

MANUAL
FOR
PUPILS IN DANCING.

CONTAINING

AN ABSTRACT OF THE LAWS OF GOOD SOCIETY,
GENERAL REMARKS ON DANCING AND ITS
ETIQUETTE, WITH A LIST OF THE
FIGURES IN QUADRILLE, Etc.



BY

HERMAN STRASSBURG,

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC AND DANCING.

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PREFACE.

Confining, as I do, the vocation of an instructor in dancing not merely to the teaching of the figures and steps, but attributing to him the further duty of aiding in the general education of his pupils, especially by demonstrating the unwritten laws of good society, I have always, during my lessons, hinted to and explained the rules and maxims of good behavior and etiquette. These rules, seemingly arbitrary, have acquired however a certain standard form, being generally adopted and obeyed by all those who claim to be men of education, and to belong to good society. For the better convenience of my pupils I have herewith endeavored to codify these rules in a short and abstractive form, and at the same time added some remarks on the character of the several dances and their etiquette. In so doing I have followed the best authorities on the subject, and even given literally the views of other authors, where they fully agree with my own views and experience.

The addition of a list of the several figures in use in the quadrille and lancers will be found most expedient to make this little book a useful manual for all pupils and friends of the accomplishment of dancing.

HERMAN STRASSBURG,

Professor of Music and Dancing.

DETROIT, MICH., October, 1866.

The Laws of Good Society.

GENERAL RULES.

The manner which a man must aspire to is one which will give ease and not embarrassment to others. He must preserve a certain dignity, but yet be pliant. He must be open, frank, look you honestly in the face, speak out confidently, yet calmly, modestly, yet firmly, not be bluff or blunt, but yet be free and simple. In fact, a man should be *natural*; he should be in society, what he is anywhere: but if he finds his natural manner too rough, too loud, too curt, or too brutal, he should learn to tame it and calm it down.

Towards our elder and superiors we must show an honest, not servile deference, towards women gentleness, towards juniors tenderness, towards inferiors a simple condescension.

What applies to manner may be transferred in most respects to that bearing which distinguishes a gentleman in society.

GAIT.

As dignity is the first requisite, a slouching gait should be avoided, and uprightness should be acquired. This uprightness, however, should not go to the extent of carrying the back inwards. The chest should be expanded, but not so much as to make "a presence."

The head should be set well back on the shoulder, but not tossed up, nor jerked on one side with that air of pertness you see in some men.

STANDING.

In standing, the legs ought to be straight, or one of them but a little, but not set wide apart. The best is to assume the third position of dancing rules.

WALKING.—In walking, the legs should be moved gently, but firmly from the hips, so that the upper part of the body may remain in the same position. The feet must be turned outward very little, indeed, but as much as in the fourth position in dancing. The arms should be carried easily, and very slightly bent at the sides, and in walking should be moved a little, without swinging them, and the shoulders should never be shrugged up.

Avoid stiffness on one hand, lounging on the other. Be natural and perfectly at your ease, whether in walking or sitting, and aspire to calm confidence rather than loftiness.

SPEAKING.

You should never speak without a slight smile, or at least a beam of good will in your eyes, and that to all, whether your equals or inferiors. To the latter it is especially necessary, and often wins you more love than the most liberal benevolence. But this smile should never settle into a simper, nor, when you are engaged in a conversation, should it interfere with the earnestness of your manner. To a lady it should be more marked, than to a man. In listening you should manifest a certain interest to what a person is saying, and, however little worthy of your attention, you should not show that you think it so by the toss of your head, or the wandering of your eyes. In speaking to any one you should look them in the face, for the eyes always aid the tongue.

SITTING.

You should not sit on the edge of a chair, or throw yourself back and stretch forward your legs. You may cross your legs, if you like, but not hag your knees or your toes. Straddling a chair, and tilting it up, may be pardonable in a bachelor's room, but never in presence of ladies.

MOVEMENTS.

You should never talk with your arms and hands, as auxiliaries to the voice; but if you use your hands at all, it should be very slightly and gracefully, never

bringing down a fist upon the table, nor slapping one hand upon another, nor poking your fingers at your interlocutor. In short, while there is no occasion to be stolid or constrained, you should not be too lively in your actions, and, even if led away by the enthusiasm of an argument, should never grow loud, rant or declaim.

BAD HABITS.

SNUFFING.—Snuffing is an obsolete custom, retained only by a few old gentlemen, and, as it is a bad one, no young man should think of reviving it.

