

THE NEW DANCING AS IT SHOULD BE

For the Ball-Room, the Class-
Room and the Stage

By
EDWARD SCOTT
Author of "Dancing in all Ages," etc

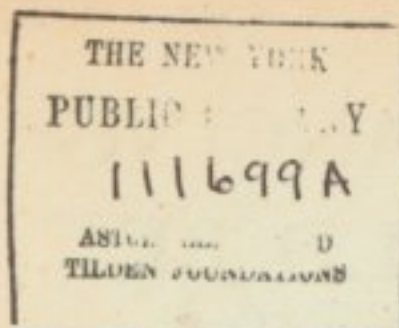
The Morning Post says :—"Mr. Edward Scott, a recognised authority on the art of dancing."

The World says :—"Mr. Edward Scott, the leading authority upon this art."



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A FEW PRESS OPINIONS

St. James's Gazette says :—" Mr. Scott is, indeed, an authority on the art of dancing."

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The Saturday Review says :—" Mr. Edward Scott has proved himself *facile princeps* as a student of the art of dancing. . . . Mr. Scott's account of dancing in ancient Egypt, in Rome and in Greece, is excellent, and if those who are devotees of Terpsichore to-day will study his pages, they should assist to bring back the art to its ancient grace."

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OF "DANCING" IN THE "ALL ENGLAND SERIES "

Price 2s. (*Double Volume*.) London : George Bell & Sons.

The Westminster Gazette says :—" If anything that is said or written can make dancing attractive and interesting, Mr. Scott's pleasantly written manual is sure to do it. It is a book full of simple teaching, and of chatty anecdotes and experiences."

The Pall Mall Gazette says :—" The book would give a good deal of amusement for winter evenings . . . for teachers it will be invaluable."

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PREFACE

MANY years ago I wrote a little treatise called *Dancing as it Should Be*, which was presumably popular, since it enjoyed a sale of about forty thousand copies. In the following pages a certain amount of matter appertaining to Dancing *per se*, apart altogether from custom or fashion, has been retained; but so much has been altered, re-written, and added to meet present day requirements, that in the form now offered *Dancing as it Should Be* is practically an ENTIRELY NEW WORK.

The present volume should also interest a wider circle of readers. The section on SOCIAL DANCING appeals more directly to the ordinary dancer who has not the advantage of technical knowledge; the section on EDUCATIONAL DANCING appeals specially to parents who would have their children properly taught, and to young teachers who honestly wish to qualify themselves in the art of giving instruction; the section on STAGE DANCING appeals to the professional aspirant, and others interested in the higher branches of the art; while the section on THE WALTZ appeals to all readers alike, whether private or professional.

EDWARD SCOTT.

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A FEW PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON STAGE AND BALL-ROOM DANCING

REGARDED as a diversion, the main consideration in dancing is the pleasure it affords the performers.

Regarded as an art, the main consideration in dancing is the pleasure it affords the spectators.

In either case the more perfect the movements of the dancers the greater will be the amount of pleasure derivable therefrom.

The clumsy efforts of imperfect dancers in a ball-room may afford amusement to onlookers, but they are only productive of mortification to the dancers themselves, and of annoyance to their partners.

Unfortunately, owing to neglected culture of the æsthetic faculties, the great majority of people are quite unable to distinguish between what is good and what is bad in dancing.

Clearly, if they did know good from bad, ball-room dancers would be at greater pains to improve their own style, and theatre audiences would be less ready to tolerate and even approve the wretched stuff that is too often presented on the stage.

And there would also be greater appreciation shown for really beautiful classic dancing when it is all too rarely exhibited. As an instance, take the exquisite

ballet of *Cupid and Psyche*, produced in 1909 at the Alhambra, an altogether artistic and delightful performance in which it would be impossible to praise too highly the arrangement, the scenario, or the dancers.

Excellence in ball-room dancing depends in a great measure on the neatness and accuracy with which the steps of the various dances are executed; but it also depends quite as much, and indeed more, on correct and harmonious action of the upper part of the body.

If you would test the truth of the above statement, when walking along the street, suddenly wheel round and retrace your steps. You will discover that it is your *head* that turns first, then your *shoulders*, and lastly your *feet*.

