  $\dot{5} \circ \dot{5}$  or  $\dot{9} \circ \dot{9}$  Outside.

A Change of the Feet.

1.  $\gamma$  1 = 1.

*A Glissade.*

$$1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset \dot{\gamma} \supset 1.$$

*A Temps Courant.*

$$1. \gamma \swarrow - \dot{\gamma} \supset \dot{\gamma} \dot{\gamma} \supset 1.$$

*An Assemblée Soutenue.*

$$1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \supset \dot{\gamma} \supset \dot{\gamma} - 1. \swarrow$$

*An Assemblée* from the First Ground Station behind to the First Ground Station before.

$$1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset 1. \quad \text{or} \quad 1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset 1.$$

*An Assemblée* from the First Ground Station before to the First Ground Station behind.

$$1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset 1. \quad \text{or} \quad 1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset 1.$$

*An Echappée* to and from the Second Ground Station.

$$1. \gamma \supset 2. \gamma \supset 1. \quad \text{or} \quad 1. \gamma \supset 2. \gamma \supset 1.$$

*An Echappée* to and from the Fourth Ground Station.

$$1. \gamma \supset 4. \gamma \supset 1. \quad \text{or} \quad 1. \gamma \supset 4. \gamma \supset 1.$$

*A Temps Levé*

Before.

$$1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset 1. \quad \text{or} \quad 1. \gamma - \dot{\gamma} \quad \dot{\gamma} \supset 1.$$

Behind.

$$\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{\cdot}{\xi} \perp \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{\cdot}{\xi} \perp$$

A Temps Levé.

to the right  $\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{\cdot}{\xi} \perp$  or  $\overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{\cdot}{\xi} \perp$  to the left.

An Entrechat Six.

$$\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1}$$

An Entrechat Seven behind.

$$\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{\xi}$$

An Entrechat Five, from the Ninth Half Aerial Station behind, finishing in the First Ground Station.

$$\overset{\cdot}{\xi}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{x}{1} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} \text{ or } \overset{\cdot}{\xi}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{x}{1} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1}$$

The same, finishing in the Ninth Half Aerial behind.

$$\overset{\cdot}{\xi}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{x}{1} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \overset{\cdot}{\xi}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma}-\overset{x}{1} \perp = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{x}{\perp} \overset{\cdot}{1} = \overset{\cdot}{\xi}$$

A Sissone.\*

with the right foot  $\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi}$  or  $\overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi}$  with the left foot.

Before.

$$\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi}$$

Behind.

$$\underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \underset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi} \text{ or } \overset{x}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{\gamma} \perp = \overset{\cdot}{\xi}$$

\* Note. In writing the Sissones, as likewise the Brises open, the sign for the movement of Extension can be left out, the Number of the Station fully conveying the meaning.

*Le Pas de Ballonné.*

1.  $\gamma - \frac{1}{2} = \frac{3}{2}$  or 1.  $\gamma - \frac{1}{2} = \frac{3}{2}$

The *Jeté* before.

$$\overset{\cdot}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{7}-\overset{\cdot}{5} \quad \overset{\cdot}{1} \sqsupset \overset{\cdot}{5} \quad \text{or} \quad \overset{\times}{1}.\overset{\cdot}{7}-\overset{\cdot}{5} \quad \overset{\cdot}{1} \sqsupset \overset{\times}{5}$$

## The *Jeté* behind

$$\overset{\curvearrowright}{1.7-5} \pm \overset{\curvearrowright}{\square} \overset{\curvearrowright}{5} \quad \text{or} \quad \overset{\times}{1.7-5} \pm \overset{\curvearrowright}{\square} \overset{\curvearrowright}{5}$$

The *Jeté* forward.

$$\frac{1}{x} \cdot \overbrace{y - \frac{y}{x}}^{\text{ }} \quad \frac{1}{\cancel{x}} \cdot \overbrace{\cancel{y} - \cancel{\frac{y}{x}}}^{\text{ }} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{x}{1} \cdot \overbrace{y - \frac{y}{x}}^{\text{ }} \quad \frac{1}{\cancel{x}} \cdot \overbrace{\cancel{y} - \cancel{\frac{y}{x}}}^{\text{ }}$$

### The *Jeté* backward.

$$1.7 - \frac{9}{V} \quad \text{or} \quad 1.7 - \frac{9}{V}$$

### The *Pas de Bourrée*

**Behind.**

$$\overset{x}{1} \cdot \overset{x}{7} - \overset{x}{5} - \overset{x}{1} \cdot \overset{x}{1} = \overset{x}{4} = \overset{x}{1} \quad \text{or} \quad \overset{x}{1} \cdot \overset{x}{7} - \overset{x}{5} \cdot \overset{x}{1} = \overset{x}{4} = \overset{x}{1}$$

### The *Pas de Bourrée*

Before,

$$\overset{\times}{1}, \overset{\times}{7} - \overset{\times}{5} - \overset{\times}{1}, \overset{\times}{J} \overset{\times}{=} \overset{\times}{4} \overset{\times}{=} \overset{\times}{1} \quad \text{or} \quad \overset{\times}{1}, \overset{\times}{7} - \overset{\times}{5} \overset{\times}{J} \overset{\times}{=} \overset{\times}{1} \overset{\times}{=} \overset{\times}{4} \overset{\times}{=} \overset{\times}{1}.$$

### The *Pas de Bourrée*

## Behind and before.

$$1. \overbrace{\gamma - \frac{1}{2}}^{\sim} = 1. \nearrow \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}}_{\sim} = 1.$$



The *Chassé* forward.

$$\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \times \end{array} 4. \gamma \swarrow \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \text{ or } 4. \gamma \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{4.} \gamma \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{4.} \gamma \swarrow \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}}$$

The *Chassé* backward.

$$\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} 4. \gamma \swarrow \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \text{ or } 4. \gamma \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{4.} \gamma \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{4.} \gamma \swarrow \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}}$$

To the right  $\gg 2. \gamma \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}} \ll 2. \gamma \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{\ddot{5}}}$  to the left.