CHEWING.—Chewing is likewise a bad and filthy habit, and no gentleman should indulge in it. It would be a mean vulgarity to chew in presence of a lady.

SMOKING.—Smoking, though it has in our days become a common habit of almost all gentlemen, and though a good many reasons may be given in its favor, should never be done in the presence of the fair. If they know, that in a few minutes you will be running off for your pipe or cigar, the fair will do well, especially if it is in a garden or so, to allow you to bring it out and enjoy it there. But you should never smoke a pipe in the streets, that is in daylight. The crime may be committed like burglary, after dark. Should you by chance meet a lady, while you are smoking, you must stop it at once, and hold your pipe or your cigar aside, till she has passed.

SALUTING.

The rules in regard to saluting depend principally upon the degree of your acquaintance with the person whom you salute.

RECOGNIZING.—If you meet a person, whom you know slightly, and wish to recognize him slightly, your course is simple enough.

BY A LADY.—If you are a lady, you have the privilege of recognizing a gentleman. You wish to do so, because there is no reason that you should not be polite to him. So when you come quite near to him, and see that he is looking at you, you bow slightly and pass on; but you should not, short sighted, raise your glasses and stare at him through them before you bow.

BY A GENTLEMAN.—If you are a man, on the other hand, and you meet a lady, whom you know slightly, you must wait till she bows to you. You then lift your hat quite off your head with the hand, whichever it may be, which is farther from the person you meet. You lift it off your head, but that is all: you have no need, as they do in France, to show the world the inside thereof; so you immediately replace it. In making the salute you bend your body slightly. If, which should not occur, however, you happen to be smoking, you take your cigar from your mouth with the other hand, and hold it back, until she has passed by.

SALUTING NEARER ACQUAINTANCES.—But, suppose it is a person whom you know rather more than slightly, and to whom you may speak, then no gentleman may stop to speak to a lady until *she* stops to speak to *him*. The lady in all cases has the right to be friendly or distant. Women have not many rights: let us gracefully concede the few they possess.

You raise your hat all the same, but you do not shake hands, unless the lady puts out hers, which you may take as a sign of a particular good will. In this case you must not stop long; but the lady again has the privilege to prolong the interview at pleasure. It is *she*, not *you*, who must make the move onwards. If she does this in the middle of a conversation, it is a proof that she is willing that you should join her, and, if you have no absolute call to go your way, you ought to do so. But, if she does so with a slight inclination, it is to dismiss you, and you must then again bow and raise your hat.

OLD ACQUAINTANCES.—If, however, you are old acquaintances, you should, whether gentleman or lady, at once stop and give the hand, and enter into a conversation, the length of which must depend on the place where you meet. As a rule it should be very short, if in the streets. If you are walking with a gentleman, whom your lady friend does not know, you must not stop; still less so, if she is walking with a lady or gentleman, whom you do not know. If however a decided inclination is evinced by either to

speak to the other, and you so stop, the stranger ought not to walk on, but to stop also, and it then behoves you to introduce him or her. Such an introduction is merely formal and goes no further.

TOUCHING THE HAT.—If you meet a gentleman on the street, with whom you are only slightly acquainted, it is sufficient for you to touch your hat with the hand, which is farther from your acquaintance, and, passing by, to make a slight bow.

HAND SHAKING.—The hand, in general, is the most convenient and most natural member to salute with, for, next to those of the lips, the nerves of touch are most highly developed in the fingers. “A cold hand and a warm heart” is an old adage, which may be true for the temperature of the skin, but is certainly not so for the mode of proving it. A warm heart, I am persuaded, gives a warm shake of the hand, and a man must be a hypocrite, who can shake yours heartily, while he hates you. The charm of the hand, as a saluting member, lies in the fact of its grasping power. Every person should select the mode of taking, grasping and shaking the hand according to circumstances. The best style of all, in my opinion, is the hearty, single clasp, full handed, warm, momentary, just shaken enough to make the gentle grasp well felt, but not painful.

WITH A LADY.—The etiquette of this mode of salutation may be simply given in a few lines. A gentle-

man has no right to take a lady's hand till it is offered. Two ladies shake hands gently and softly. A young lady gives her hand, but does not take a gentleman's, unless she is his friend. A lady should always rise to give her hand: a gentleman, of course, never dares do so seated. On introduction in a room, a married lady generally offers her hand, a young lady not.

IN A BALLROOM.—In a ballroom, where the introduction is to dancing, not to friendship, you never shake hands, and, as a general rule in good society, an introduction is not followed by shaking hands, only by a bow. It may perhaps be laid down that, the more public the place of introduction, the less hand-shaking takes place.