No teacher can impart the art of dancing really well unless he has some knowledge of the anatomical structure of the human frame.

As regards artistic, stage, or operatic dancing, excellence depends on neatness and brilliance in the execution of steps and movements (*pas* and *temps*), which are generally of a more intricate nature than those employed in ball-room dancing; on the judicious blending of light and shade, as represented by closed and extended positions of the limbs; and also on the harmonious and accordant action of the head, body, arms and hands of the dancer. These movements are all regulated by certain definite laws which should be understood and clearly explained by the teacher.

That these laws of graceful and harmonious action were known and adhered to by the ancients we may easily convince ourselves by reference to their sculp-

tures; yet I have seen exhibitions by so-called exponents of classical dancing in which they have been wholly disregarded. This betrays not only want of knowledge on the dancer's part, but also ignorance on the part of those who have lavished such fulsome adulation on the performance.

Yet by contrast with the awful rubbish in which the performers seem ever trying to kick imaginary flies off an imaginary ceiling, it is refreshing to witness even amateur attempts to portray classical dancing. Such efforts, though imperfect, are at least efforts in the right direction.

It is by no means necessarily a sign of incompetence on the part of a teacher if he or she does not happen to know any particular dance. Many dances are not worth remembering, and many not worth acquiring.

But it is deplorable that there should be people professing to teach others how to dance, while they are themselves totally ignorant of the real grammar and technique of their art.

Some teachers for obvious reasons dislike to be asked questions, but teachers who really understand their art are always ready to explain the why and wherefore of their methods, and are pleased to give any information to their pupils.

If you ask your teacher questions concerning the traditions or technique of dancing, and he or she frankly confesses ignorance, you may at least assume that the teacher is *honest*.

If you are put off with evasive replies, you may be sure that the teacher *does not really know* that which you wish to learn.

But if you are told as facts things which you afterwards discover to be false, then you may know that you are in the hands of a teacher who is *not to be trusted*. In such circumstances it is well to make a change—the sooner the better.

ON DANCING GENERALLY

"I could be pleased with any one
Who entertained my sight with such gay shows
As men and women, moving here and there,
That, coursing one another in their steps,
Have made their feet a tune."

—DRYDEN.

THERE is no art that has been subject to so many vicissitudes during the known period of its cultivation as the art we are about to consider. There have been times when the idea of dancing was associated in men's minds with whatsoever is grandest and noblest in religion, art and nature, and there have been times when it was associated only with frivolity and dissipation. It has by turns been almost utterly neglected, and again cultivated to the highest degree of perfection.

But there has always been considerable diversity of opinion with regard to the merits of dancing. Some of the early fathers thought it not irreverent to teach that the angels dance in heaven, while others were of opinion that dancing was a practice more appropriate to an entirely different region. As John Taylor, the poet of a later day, assures us :

"All h— danced trenchmore in a string."

Tertullian was one of the Fathers who had no appreciation for the art, nor does he appear to have been very kindly disposed towards its exponents, for he

includes the dancers amongst those whom he would "admire, laugh and rejoice to see groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness."

There are still, even in this twentieth century, many people who object to dancing; but their numbers are happily diminishing day by day. They are doubtless aware of this fact, and that is why every now and again they seem to make a desperate stand, and proclaim the wickedness of dancing in glowing words. About the time that the original book bearing this title was first published, some terrible fulminations against "close-bosomed whirlings" were being uttered in the North, but even these, notwithstanding their severity, were mild compared with the denunciations of days long gone by. An idea of the latter may be gained from the following passage in Perin's *History of the Waldenses*. It is taken from one of their ordinances, in which they say: "A dance is the devil's procession; and he that entereth into a dance entereth into his procession. The devil is the guide to the middle and to the end of the dance. As many paces as a man maketh in dancing, so many paces doth he make to hell." The "springs and flings" and "close-bosomed whirlings" of the Aberdeen Presbytery were nothing to this.