The *Chassé Plié* forward.

$$\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \times \end{array} 4. \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} \supset \overset{\times}{4.} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{4.} \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} \supset \overset{\times}{4.}$$

The *Chassé Plié* backward.

$$\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} 4. \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} \supset \overset{\times}{4.} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{4.} \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} \supset \overset{\times}{4.}$$

A *Coupé* to the Fifth Half Aerial Station.

$$1. \swarrow \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{2}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset 1. \text{ or } 1. \swarrow \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{2}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset 1.$$

Changing an Attitude from one leg to the other, supposing it to be in the Ninth Half Aerial Station behind.

$$\overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{2}} \perp = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{2}} \perp = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}}$$

A *Brisé* Open.

$$\text{Forward } \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset \perp = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{2}} \left( \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset \perp = \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{2}} \right) \text{ Back.}$$

A *Brisé Fermé*, taken from the Ninth Half Aerial Station.

Back.

$$\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}} \text{ or } \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{5}} \supset \perp \supset \overset{\times}{\underset{\cdot}{I}}$$





strain wherein the said obstacle happens, examples of which I have given in the Gavotte, making use of a sign thus \*, to indicate the gentleman, and thus o for the lady. The number placed at the bottom denotes the quantity of bars the ground plan occupies.

Adieu.

Note, Should there be more Persons than two dancing on the same air, the line of the Gentlemen should be placed above the music, and that of the Ladies below, each having a different sign on the ground Plan as thus \* or o or • or †, likewise at the head of the line.

### GAVOTTE de VESTRIS.

The musical score for "GAVOTTE de VESTRIS" is presented in two systems. The first system is divided into two parts: "Cavalier" and "Dame".

**Cavalier Part:** The notation begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various signs and numbers indicating dance steps and bar counts. The signs used are \* (gentleman), o (lady), and • (lady). The numbers at the bottom of the staff indicate the quantity of bars the ground plan occupies.

**Dame Part:** The notation begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various signs and numbers indicating dance steps and bar counts. The signs used are \* (gentleman), o (lady), and • (lady). The numbers at the bottom of the staff indicate the quantity of bars the ground plan occupies.

**Second System:** This system continues the music for both parts. It includes a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various signs and numbers indicating dance steps and bar counts. The signs used are \* (gentleman), o (lady), and • (lady). The numbers at the bottom of the staff indicate the quantity of bars the ground plan occupies.

The musical score is organized into several systems, each containing multiple staves. The notation is written in a style typical of 18th or 19th-century dance music, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical symbols such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, along with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The page is divided into sections by a double bar line and includes a small diagram of a dance floor in the top left corner.

\*Note. When the Lady has Finished her First solo she should walk to the right to prepare for her second, the Gent: should do the same when he has concluded his.



12

8

8

12

12

12

In this and in the following Gavotte, I have preserved as much as possible the steps as they were originally composed, but the length of time since their first composition and their having being changed so often by different Dancers, renders it almost impossible to know their exact forms: formation, the figure alone, retains its perfect originality.



## LETTER IX.

## ANOTHER SYSTEM OF CHIROGRAPHY.

In my last I sent you a short method of describing minutely all the movements and stations in the composition of each step, but as almost every step has its name, I shall now give you another system, which, with the occasional assistance of the numbers of the stations, and a few of the signs of the movements used here and there to describe those steps which have no name, can be written in a still smaller space than music, as for example :—

A <i>Battement</i> to the right can be put down	-	-	thus	⌈
A <i>Battement</i> to the left	-	-	thus	⌋
A <i>Battement</i> before	-	-	thus	⊥
A <i>Battement</i> behind	-	-	thus	⊥
A Little <i>Battement</i> with the right foot	-	-	thus	E
A Little <i>Battement</i> with the left foot	-	-	thus	3
The Great <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the right foot, outside	-	thus	—○	
The Great <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the right foot, inside	-	thus	—⊖	
The Great <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the left foot, outside	-	thus	○—	
The Great <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the left foot, inside	-	thus	⊖—	
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the right foot, outside	-	thus	—○	
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the right foot, inside	-	thus	—⊖	

The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the left foot, outside	-	thus	⌋
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> with the left foot, inside	-	thus	⌋
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> in jumping, with the right foot, outside	- - -	thus	⌋
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> in jumping, with the right foot, inside	- - -	thus	⌋
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> in jumping, with the left foot, outside	- - -	thus	⌋
The Little <i>Rond de Jambe</i> in jumping, with the left foot, inside	- - -	thus	⌋
A Change of the feet	- - -	thus	□
A <i>Glissade</i> to the right	- - -	thus	⌋
A <i>Glissade</i> to the left	- - -	thus	⌋
A <i>Temps Courant</i> forward, with the right foot	- -	thus	⌋
A <i>Temps Courant</i> forward, with the left foot	- -	thus	⌋
A <i>Temps Courant</i> backward, with the right foot	- -	thus	⌋
A <i>Temps Courant</i> backward, with the left foot	- -	thus	⌋
An <i>Assemblée Soutenue</i> inside, with the right foot	-	thus	⌋
An <i>Assemblée Soutenue</i> inside, with the left foot	-	thus	⌋
An <i>Assemblée Soutenue</i> outside, with the right foot	-	thus	⌋
An <i>Assemblée Soutenue</i> outside, with the left foot	-	thus	⌋
An <i>Echappée</i> to the side	- - -	thus	W

An <i>Echappée</i> to the Fourth Ground Station	-	-	thus	≡
The <i>Jété</i> before with the right foot	-	-	thus	>
The <i>Jété</i> before with the left foot	-	-	thus	<
The <i>Jété</i> behind with the right foot	-	-	thus	>
The <i>Jété</i> behind with the left foot	-	-	thus	<
The <i>Jété</i> forward with the right foot	-	-	thus	∧
The <i>Jété</i> forward with the left foot	-	-	thus	∧
The <i>Jété</i> backward with the right foot	-	-	thus	∨
The <i>Jété</i> backward with the left foot	-	-	thus	∨

A <i>Temps Levé</i> before with the right foot	-	-	thus	⊢
A <i>Temps Levé</i> before with the left foot	-	-	thus	⊣
A <i>Temps Levé</i> behind with the right foot	-	-	thus	⊡
A <i>Temps Levé</i> behind with the left foot	-	-	thus	⊢
A <i>Temps Levé</i> to the right	-	-	thus	⌋
A <i>Temps Levé</i> to the left	-	-	thus	⌈

An <i>Entrechat</i> , 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8	-	-	thus	
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A <i>Sissone</i> on both feet	-	-	thus	□
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A <i>Sissone</i> to, or in, the Fifth Half Aerial Station, with the right foot,	-	-	thus	□ 5
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NOTE.—If the number of a station is placed before a sign, it denotes with which foot the step is to be done, and from what station it is to be taken; the number placed after it denotes where it should finish, as for example, an *Entrechat* seven, taken from the First Ground Station, with the right foot

before, finishing in the Ninth Half Aerial Station behind, should be written thus  $\text{7} \text{ } \text{⑦} \text{ } \text{9}$ .