THE KISS.

It remains only for me to say a few words of that old, cordial mode of salutation—the kiss. It is a delicate subject to speak of in this country, and on this account I have to be short.

Kissing was a very early discovery, as those, who read their Bibles, may find out.

KISS OF PEACE.—The "kiss of peace" was a mark of love between men. It is still in use between friends of both sexes in the old country, especially in France and Germany. There the parent kisses his grown up son on his forehead, friends press their lips to other's cheeks, brothers throw their arms round one other's

neck, and embrace like lovers. Here, in America, it is reserved for children and girls, and for my little Herman to stop my lips when I am going to scold him. Well, it is a beautiful old custom, all the same, and if we were not so wicked in this nineteenth century, we would have more of it.

IN TIMES OF YORE.—In the days of good Queen Bess it was the height of politeness to kiss your neighbor's wife, and your grandfathers will tell you that, on entering a room, they kissed all the women present, as a matter of course. This privilege is reserved among us to "Scotch cousins," who make a very free use of it. But, alas! this beautiful symbol of pure affection, which sent a thrill from warm lips through all the frame, is now become a matter of almost shame to us. It is a deed to be done behind the door.

IN OUR TIMES.—The kiss of mere respect was made on the hand, a good old custom still retained in Germany. But in this day the kissing of the lips is reserved for lovers, and should scarcely be performed in public. But the kiss of friendship and relationship on the cheeks or forehead is still kept up a little, and might be much more common. But, as a general rule, this act of affection is excluded from public eyes in this country, and there are people who are ashamed even to kiss a brother or father on board the steamer or railroad car, which is to take him away for some ten or twenty years. There are people who are ashamed of showing any feeling, however natural,

however pure. This is a matter in which I would not have etiquette interfere. Let the world say it is rustic or vulgar to kiss your friends on the platform of a railway in the moment of parting, or when they arrive: it is never vulgar to be loving, and love, that is real love, will show itself, though there were twenty acts of Congress against it. But after all, custom is a tyrant, and, if we will claim to possess good habits, we must obey its commandments.

Remarks on the Etiquette of Dancing.

DANCING. — Now going over to give some remarks on the art of dancing, and to lay down the principal points of its etiquette, I will not dwell upon its usefulness as an exercise to improve the pliability, elasticity and strength of your limbs and body, and consequently your health, but simply state, that in our days it is indispensably necessary for any man or woman, who does not intend to lead the solitary life of an hermit, to know how to dance.

COROLLARY TO EDUCATION. — Dancing, in fact, is one of those corollaries of the problem of education, by which a person is fitted out not only to “pass,” but to take honors in the social examination. In a *man* its knowledge is not required to keep a friend, or to charm a woman; in a *woman* not to surpass a rival and to captivate a man of more taste than heart. For *both*, however, it has a far higher object, that namely of giving pleasure to our fellow-creatures, and of increasing the general harmony of society.

In the present day the art is much simplified, and

if you can walk through a quadrille, and perform a *Polka, Waltz or Galop*, you may often dance a whole evening through. Of course, if you can add the *Lancers, French Quadrille, Polka Mazurka, Varsoienne, Danish*, etc., you will have more variety, and can be more generally agreeable. In fact, there exist more than three hundred different dances, but the number of *usual* dances is limited, and *unusual* ones should be very sparingly introduced into a ball or a social party, for, as few people know them, their dancing, on the one hand, becomes a mere display, and, on the other, interrupts the enjoyment of the majority.

CONVERSATIONAL DANCE.

QUADRILLE.—The most common dances in this country are the Quadrille and a few of the so called round dances.

CONVERSATION.—The Quadrille is pronounced to be essentially a conversational dance; but, inasmuch as the figures are perpetually calling you away from your partner, the first necessity for dancing a quadrille is to be supplied with a fund of small talk, in which you can go from subject to subject like a bee from flower to flower.

SUBJECTS FOR CONVERSATION.—The more you are a person of good education and learning, the easier it will be for you to find proper subjects for a conversation that will make you agreeable to your partner.

You need not then to confine your conversation to those vulgar remarks on the weather and the morning papers' gossip, if you are acquainted with the productions of literature, and are able to converse about some interesting new publications. And especially if, as every well bred gentleman and lady should be, you are expert in some foreign languages, and know the poets and literary master-works of other nations, you will never be at a loss to find some new and interesting topics for communication and conversation, and at the same time you will have ample means to show your good taste and make yourself agreeable to your companion.