Again, in a book written somewhere about the year 1580, and dedicated to Henry IV. of France, the author, after assuring his readers that dancing springs from no other sources than *idolatrie*, *yvroneſſe*, etc., deprecates the movements as being contrary to the order of nature, and suggests: "*que nos exhortos nos Eglises de chasser et releguer ces vilaines couſtumes aux Enfers.*"

You see, reader, that I start perfectly fair by mentioning some of the strongest, if not the most conclusive, things that have been said against the art we are about to consider. No one could wish to see them more forcibly expressed ; so that if you do not want to enact a part in the procession above alluded to, you can at once close the book and have done with dancing for ever.

Perhaps, though, you do not feel terrified. You may possibly think that the language in which the detractors of dancing clothe their ideas is wanting in elegance, and savours rather of abuse than argument. Well, their remarks, as a rule, are certainly not complimentary ; but it should be remembered that dancing and politeness generally go hand in hand, and those who condemn the one are not likely to be over-particular about the other. Besides, it was the custom with our forefathers to make free use of names now considered unspeakable in polite society. They said what they meant, and that pretty plainly. There was no beating about the bush with them. We have gained in elegance and refinement, though perhaps we have lost something in sincerity.

With regard to the more modern deprecations, I can only say that to aver that dancing in itself is wicked is simply absurd. That the art may be abused and thereby lead to wickedness I admit ; but then so may all other pursuits, science, literature—even painting according to Mr. Horsley, R.A. ; “and if,” as it has been observed, “we are to confine ourselves to such amusements and employments as are not liable to error, we shall neither be amused nor employed at all.” The

"close-bosomed whirlings," if true, would be decidedly objectionable; but the expression implies want of observation or ignorance of the modern fashionable style of dancing, which is nothing of the kind.

Some years since, in a paper read at the Birmingham meeting of the Social Science Congress, the late Sir Walter Besant said: "No life can be wholly unhappy which is cheered by the power of playing an instrument, *dancing*, painting, carving, etc. . . . Every man who practises one of these arts is during his work drawn out of himself, and *away from the bad conditions of his life.*" I wonder what the anti-dancers thought of this?

Notwithstanding the different opinions that have in various ages been held respecting dancing, it is a fact worthy of notice that the greatest men of all times who have given the subject their consideration have commented favourably upon it; and to assert that dancing, as a recreation, is productive of evil is going against the stream of historical experience. Has not the art been cultivated by the greatest nations in times of prosperity, and neglected in those of demoralization and decline? To go back even to its infancy: it was much esteemed in the early ages of Greece, and had reached its highest perfection during the third and most splendid period of Grecian history. Aristotle ranked dancing with poetry. Socrates took lessons when in advanced life—this ought to be an encouragement to adult pupils—and Lycurgus enjoined it on the warlike Spartans, whose children commenced learning at the early age of five. Think of that, parents who object to your little ones being taught to dance. Do not imagine that you are

giving them an accomplishment that will lead to bad results. While the Greeks danced, Greece was great, and the men were manly ; but later on, when effeminacy and laziness had come to be the chief characteristics of the nation, we learn that what had been "the pride of monarchs and warriors" was in the end cultivated by hired artists only, as the Greeks youths were too indolent to practise dancing as a personal recreation.

Again, in Rome, a writer of the fourth century, after asking if any one has ever witnessed professional dancing at any entertainment, says : "Formerly our great ancestors were desirous of acquiring the art of dancing," and adds that, "during the interval of the Punic Wars, the children of gentlemen, nay, of senators, attended dancing-schools, and learned the use of the castanets." Any student of history knows that this was a period of the strictest morality, and that the Romans of that time were distinguished for their simple, manly character ; but afterwards, when demoralization and corruption began to manifest themselves, both in their public and private life, dancing appears to have been less favourably regarded ; and when, at length, the same nation gradually sank into excesses of vice and profligacy, it was held beneath the dignity of persons of any consideration to dance, and, as in Greece, the art was relegated entirely to the stage.

Parenthetically, I would ask : Is it a rare thing to find among the *jeunesse dorée* of our twentieth century ball-rooms many who affect all the listlessness and languor of aristocratic Greece and Rome, and who, if not altogether too lazy to dance, are, at least, too idle to learn to dance properly ?