This rule applies to all.

- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the right foot,  
before - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the right foot,  
behind - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Third Half Aerial Station, with the right foot,  
before - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Third Half Aerial Station, with the  
right foot, behind - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Fifth Half Aerial Station, with the  
left foot - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the  
left foot, before - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the  
left foot, behind - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Third Half Aerial Station, with the  
left foot, before - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- A *Sissone* to, or in, the Third Half Aerial Station, with the  
left foot, behind - - - - - thus  $\square \dot{\phi}$
- The *Pas de Balloné* - - - - - thus  $\Delta$
- The *Pas de Bourré Courant* to the right - - - - - thus  $\sim$
- The *Pas de Bourré Courant* to the left - - - - - thus  $\sim$
- The *Pas de Bourré Courant* forward - - - - - thus  $\sim$
- The *Pas de Bourré Courant* backward - - - - - thus  $\sim$
- The *Chassé* forward - - - - - thus  $\Delta$

The *Chassé* backward - - - - thus  $\nabla$   
 The *Chassé* to the right - - - - thus  $\triangleright$   
 The *Chassé* to the left - - - - thus  $\triangleleft$

The *Chassé Plié*, forward - - - - thus  $\Delta$   
 The *Chassé Plié*, backward - - - - thus  $\nabla$   
 The *Chassé Plié*, to the right - - - - thus  $\triangleright$   
 The *Chassé Plié*, to the left - - - - thus  $\triangleleft$

The *Coupé* to the Fifth Half Aerial Station, with the right  
 foot - - - - thus  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$  or  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$

The *Coupé* to the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the  
 right foot, before - - - - thus  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$  or  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$

The *Coupé* to the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with  
 the right foot, behind - - - - thus  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$  or  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$

The *Coupé* to the Fifth Half Aerial Station, with the  
 left foot - - - - thus  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$  or  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$

The *Coupé* to the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the  
 left foot, before - - - - thus  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$  or  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$

The *Coupé* to the Ninth Half Aerial Station, with the  
 left foot, behind - - - - thus  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$  or  $\vdash \dot{\mathcal{C}}$

The Simple *Coupé* forward, with the right foot - - thus  $\mathcal{C}$

The Simple *Coupé* backward, with the right foot - - thus  $\mathcal{C}$

The Simple *Coupé* to the side, with the right foot - - thus  $\mathcal{C}$

The Simple *Coupé* forward, with the left foot - - thus  $\mathcal{C}$

The Simple *Coupé*, backward, with the left foot - - thus  $\mathcal{C}$

The Simple *Coupé* to the side, with the left foot - - thus  $\mathcal{C}$

The Simple <i>Coupé</i> with the right foot, forward, and jumping	- - - - -	thus	
The Simple <i>Coupé</i> in jumping, with the right foot, backward	- - - - -	thus	
The Simple <i>Coupé</i> in jumping, with the right foot, to the side	- - - - -	thus	
The Simple <i>Coupé</i> in jumping, with the left foot, forward		thus	
The Simple <i>Coupé</i> in jumping, with the left foot, backward		thus	
The Simple <i>Coupé</i> in jumping, with the left foot, to the side	- - - - -	thus	
The <i>Coupé dessous</i> with the right foot	- - - - -	thus	
The <i>Coupé dessous</i> with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	
The <i>Coupé dessus</i> with the right foot	- - - - -	thus	
The <i>Coupé dessus</i> with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	
An <i>Assemblée</i> before, with the right foot	- - - - -	thus	
An <i>Assemblée</i> behind, with the right foot	- - - - -	thus	
An <i>Assemblée</i> before, with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	
An <i>Assemblée</i> behind, with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	
An Attitude with the right foot	- - - - -	thus*	or
An Attitude <i>allongée</i> with the right foot	- - - - -	thus	
An Attitude with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	or
An Attitude <i>allongée</i> with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	
The <i>Pas Grave</i> , with the right foot	- - - - -	thus	
The <i>Pas Grave</i> , with the left foot	- - - - -	thus	

\* If an Attitude is marked with two dots, it is to be done before; if with four dots, it is to be done behind.



A <i>Brisé</i> with the right foot, forward, open	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the right foot, forward, closed	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the right foot, backward, open	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the right foot, backward, closed	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the right foot, to the side, open	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the right foot, to the side, closed	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the left foot, forward, open	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the left foot, forward, closed	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the left foot, backward, open	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the left foot, backward, closed	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the left foot, to the side, open	-	-	thus	
A <i>Brisé</i> with the left foot, to the side, closed	-	-	thus	
A <i>Fouetté</i> with the right foot, outside	-	-	thus	
A <i>Fouetté</i> with the right foot, inside	-	-	thus	
A <i>Fouetté</i> with the left foot, outside	-	-	thus	
A <i>Fouetté</i> with the left foot, inside	-	-	thus	

For *Pirouettes*, see the Eighth Letter, page sixty-five and seventy.

The <i>Emboîtés</i> forward	-	-	thus	
The <i>Emboîtés</i> backward	-	-	thus	
The <i>Pas de Basque</i> with the right foot	-	-	thus	
The <i>Pas de Basque</i> with the left foot	-	-	thus	
The <i>Pas de Basque</i> in jumping, with the right foot	-	-	thus	
The <i>Pas de Basque</i> in jumping, with the left foot	-	-	thus	

The <i>Pas de Basque</i> in jumping and in turning, with the right foot	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Pas de Basque</i> in jumping and in turning, with the left foot	- - - -	thus	
To pass the foot from behind to before	- - - -	thus	
To pass the foot from before to behind	- - - -	thus	
To pass the foot from behind to before while jumping	- - - -	thus	
To pass the foot from before to behind while jumping	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Temps de Cuisse</i> before, with the right foot	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Temps de Cuisse</i> behind, with the right foot	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Temps de Cuisse</i> to the side, with the right foot	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Temps de Cuisse</i> before, with the left foot	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Temps de Cuisse</i> behind, with the left foot	- - - -	thus	
The <i>Temps de Cuisse</i> to the side, with the left foot	- - - -	thus	

I shall now present you with the Gavotte of Vestris, written by signs according to this system, and at the last bar bid you\*

Adieu.