WITH A STRANGER.—If your partner is a stranger, you should engage him or her to speak about his place of residence, of its environs, of friends, for nothing gives more pleasure to a stranger than to be reminded of his or her "sweet home." But first of all you must study the inclinations and degree of intelligence of your partner, and select your topics for conversation accordingly, dwelling always upon such points as you find to be the most agreeable to her.

SMILE.—In regard to the figures in a quadrille you must know that the smile is the most important of all of them. A dance is supposed to amuse, and nothing is more out of place than a gloomy face. The gaiety of a dance is more essential than the accuracy of its figures, and if you feel none yourself, you may at least look pleased by that of those around you.

CARRIAGE.—The next point is to carry yourself upright. Like in the *Menue* of old, the carriage constitutes the dance in the quadrille, in which, even if ignorant of the figures, you may acquit yourself well by a calm, graceful carriage.

GRACEFULNESS.—And you should never forget that a lady—beautiful word!—is a delicate creature, one who should be revered and delicately treated. It is therefore unpardonable to rush about in a quadrille, to catch hold of the lady's hand as if it were a doorhandle, or to drag her furiously across the room, as if you were Bluebeard and she Fatime. Be graceful and grateful when you take a lady's hand; for does she not confer an honor on us by the action? To squeeze it, on the other hand, is a gross familiarity, for which you would deserve to be excluded from the company.

STEPS.—"Steps," as the *chasser* of the quadrille is called, belong to a past age, and even ladies are now content to walk through a quadrille. To be graceful, however, a lady should hold her skirt out a little. In Germany and France this is done with one hand, which I am inclined to think is more graceful, than holding it with both. It is however always necessary, as in all dances, to keep time with the music, the great object being the general harmony.

FIGURES.—As far as figures concerns, it is wise to know all of them, and to be expert in every way they

may be performed; but you must not insist on dancing them, unless they are known by the whole company. A quadrille cannot go on evenly if any confusion arises from the ignorance, obstinacy, or inattention of any of the dancers. It is a most valuable dance if not overdone with artificial figures. Old and young, stout and thin, good dancers and bad, lazy and active, stupid and clever, married and single—all can join in it, and have not only an excuse and opportunity for *tete-a-tete* conversation, which is decidedly the easiest, but find encouragement in the music, and in some convenient breaks in the necessity of dancing. A person of few ideas has time to collect them while the partner is performing, and one of many can bring them out with double effect.

ROUND DANCES.

Very different is the object and principle of the so called round dances. Here the intention is to enjoy a peculiar physical movement under peculiar conditions, and the conversation during the intervals of rest is only a secondary object. These dances demand activity and lightness, and should therefore be, as a rule, confined to the *young*.

THE WALTZ.—Much can be said about the innocent enjoyment of a good waltz, its grace and beauty, but I will only give a few hints on the subject.

POSITION. — The position is the most important point. The lady and gentleman, before starting, should stand exactly opposite to one another, quite upright. The gentleman's hand must be placed around the lady's waist, so as to have a firm hold.

STEP.—The position having been gained, the step is the next question. In Germany the rapidity of the waltz is very great, but it is rendered elegant by slackening the pace every now and then, and thus giving a *crescendo* and *decrescendo* time to the movement.

The Russian men undertake to perform in waltzing the same feat as the Hungarians in riding on horseback, and will dance round the room with a glass of champagne in the left hand without spilling a drop. This evenness in waltzing is certainly very graceful, but can only be attained by a long sliding step, which is little practiced in England, where the rooms are small, and people, not well understanding the real pleasure of dancing, insist in dancing all at the same time.

The pace again should not be sufficiently rapid to endanger other couples.

STEERING.—It is the gentleman's duty to *steer*, and in crowded rooms nothing is more trying. He must keep his eyes open, and turn them in every direction, if he would not risk a collision and the chance to fall.

VIOLENT WALTZING.—The consequence of violent dancing may be really serious. Not only do delicate

girls bring on thereby a violent palpitation of the heart, and their partners appear in a most disagreeable condition of solution, but dangerous falls ensue from it. Therefore be careful in the waltz, be sparing, lest it prove in this land, where consumption is so much complained of, to too many the "dance of death." Let us not mingle cypress with our roses!

ORIGINAL WALTZ.—The waltz is of German origin, but where it is still danced in its original manner, (as for instance among the peasants of the Tyrol,) it is very different from the way it is danced in the most parts of this country. It is there very slow and graceful. The feet are thrown out in a single long step. After a few turns the partners waltz alone in the same step, the man keeping the time by striking together his iron shod heels, until with a shout and clapping of hands he again clasps his partner and continues in the same slow measure with her.