To come back nearer to our own times. In England, during the reign of Elizabeth, dancing was considered by no means a light and trivial accomplishment. We read that at the Christmas Masques the gentlemen of the Inns of Court were summoned to dance a Coranto before her Majesty, and that she expressed herself well pleased with their performance. Among the dances then in vogue were the Gigue, Pavanne, Brawl, Gaillarde, Canary and Volta, which last, apart from its rhythm, appears to have been a movement bearing some resemblance to the modern Polka—at least, according to Sir John Davis, who says :

“ Yet is there one, the most delightful kind,
A lofty jumping or a leaping round,
Where arm in arm, two dancers are entwined,
And where themselves with strict embracements bound ;
And still their feet an anapest do sound :
An anapest is all their music's song,
Whose first two feet are short, and third is long.”

Few people would be prepared to maintain that the morals of our country were less rigid under “ Good Queen Bess ” than in the time of the second Charles. Yet it seems that dancing found but little favour at his Court ; if, indeed, we except the Cushion Dance, one of those kissing performances in which it was not unfrequently necessary that the lips of the partners should be pressed together for fully a minute in order to keep time with the music, and which had really nothing whatever to do with the legitimate domain of dancing.

I have said that Aristotle ranked the art of dancing with that of poetry ; but it must be remembered that the dancing of his time was very different from the

drawing-room performances of the present day, which would have ill-accorded with æsthetic Grecian tastes. Athenæus tells us that the Greeks brought their dance to such perfection that the most eminent sculptors thought their time not ill-employed in studying and designing the attitudes of the public dancers; and adds, "that to this study they owed, undoubtedly, some of the transcendent beauties of their work." Even in the days of Minuets dancing was recognized as one of the fine arts, and the spectators took quite as much interest in the performance as the dancers, who were praised or criticized according to the manner in which they acquitted themselves. But what interest, save that of ridicule, could any observer take in watching young men, with stretched necks, kept in one position by the breadth and rigidity of their shirt-collars, pushing their partners at arm's length before them right down the room, turning rapidly in the corners, then darting out again to everybody's inconvenience, and behaving generally in a ridiculous manner? Yet these antics pass for waltzing—"the latest style"! I do not think, however, that many men would care to adopt this manner of dancing if they had to go through their part alone; but so long as they are able to drag some unfortunate girl about with them, they do not appear to think it matters how idiotically they behave, or how badly they dance.

We think, no doubt, that our ancestors must have made themselves very ridiculous when dancing the Pavane, in which the men slowly approached their partners with outstretched arms and mantles, imitating the actions of turkey-cocks and peacocks spreading out

their tails—the more disdainful their demeanour the more appropriate to the character of the dance. But, after all, is it more absurd to strut about like birds than to act like children playing at horses, and twist round like teetotums? I think not. The extravagances of our forefathers had, at least, the excuse of being characteristic, while our modern ball-room extravagances, like many of those exhibited on the stage, are not only destitute of grace, but they represent nothing whatever.

SOCIAL DANCING

"For who so sorrowfull is in harte,
Him lust not to plaie ne starte,
Nor for to dauncen, ne to sing."

—CHAUCER. *Romant of the Rose.*

"Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,
And in the lighted hall the guests are met:
The beautiful looked lovelier in the light
Of love, and admiration, and delight,
Reflected from a thousand hearts and eyes,
Kindling a momentary paradise."

—SHELLEY.

THE observations in this part of my little treatise are addressed more particularly to readers who wish to practise dancing merely as a social diversion for winter evenings, and have no intention of following the art professionally, or inclination to study its more ornamental branches with a view to amateur performance. But even those who seek only private pleasure and amusement from their dancing would do well to give some attention to the rudiments of the art as here set forth in another section, and more elaborately in my double volume on *Dancing* in the "All England" series of handbooks. In practising the five positions, however, they need not for ball-room dancing turn the feet quite so much outward—a right angle being sufficient—and in the *battlements* their limbs need not be quite so fully extended.

Always remember that the aim of the ball-room dancer should be to please by dexterity rather than astonish by display.