\* The greater part of the numbers of the Stations in this example can be dispensed with. I have introduced more than necessary, to make it better understood, it being the first copy of the kind. Likewise, where the step is intended to be repeated, the word *idem* can be used instead of the characters, in either this, or the method laid down in the Eighth Letter.

NOTE. Unfortunately, steps in dancing are not clearly understood by their names, many being completely misnomers; thus very few can be traced down to their origin. It is true some of them convey the meaning of their qualities in their designation, such as the *Glissade*, the *Change of the Feet*, the *Assemblée*, &c.; but the appellations for the most part are foreign to their qualities. I have therefore commenced a Dictionary (which I purpose shortly to publish), for the purpose of giving more appropriate and rational names to the steps in dancing, in which I have headed the description of each step with the name now in use, followed by a designation more applicable to the description of its qualities.

# LA GAWOTTE DE VESTRIS.

N° 11.

8

Cavaliers.

Dame.

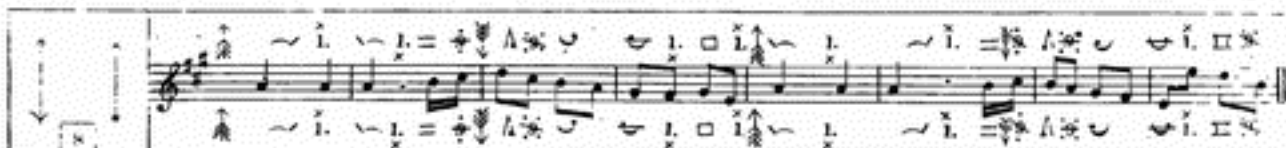
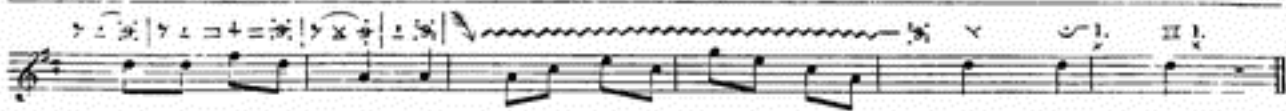
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12

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8

8



## LETTER X.

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### ON THE DANCES OF THE PRESENT DAY.

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Formerly we had (independent of the grotesque) three distinct styles of dances. First, the grand serious ; this was used on all occasions, where the intention was to personate grandeur, or majesty : secondly, the demi-character ; this was used to personate all light, airy, or gay characters, such as zephyrs, pages, peasantry, &c. : thirdly, the comic ; this was used as a dance of country clowns, &c. : but of late the two first have been so blended with each other, that they now actually form but one, and the comic latterly has become almost obsolete. The last dancers of eminence in this style, were Messrs. Beauprée, Boisgirard, and Mazurier. Thus there remains at the present time (correctly speaking) only one style, in which all dancers strive to gain pre-eminence, individually endeavouring to gain to the greatest extent, the approbation of the public ; thus it necessarily happens, that so few persons succeed in the attempt. How much better and more meritorious it would have been to have kept each style distinct ; we then should have had



more space and a better field for the diversified talents of our dancers; and persons whose abilities would not allow them to become eminent in the combined style, might, if each had remained distinct, have become equally favourites with the public, and excelled in that which their genius and construction had adapted them for; but according to the present system, the high majestic figure, the middling size, the athletic, and the diminutive, all aspire to become celebrated in the combined style, striving very often against nature: and if success attends their efforts in acquiring that talent so essential in the profession, it often happens that their figure, being either too tall or too diminutive, is so ill adapted to the combined style, that they never become established favourites with the public; the best height for the present style is the middle size.

Our dances for the most part are, or should be, a collection of steps, arranged so as to show to the best advantage the talent of the performer in executing feats of agility, graceful evolutions and effective groups and pauses, drawing the attention and admiration of the spectator to the scene before him, calling forth his approbation and applause by imparting to the eye those pleasurable sensations which affect the soul, continually exciting astonishment and delight until the expiration of the dance. This is the manner in which our dances should be composed; any thing that is likely to tire, or take away the enthusiasm of the spectator, should be carefully avoided; this accounts for the disuse of *entrées* of *figurantes* during the time of a *pas de deux*, *trois*, &c. It may be remarked that they give time for the



dancers to recover their wind. True, they do so; but at the same time they spoil the effect, throw a coolness over the dance, and disunite the thread of the performance. If to gain wind is the object (and there can be no other), that can be accomplished, in a much better way, by the careful arrangement of the steps, &c.; thus a group or a slow movement can be introduced, an effective pause, or an attitude, by which means a sufficient time will be obtained for the increased and agitated motion of the lungs, caused by an excessive exertion of the body, to regain, in a partial degree, their tranquil state, and enable the dancer to renew his task with ease and vigour.

A dancer should compose his steps, *Enchainments*, &c., so that they unite imperceptibly with each other, without any apparent effort; the arms and body at the same time keeping unity of motion with the legs, and the expression of the dance completely corresponding with that of the music. Thus flowing tones should be accompanied by easy, delicate, graceful, aerial motions; brilliant music, by vigorous steps, such as *entrechats*, *ronds de jambes* in the air and other feats of agility; and presto music by close steps, such as the little *battemens*, the little *ronds de jambes*, the *entrechats* four and five, *les pas de bourrées*, &c., and every other step that can be done with rapidity without any distortion of the body; and sometimes the whole of the *presto* can be concluded by a well-made *pirouette* in the third half aerial station; this adds greatly to the effect if not prodigally used;\*

\* The prodigal use of the *Pirouette*, puts me in mind of a dancer, who *Pirouetted* perfectly well, and who introduced generally about eighteen or nineteen of them in his dances; said that when he was at a loss for any step to fill up the *Enchainment*, he surmounted the difficulty by introducing a *Pirouette*; he at last acquired the nickname of the *Dervise*.

and above all the *finale* should be brilliant and effective. It is in the composition of dances, as it is in the composition of music; dancing has its stations, movements, and positions of the arms, &c., music has its notes, pauses, &c.; it is according to the good or bad taste of the composer that the *pas*, or piece of music is either more or less agreeable.

## LETTER XI.

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ON THE DEFECTS OF FORMATION TO WHICH THE HUMAN FORM IS SUBJECT THROUGH INATTENTION, &c.