OTHER DANCES.—The very names of the other dances bespeak their origin. The Slavonic nations have given us the Polka, Mazurka, Redowa, Gorlitz, Eletzka and others. The Varsovienne and Cracovienne are all that remain of Polish nationality. Then the Madrilaine has been imported from Spain, which retains the Oriental Bolero, Fandango and Cachucha.

AMERICAN HORNPIPE.—The Americans, with more patriotism than the John Bulls, have preserved the only national and English dances, the Hornpipe and

Jig, and have about twenty varieties of the former, including a sailor's, college, gipsy's and even brick-layer's and lamplighter's hornpipe. But these American dances, which have names no less excentric than our drinks, have as yet not been introduced into good society.

POLKA, ETC.—The remarks as to the position in waltzing apply to all round dances, and there is little to add with regard to the *Galop* and *Polka*, except that it is a great mistake to suppose them to be rapid dances. They should be danced as slowly as possible. They will then be more graceful and less fatiguing.

The Polka Mazurka is still much danced, and it is certainly very graceful.

THE LANCERS.—The remarks on the Quadrille apply equally to the Lancers, which are great favorites, and threaten to take the place of the former.

THE GERMAN.—A very pleasant and social dance is the German, which I should like to see introduced into this country. It consists of a great variety of figures taken from almost all other dances, and often invented on the spot. It is generally danced to close a ball.

FRENCH CONTRE DANCE.—All what is to be said in regard to the French Contre Dance must be left to the instructor. It is also going to become a great favorite in this country, and of right so, for it is one of the most

agreeable and graceful dances, as well for the dancers themselves as for the lookers on.

CONCLUSION.—Herewith I will close my general remarks on dancing, and only add that the calm ease, which makes the man of good taste, makes even the swiftest dances graceful and agreeable. But you will never enjoy dancing till you do it well, and you will dance well if you will look for a good instructor, and pay full attention to his directions.

FIGURES OF THE QUADRILLE.

I.

Honors to partner,	8 bars.
Right and left four,	8 "
Balance four,	8 "
Ladies' chain,	8 "
Half promenade,	4 "
Half right and left,	4 "

Repeated by sides.

II.

First four forward and return,	4 bars.
Cross over,	4 "
Chassez,	4 "
Cross back,	4 "
Balance four,	8 "

Repeated, (sides same.)

III.

First four, right hand cross,	4 bars.
Left hand back,	4 "

Balance in centre,	4 bars.
Half promenade,	4 "
Two ladies fore and back,	4 "
Gentlemen the same,	4 "
Forward four,	4 "
Half right and left to place,	4 "
Repeated, (sides same.)	

IV.

First four forward,	4 bars.
First lady cross over,	4 "
Forward three,	4 "
Two ladies cross over,	4 "
Forward three; two ladies cross,	8 "
Four hands half round,	4 "
Half right and left,	4 "
All men left,	8 "
Repeated, (sides same.)	

V.

All join hands, forward and back,	4 bars.
Forward again,	4 "
Ladies pass to the right until they reach their place.	
All men left.	
Gentlemen to right, same as before.	
Promenade.	

FIGURES IN THE LANCERS.

Honors to your partners and corners.

I.

First four forward,	4 bars.
Swing opposite lady,	4 "
Four cross over,	4 "
(Second couple pass between the first couple.)	
Cross back,	4 "
(First couple pass between the second couple.)	
Salute left hand lady.	
Salute partner and swing,	8 "
Repeated, (sides same.)	

II.

Forward four and back,	4 bars.
Forward and leave lady in centre,	4 "
Chassez right and left,	4 "
Swing partners to place,	4 "
(Form two lines to side.)	
Forward eight,	4 "
Swing partners to their places,	4 "
Repeated, (sides same.)	

III.

First forward and back, 4 bars.

Forward again, slow salute, . . . 4 "

Four ladies right hand cross, . . . 4 "

(Same time gentlemen right face march
half round.)

Left hand back, 4 "

(Same time gentlemen come to about
face and march back to places.)

Repeated, (sides same.)

IV.

First four lead to right and salute, 4 bars.

Lead to left and salute, 4 "

Chassez to places and salute partner, 4 "

Right and left four, 8 "

Repeated, (sides same.)

V.

Grand right and left, 16 bars.

First couple face outside.

(Sides form between first and second couple.)

Chassez right and left.

Lead inside and back the same way.

Form two lines.

Forward eight.

Swing partners to places.

Repeated by each couple.