It has been often said that no one can teach himself to dance by reading a book, and it may be admitted that the assertion is not altogether devoid of truth, especially with regard to the steps and rudimentary portion of the art, which can be so much more easily shown than described. Still, it by no means follows that an indifferent dancer may not greatly improve his style by carefully attending to written instructions, and it will be my object in considering the Round Dances to show how the difficulties experienced by all beginners may be most easily and successfully overcome; also to point out and correct those errors which both learners and practised dancers are most apt to fall into.

There is no dance which shows more unmistakably any awkwardness on the part of the pupil, any negligence on the part of the teacher, than

THE POLKA.

A lady who wished to find out if her children were receiving proper instruction in dancing could not do better than sit down at the piano and play a few bars of a Polka, asking them to dance to the music *alone*. She should then observe how they take their steps; mark if they raise the foot behind the heel in starting, and always at the fourth beat of every bar, or if they merely sprawl their feet about aimlessly, as so many do; notice if they point the toe in whatever direction they may be going—especially the right toe—and watch if they spring slightly on the sole of the foot immediately before

the commencement of each bar. Lastly, she should ask them to explain the rhythm of the dance, and point out the difference between the accent of the Polka and that of the Schottische.

From these remarks the reader will naturally infer that these are details in which most dancers are deficient. That is quite correct; yet it is only by attention to small details that perfection is to be attained. Even among those who fancy they are thoroughly proficient, and who would feel highly indignant if you suggested that they had anything yet to learn, very few dance the Polka really perfectly. They flounder about with a one, two, three, and that is all. The one, two, three is all right enough, but *where is the four?* It is in the music always, but rarely ever in the dance.

Now it is to that unfortunate and much-neglected four that I wish to call your particular attention. If you look at a well-written Polka you will see that it actually commences with a four. Why is this, do you think? Why, it simply means that you must begin to dance on the four, that is, if you are a gentleman you commence by springing on the sole of the right foot, and lifting the left slightly up behind the heel ready to take the first step. Mind, it is with the *left* foot that you take the first *step*. It is the springing and raising the foot behind that occupies the fourth interval.

Now begin.

As soon as the left foot touches the floor, raise the right ready for the second step. Bring the right up to where the left is, simultaneously raising the left, and once more fall upon the left, raising the right.

These are the first three steps: left, right, left.

Pause just a second, and then spring on the sole of the left foot—exactly as you did before on your right—at the same time bringing your right foot into position behind, at right angles, ready to begin the next three steps, which are taken in the same manner as the first three, only in the contrary direction and with the feet conversely:

Right, left, right.

These steps you should first practise sideways, the first three to the left, then the next three to the right, turning your feet well out, especially the one you start with.

It will help you greatly in learning if you try to remember that the one and the three are always taken with the same foot, thus: left, right, left—pause—and right, left, right. You will gain some idea of the rhythm by counting thus:

and one,' two, three'—and one,' two, three.'

The *and* corresponds to the spring, and the dash to the pause, both together making up the four.

The steps are all of equal length as regards time, each occupying a quarter of a bar; but the first and third are specially accented.

You would be astonished if you knew the difference the little *and* I have mentioned makes in dancing the Polka. Just say to yourself several times—marking the punctuation:

One, two, three: one, two, three.

It sounds heavy and wooden, like many people's dancing. Now say:

and one,' two, three'; and one,' two, three.'

It sounds light and springy, as dancing should be. You will find this worth remembering.

In turning, the first three steps should take you half round, and the last three should complete the circle. The act of pointing the right foot well out at the commencement of the last three steps will help you wonderfully in getting round—a great difficulty with all learners—if you turn simultaneously on your left, as on a pivot, whilst taking the slight spring, and also bring your *right shoulder, right arm*, and, consequently, *partner* round at the same time. While you do this, the whole weight of the body must, of course, fall on the left foot—that is, the centre of gravity must fall within the base, or you will be quite powerless, and have to put your right foot down before the time in order to prevent yourself from falling.

I wish it to be thoroughly understood that in telling you to spring at the fourth beat of the bar, immediately before taking the first step, I do not mean that you are to jump, but simply to rise and fall on the ball of the foot. In the Polka the knees should not be kept too stiff, and you must take your steps as quietly and gently as is consistent with the proper accent and spirit of the dance.