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The choice of a profession, in which our nature does not raise obstacles which are difficult to overcome, ought to be of the first consideration to ourselves and parents; if we are not suited or likely to gain great reputation in the one chosen for us, we had better abandon it while yet in our youth, and diligently study another which may be more agreeable to our nature, and allow us to arrive at that degree of eminence so desirable to be obtained. Where defects can be corrected and reformed by study and application, or by the advice and assistance of judicious masters, then it becomes an essential point quickly to use every effort, before the parts to be corrected have acquired strength and consistence—before nature has unalterably taken her bent, and the error becomes too habitual and inveterate: thus, as a young tree can be bent into almost any form that the cultivator pleases, so it is with the human frame; therefore, persons should be extremely careful

never to encourage any habit that may be injurious to or check its perfect formation, during the time that nature is endeavouring to complete its beauty. Rare indeed are the instances of persons entering this world with a defective form; but often, very often, to our nurses at the time of our infancy, or to ourselves or instructors during the early part of our life, we owe this misfortune, by paying so little attention to the postures in which we place ourselves for any length of time; thus it is that so many persons are knock-kneed, round-shouldered, on one side, one hip larger than the other, the ancles on the ground—thereby rendering their walk difficult—(if at all practicable) all which can be prevented or corrected, if attended to during youth.

Dancing, if taught in a proper manner, assists nature in perfecting its work, and if it does not quite efface those defects in our formation, it contributes much to their concealment; on the other hand, if it be taught by an incorrect system, it becomes highly prejudicial, and produces those defects in the knees and ancles, known under the name of knock knees and weak ancles; these are principally caused by trying to force out the feet, without observing whether or not the knees follow in the same direction; a thing, according to the formation of the legs, absolutely impossible to be done, without twisting and bringing forward the insteps and ancles, thereby straining all the tendons and ligaments of the small bones of the feet,\* causing at the parts thus

\* “The *tarsus*, or instep, is composed of seven large bones, which (while in an upright position) form a firm elastic arch for supporting the body; which arch has its strength from the strong ligaments with which these bones are joined.”

injured considerable inflammation, and sometimes attended by an enlargement of the whole of the ancles, and consequently accompanied by great debility in the lower parts of the legs and in the feet. The proper position of the legs should be with the patellæ, or caps of the knees, in a straight line with the great toes; therefore, if the feet are turned, the thighs should be so likewise, and this can only be done at the hip joints. Thus, great care should be taken never to allow the feet to be turned out more than can be accompanied by the knees, by which means all danger of deformation will be avoided;\* but should the above defect (unthinkingly attributed to weakness) have already taken place, then it must be corrected by arching the legs outside as much as possible at the knee joint, and walking on the outside of the feet, thereby taking off all pressure from the inner-side, at the same time paying attention not to turn the feet too much out.†

\* "The lower head of the tibia composes the chief part of the ancle-joint. The lower head of the tibia is smaller than the upper, in the same proportion, that the ancle is smaller than the knee. The pointed part of this head of the tibia represents the mouth-piece, or flat part of the pipe, and constitutes the bump of the *inner ancle*. The lower end of the fibula lies so upon the lower end of the tibia, as to form the outer ancle; and there is on the one side of the tibia a deep hollow, like an impression made with the point of the thumb, which receives the lower end of the fibula. This acute point of the tibia, named the process of the inner ancle, passes beyond the bone of the foot, and, by lying upon the side of the joint, guards the ancle, so that it cannot be luxated outward, without this pointed process of the *maleolus internus*, or inner ancle, being broken."—*J. Bell, on Anatomy.*

† Indeed, it is impossible to throw the knees out without the assistance of the thighs; the knees have only two motions, bending and extension, the one drawing the leg back, the other throwing it forward; they have no power, then, of themselves, to determine or assume an outward position, but must eventually depend on the thighs, which entirely command all the lower parts of the legs, and turn them in consequence of their own rotatory motion, the centre of action being at the hips, so that, in point of fact, whatsoever direction they take, the knees and feet are obliged to follow.

If we trace the defect of being on one side, that is to say, one shoulder lower and more distant from the head than the other, the hip on the same side enlarged and projecting outwards, we shall find that it generally originates through our taking the habit of resting continually on the same leg during our growth, the natural consequences of which are, that the whole of the weight of the body being placed on one leg, causes the whole of the confined side to grow in substance, at the same time allowing the other to grow in length (for nature, if prevented in one way, will operate in another). This defect is not seen while the person so formed is standing on the enlarged side, for then the shoulders are in a line with each other; but immediately the heels are closed, the body resting equally on both feet, its appearance becomes visible even to the most common observer. To correct this, the cause should be removed by permitting the body to rest continually on the lengthened side; this will allow the defective one to grow in length, and in a little time this deviation from symmetry will cease to exist, and both sides will become equal without the assistance of irons, or any other artificial means.

I have seen this defect so well concealed in persons that have attained their growth, that by their unremitted attention, it has been impossible to discover it: this is done by raising the defective shoulder and lowering the other, thereby causing them to be in an equal line with each other. The hip should be corrected in grown persons on the same principle, by forcing it in; this will cause the other to project in a slight degree, thus making both equal.



There is another defect very common in the knees; namely, when they are too straight, indeed, sometimes completely forced back, the sinews, &c., being strained to a considerable extent. The means of correction are, by relaxing the knees until they have resumed their correct position, then by continued attention never under any circumstances to allow them to regain their defective position. Of all defects this is the most easy to conceal, requiring only care never to extend the knees beyond their proper and just tension.

Adieu.

## LETTER XII.

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### ON CHARACTERISTIC DANCES.

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Characteristic dances consist of pantomime or gesture combined with dancing; they for the most part describe some adventure, love story, or combat; they form in themselves a ballet of action in miniature, in which dancing becomes a secondary consideration, being made to accompany the gesture, which, to give effect, ought to be extremely clear and expressive, describing with the minutest care the situation, sentiment, and meaning of the personified characters, conveying, by means of motion and gesture, what they would impart were they to speak. In dances of this kind a considerable degree of interest and effect should be kept up during the whole performance; the situations, pauses, groups, &c. should be well chosen, and convey to the eye, and

from thence to the mind of the spectator, the full meaning of the performance. The music should be good, expressive, and well arranged, assisting jointly with the pantomime action of the dancers in explaining the history of the dance; almost every note should have its corresponding motion from the performer, either energetic, sympathetic, gay, or languishing, according to the circumstance of the dance; but above all, every action, group, &c. ought to be done with the greatest imaginable ease, avoiding all undue violent contortions of the features or body; thus nature and truth should prevail throughout the whole performance.

It is recorded of the ancients, who possessed in the highest degree the talent of imitation, that when the dance of *Eumenides* or Furies was performed on the theatre at Athens, so expressive was the character, and the effect produced on the spectators so great, that it struck them with irresistible terror, and the people imagined they saw in reality the personified deities commissioned with the vengeance of heaven to pursue and punish their crimes.

The *Phyrric* or *Enoplian* dance, emblematic of war, said to have been invented by *Phyrrus* or *Neoptolemus*, the son of *Achilles* (according to *Lucian*), or as some derive it, from *Pyrrhicus*, a Cretan or Lacedæmonian, in which *Merion* excelled, was of no less expressive a character, but of a different class from the dance of the Furies; it required the utmost exertion, agility, dexterity, and intelligence of the performers during its execution, in describing the art of attack and defence, likewise the skill required in avoiding the enemy when overmatched;

it was accompanied by the sound of the flute, and each performer was armed cap-a-pie. This dance was composed of four parts; first, the *Podism*, a kind of quick march used for the purpose of overtaking or getting away from an enemy; second, the *Xiphism*, an animated imitation of a combat, going through all the movements of attack and defence, such as darting the javelin, aiming a stroke, or dexterously dodging, parrying, or avoiding a blow or thrust; third, the *Komos*, in which the dancers performed a succession of leaps or vaultings to enable them (when the occasion required) to scale walls, jump over ditches, &c.; fourth, the *Tetracomos*,—this was an extremely slow, majestic dance of a square figure. It is uncertain whether this dance was performed every where in the same manner, but it is pretty well authenticated that the Spartans, who most cultivated the *Pyrrhic* dance, never made use of any other than real arms in the exercise of their martial or warlike dances, and were always accompanied either by the flute or voice.

Among other examples, one is given of a dance called *Trichoria*, said to be the invention of *Lycurgus*; it was composed of three choirs; one of children, another of young men, and the third of old men, who began by singing, In time past we were valiant; the young men answered, We are so at present; to which the chorus of children replied, We shall be still more so when our time comes.

By the care the ancients took in the cultivation of the foregoing dances, it would appear that characteristic dances were in the highest

esteem among them ; they well knew the bold and enthusiastic effect they had on the performers and spectators ; they impressed on the minds of their youth in a more direct way than poetry the events of common life ; recorded the warlike and other actions of their forefathers, and communicated by easy attractive means, the art of attack and defence. Thus in our characteristic dances and ballets, we should detail with truth, and clearness, the historical events of the time we represent, first searching for their authenticity, and then put in action by animated motion the description gained by our researches.

In the more quiet style of characteristic dances, less energy is wanted, but not less knowledge and judgment in their composition ; the tale should be equally well told, and every sentiment, expression, &c. pourtrayed, so as to be within the comprehension of persons of the meanest capacity. I do not intend, when I say this, that a multiplicity of gestures are necessary, for that would become ridiculous, but that the situations should be good, the groups and pantomime action expressive, and the *tout ensemble* correspond in harmony and good sense, forming at once, a *tableau*, pleasing and instructive in its effects. This can never be done by mere mechanical motion, but must spring from the soul, and be articulated or described by the members, for, as *Cicero* observed, "every motion of the mind has naturally its peculiar countenance, voice and gesture ; and, like the strings of an instrument, act agreeably to the impressions they receive from the mind."

" Sweet Pythmia, see advance,  
Mother of the graceful dance ;

She, who taught th' ingenious art,  
Silent language to impart;  
Signs, for sentiment she found,  
Eloquence, without a sound,  
Hands loquacious save her lungs,  
All her limbs, are speaking tongues."

(SYRUS.)

Adieu.



## LETTER XIII.

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### ON THE LESSONS OR EXERCISES.

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MY DEAR FRIEND,

On concluding my last letter, I thought that all correspondence between us, on dancing, had terminated ; but since you wish me to describe in what manner it is necessary to exercise a pupil, I have again resumed my pen in order to comply with your request. In the first place, he should study to turn out the thighs, and gain suppleness in the hip, knee, and instep joints, by the bending exercises in all the ground stations;\* he then should rise gradually on the points of the toes, remain there, then descend in the same manner ; this exercise should be done frequently, in all the following half aerial stations, viz. the first, the fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth : he then should try to obtain firmness at the hip joints, which he can acquire by making use of the great, and then the little *battemens*, to, and from the fifth half aerial station,

\* See Letter VIIth, The Observations on the Bending Exercises and *Battemens*.

commencing and finishing each *battement* in the first ground station, the leg in action arriving in front; this should be followed by the *battemens* forward, to, and from the ninth half aerial station, then the *battemens*, to, and from the ninth half aerial station behind; and finishing the tension exercises, by doing the *battemens*, to, and from the fifth half aerial station, finishing each, by bringing the active leg in the first ground station behind.

The next exercise should be the little *battemens*, to, and from the third half aerial station, finishing and commencing each one from the fifth half aerial station;\* after having done them with each leg, slow, and well pronounced, they then should be recommenced, increasing their rapidity gradually until they can be scarcely counted; they then likewise should be done with the body resting on the ball of the foot that is not in action. The next thing should be the *ronds de jambe*, on the ground, commencing from the fifth half aerial station; this is done by describing a circle with one leg, dividing it equally before and behind, or behind and before, allowing the heel of the foot in action, to touch the ground as it approaches the other, and raising it, by extending the instep, as it becomes more distant, at the same time (as, indeed, at all times) forcing the heels forward, and the knees outward as much as possible. When this is accomplished, he should do the little *ronds de jambes*,† commencing slowly, and gradually encreasing their velocity, as in doing the little *battemens*. The whole of these exercises should be done

\* See the little *Battemens*, page 28 and 57.

† See the little *Rond de Jambe*, page 28 and 58.

first with one foot, then with the other ; first by slightly holding with one hand at arms length by a rail, or any thing that is stationary, the foot in action being outside ; then repeated in the middle of the room without any support. After having done these preparatory exercises, he can proceed to the *grand battemens*, remaining at each half aerial station, a short time. He then may do them by raising the leg slowly, and remain in each half aerial station ; then the exercise of rising gradually on the points, changing the feet while in the first half aerial station, and then descend gradually ; afterwards he may do the *temps courants*, single and double, the great *ronds de jambe*, the *coupés* to the fifth, ninth, and eleventh half aerial stations, in front, and in turning round ; various *attitudes*, the *fouettés*, the *temps de pirouettes*, the *pirouettes*, the *entrechats*, the *ronds de jambe* in the air, and all vigorous steps and *enchaînemens*, the lesson terminating by the practice of the *échappées*, the changes of the feet, great and small, the *grand battemens*, and a few bending exercises ; the two last are done with the intention of regaining the outward position of the hips, which they will naturally lose in a degree, by the exertion used in doing the *entrechats*, &c. In the foregoing practice should be introduced the study of the arms, commencing by placing them alternately in each position, then forming circles by raising them in front and lowering them at the sides ; then the contrary way ; opposition circles should then follow, the arms going in contrary directions to each other ; oppositions, &c. separately, and in conjunction with the exercises of the legs.

This is *La Leçon de Danse*, which can be varied, augmented,

or diminished, according to the judgment of the master, or the capability of the pupil; but when he has arrived at that degree of perfection so that he can do all his exercises, steps, *enchainmens*, &c., &c., with ease and correctness, he then should shake off the pupil and learn to compose his own dances, commencing by little *enchainmens*, from thence to those that are more complicated, adding groups, &c., and at last to entire dances, the whole arranged according to the principles laid down in the Tenth letter.

It is likewise necessary that he should walk well; his steps should be firm, but without stiffness, his arms should be suspended easily on either side, the knees should, while in motion, have an easy bend, the body should be well placed and not allowed to roll, the toes should arrive on the ground a little before the heels,\* his steps should be made as equal as possible, and above all he should avoid the two extremes of carelessness or pretension.

The bow should be expressive, it being made to denote either a compliment, submission or respect; and independent of the preparation, should be divided into two parts; first, (supposing he is in the first

\* This cannot be accomplished while walking quick, but still great care should be taken never to allow the toes to point upwards.

NOTE.—The best age for a pupil to commence, is when the mind begins to expand, and the frame has become sufficiently strong to undergo fatigue, which ought to be increased gradually until it has become habitual to nature, carefully avoiding all forced methods by machinery, or by any other means that may tend to weaken the construction, and render it unfit for the extraordinary exertion required of a dancer.

position,) by inclining the head, then bending forward by entering the chest, at the same time keeping the loins perfectly straight, and allowing the arms to suspend easily from the shoulders; secondly, by raising the body to its erect position, then the head, at the same time stepping back on one foot and taking the whole weight of the body off the other.

The courtesy should (as the bow) be expressive, and divided into three parts; first, bending on the foot that is before (supposing the person to be in the second or ninth half aerial station behind) with the head erect, looking before her, calling the attention of the person or persons to whom the compliment is intended; secondly, retiring on the foot that is behind, at the same time making a slight inclination of the head and body; and, thirdly, finishing by extending the knees, and at the same time raising the head and body to an erect, but not stiff position.\*

This is the mode of making the bow or courtesy of etiquette, but this should be varied according to the character of the dance, for it would be ridiculous to see a peasant make the bow of a nobleman.

Allow me, my dear friend, before I resign my pen *tout de bon*, to write a few lines on *La Danse de Société*, which, although unnecessary for

\* It adds greatly to the elegance of the courtesy by finishing in an oblique position, the body turning slightly in the direction of the foot that is behind, while performing the third part. Both the courtesy and bow can be done with or without the preparation, which is made by sliding one foot to the side and bringing the other behind for the courtesy, or in the first position for the bow.

your information, may be of some use to our friend J \* \* \*, to whom, after you have perused this, I shall feel obliged by your forwarding it.

There is not any species of dancing so variable as *La Danse de Société*, each kind depending wholly on fashion for its preference, sometimes the easy, flowing style predominates; at others the gay, indeed, oftentimes, almost amounting to gymnastic exercises; then characteristic dances bear away the palm; in fact, each species has at different times its sovereignty and its disrepute, therefore it becomes difficult to describe the one that is most in estimation, for to-morrow (comparatively speaking) it may be thrown aside as ancient.—

*La Danse de Société Française*, according to my idea of it, should be composed of easy, flowing, graceful steps, such as the *glissades*,\* the *chassés*, the *assemblées*, the *brisés*, the *fouettés*, the *pas de basques* forward, and in turning round, the *pirouettes* on the points of the toes, the *jétés*, and a number of others of the same class, varying them continually, choosing those steps which unite with each other well and without difficulty, introducing occasionally a few steps in which vigour is required for their execution, such as the little *pas de bourrées*, the little *battemens*, the *emboités*, the *temps de cuisse*, the *sissones*, and sometimes, but very rarely, the *entrechat* four, the whole to be done in an easy, quiet manner, the motions of the arms, head, and body corresponding with the actions of the legs; in fact room-dancing is

\* Care should be taken, while performing this or any other step wherein the sliding movement is introduced, to glide the heel lightly on the ground; nothing is more ridiculous than to see the heel elevated while executing this movement.



# LES NOUVEAUTÉS

## A NEW SET of QUADRILLES

In which is introduced the Minutia of the steps in the figure of L'ÉTÉ, written by signs, according to the System laid down in the letter on CHIROGRAPHY, in the Authors Work on Dancing.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO HIS PUPILS

THE LADIES FRANCES AND ALEXANDRINA VANE.

BY

E. A. THÉLEUR.

LE MINUTIER.  
N<sup>o</sup> 1.

Fig: Right and Left (8 Bars) Balances Four and turn Partners (8 Bars) the Ladies Chain (8 Bars) Half Promenade to the opposite side and conclude by the Half Right and Left (8 Bars) the same for the other Four.

(Note.) Each Fig: commences on the 2<sup>d</sup> strain of the Air, or if the 1<sup>st</sup> is repeated, then on the 2<sup>d</sup> Time of its being play'd and concludes on the 1<sup>st</sup>

FRANCIS C. 12  
No. 2.  
LADY

1<sup>st</sup> Time.

2<sup>d</sup> Time.

3. 7 As Above.....

The opposite Lady and Gent: advance and retire, to the Right and Left. (8 Bars.) They cross over to each other's Places, then to the Right and Left. (8 Bars.) Balances Four and turn Partners. (8 Bars.) The same Fig: for the others.

Highland Lancers - Fiddle

ALEXANDRINA.  
No. 3.  
LADY

The opposite Lady and Gent: change Places by giving their Right Hands and return by giving their Left. (8 Bars.) Balances Four in a line; each Person taking his or her Partner by the Right Hand then the half Promenade. (8 Bars.) The Party who commenced the Figure advance and retire, they then go round each other. (8 Bars.) The opposite Four advance and retire and conclude by the Half right and left. (8 Bars.) The same Fig: for the others.

**VIVACANTE.**  
No 4.

The Chasex croisez Four (8 Bars) The 1<sup>st</sup> Lady & Gent advance & retire, then advance again, the Lady crossing over to the opposite side, the Gent returning to his Place (8 Bars) The 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>d</sup> Lady cross over, the 1<sup>st</sup> Gent: passing between them; the same repeated. (8 Bars) Balancez Four & turn Partners. (8 Bars) the same Figure for the others.

**ALLEGRE.**  
No 5.

The Great Round for all Eight (8 Bars) then the whole of the Figure of No 2, concluding by the Great Round or the Chas. Croisez. The same Figure for the others.

NB. This Figure commences on the repetition of the 1<sup>st</sup> Strain of the Air.

Source: <http://www.fishbase.org>

Edwin J. Nielson.

The

$$\text{Cov}(\mathbf{1}_i, \mathbf{1}_j) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } i=j \\ 0 & \text{if } i \neq j \end{cases} \Rightarrow \mathbf{I}_n \mathbf{1}_i = \mathbf{1}_i \Rightarrow \mathbf{I}_n \mathbf{1}_i = \mathbf{1}_i$$
$$\text{Dom}(\pi) = \mathfrak{H} \cap \bigcup_{i=1}^n \overline{[i, \infty)} = \mathfrak{H} \cap \bigcup_{i=1}^n \overline{[i, \infty)}.$$

Dolce.

Vine. PP

\* In continuation, the Gent: and Lady forming together small circles round the Room, the Gentleman's right arm placed round the waist, of the Lady, the Lady's left hand resting on the right shoulder of the Gent.

nothing more or less than that which is used for the stage, but executed in a more quiet style, avoiding all extravagances, or large steps; consequently, the practice to acquire this part of the art is considerably more easy than that of the public dancer; it consists of the bending in the first position, the little *battemens* from the first ground station to the fifth half aerial, the little *battemens* to, and from, the third half aerial station, the *ronds de jambe* on the ground, the little *ronds de jambe*, the changes of the feet, the *assemblées*, the *temps levés*, the *chassés*, &c. selecting the more simple part of the practice laid down for the theatrical dancer, employing all the grace, &c. but in miniature; the arms should be placed in the manner I have detailed in describing the first position, the ladies slightly holding their robes in each hand between their thumbs and first fingers, permitting it to fall gracefully in front, thus avoiding an inelegant plait, from hand to hand, which most ladies cause through straining their robe, from side to side.

*Minuets*, although at present it is not the fashion to dance them at assemblies, should not be neglected in the lesson for room dancing, they considerably assist in the attainment of an easy carriage and manner of presenting oneself.—Fancy dances such as *Allemands*, &c. have their utility; they render the arms supple, and give them an habitual gracefulness in their ordinary occupations; but to give a more correct idea of the steps used for *La Danse de Ville*, I shall present you with a specimen in the composition of a figure of *L'Été*.

It may be *à propos* here to mention, that independent of being



able to dance well, there are a number of little attentions absolutely necessary to the exterior education of persons in fashionable life, which at once designate the gentleman or lady from persons brought up in a different sphere. These, trivial as they may appear of themselves, prepossess persons in favour of those who possess them, and where the more solid parts of education cannot shine, these little assiduities keep up the respect, esteem, and good understanding of society; whereas persons not having these *petits riens*, although they may possess profound knowledge, great talent, and every requisite for the Cabinet, would be thrown completely in the shade in assemblies of ceremony and pleasure; and though it is only by frequenting and being in good society that they can be completely acquired, yet a few rules can be laid down to assist in the attainment of them, and this duty I consider as a part of the lesson of *Le Maître de Danse pour la Ville*.

To sit down and rise up gracefully is of the first importance in the accomplishments of persons *dans la bonne société*. It always gives me pain, when I see persons bending forward while quitting their seats, and indeed, it is not only ungraceful to rise by making a sudden motion forward of the body, but renders the person so doing liable to accidents; I once saw a very unfortunate disaster happen to a lady while rising in this way, by the assistance of the weight of body being brought forward, she was accidentally pushed down by a gentleman who had been sitting by her side, who on perceiving her companion (a lady sitting on the other side of her) drop her fan, rose and bent forward hastily in order to pick it up, by doing which, he and the



first mentioned lady (who was rising at the time) unfortunately came in contact with each other, which was the cause of the accident alluded to.

The proper way to sit down is, after the style of the courtesy, by bending on the foot that is before, then retiring on that behind, and in this manner gain the seat: to quit it, the person should rise by the assistance of the foot that is behind, without inclining the body forward. The lady, while taking her seat, should hold her robe with one or both hands, at the same time slightly advancing her arms without raising them, this will prevent her tumbling or creasing her robe, and will cause it to fall gracefully by her side; she should likewise be careful not to turn her feet too much out, nor sit in an uneasy or awkward position, but advance one foot a little more than the other, and either cross the hands or arms, play with her fan, or do any other movement with the arms, that can be effected with quiet gracefulness, and without affectation.

The modes of entering a room vary so much according to circumstances, that it becomes difficult to fix any precise rules for their performance; an acknowledgement of the presence of persons should always be made, if ever so slightly, and this should be regulated by the respect or ceremony due from the person entering to those within. If the door should be opened by an attendant, then the presentation (comparatively speaking) becomes easy, the party making a slight bow or courtesy on their entrance, but should the person have to open the

door, then the hands are called into action, and therefore the presentation becomes more difficult, and should be made thus: supposing the door opens to the right, then the right hand should be placed on the handle of the lock, the person advancing with the left leg first, then with the right, placing it against the door, the left foot should then be slid to the side, and the right brought behind, or close to the other, and in this manner should be made the courtesy or bow, finishing by retiring on the right foot, still holding the handle of the door; the hand should then be lowered and brought forward to the inner side and placed on the inner handle, then the door should be closed, at the same time advancing towards it by stepping on the left foot. To quit the room, the right hand should be placed on the handle of the lock, then open it, at the same time stepping back on the left foot, in a line with the door; the hand should then be lowered, and raised to the outer handle, the right foot slid towards the door and the left brought behind, at the same time opening the door wider by extending the arm, and in this position make the bow or courtesy, concluding by retiring, and closing the door. The same rules (using the other hand and foot) can be applied, should the door open to the left; either on entering or retiring, care should be taken to open the door sufficiently wide so as to admit of free ingress or egress of the party without endangering the destruction of *les Habillements*.

And now let me bid you a final

Adieu.

FINIS.