As you are, of course, aware,

THE SCHOTTISCHE

is no longer fashionable, but it may still occasionally be introduced at private parties. I will here describe the old dance because it is useful as an exercise, and will help you in learning the Barn Dance and other movements in which occur steps of a similar nature.

In making your first efforts, you will find that your greatest difficulty will be to keep accurate time and take your steps in unison with those of your partner, especially when hopping. Yet, unless you are able to accomplish this, I can assure you that the feeling will be unpleasant to yourselves and the effect unpleasing to others. Your heads will be continually bobbing up and down at different times, and a few turns will tire you both more than a long Schottische if danced properly. It unfortunately happens that in this dance it is not much in the power of either partner to help the other; and if *you* should happen to be the one who is deficient, your performance may prove particularly annoying to your partner, especially if in one of the hops you happen to alight on her toes. I hope sufficient has been said to induce you to practise the dance thoroughly yourself before you attempt to lead a lady through it, and will now tell you how the movement may be most easily acquired.

It will be better to commence by practising the step sideways, as you did that of the Polka, so that you have only one difficulty to contend with at a time. Turning presents another difficulty; but that can be more easily overcome after you have thoroughly mastered the steps. An amateur in attempting to teach any one would most likely begin by dancing round and saying: "This is how you should do it, see!" But you would not see; at least, you would only see how your would-be instructor did it, you would not understand how it was to be done by yourself.

This I will try to explain:

Commence with your left foot raised a little behind

your right, ready to start. (I am still supposing the reader to belong to my own sex. If a lady, she will, if dancing with a partner, begin with the opposite foot ; but it matters little which she begins with in learning the step.) Now, at the first beat of the bar, take a step to the side with your left foot, then, at the second beat, bring the right up to it gently, and at the third, take another step with your left foot—these three steps very much the same as if you were walking sideways, only with the knees slightly bent and the action springy. Now, after the third step, bend your left knee and gently spring, or hop, on the left foot, coming down again upon it, and not on the right.

These three steps and hop complete one bar of four beats.

Now proceed in exactly the same manner in the other direction, commencing with the right foot, and also finishing by hopping on the right, to complete the second bar.

Recollect, the first, third, and hop are all taken with the same foot : left, right, left, and hop on the left ; then, right, left, right, and hop on the right.

Now come four consecutive steps and hops taken with each foot alternately, thus :

Place the left foot down, and then hop on it ; then the right, and hop on it ; then left, and hop ; and, lastly, right, and hop. These four steps and hops occupy two bars of the music, after which you begin again with left, right, left, hop, as before.

Remember that in the hops you must always come down again on the *same foot*.

In these four steps and hops you must be particularly

careful about the time, or your dancing will have the head-bobbing, cat-on-hot-bricks appearance of which I have already spoken.

The reason why so few people, even among fairly good dancers, really seem to dance the Schottische in perfect accord may, I think, be explained easily enough, though I do not remember having heard or seen the peculiarity satisfactorily accounted for elsewhere. It is pretty certain that if the cause were generally known we should not so frequently observe the ludicrous effect.

There are in the music of the Schottische four intervals to each bar, and each step occupies, or should occupy, one interval, or quarter of a bar ; but it is impossible that the hop itself can occupy the same time as the steps, for no sooner are you off the ground than you are brought down again by the force of gravitation. It is very easy for any one who doubts this to try and see how long he can remain with his feet from the ground. It consequently follows that in order to keep in time with the music, and to make up for the momentary hop, *there must be a pause somewhere.*

Now some people, without being aware of the fact, make this pause immediately *before* the hop, while others, equally unenlightened as to their mode of procedure, make it immediately *after* ; hence the head-bobbing. Thus, one says :

one—hop, two—hop, etc. ;

and the other :

one, hop—two, hop—etc. ;

the dash representing the pause. These are both

apparently in time with the music, as the interval is in each case fully made up.

Which, then, is right?

For my own part, I certainly think the pause should be made immediately *before* the hop, as it enables you to bend the knee and prepare to take the spring gracefully; besides, most good dancers do this intuitively, without, perhaps, knowing why, or even being aware of the fact that the interval between the step and hop is longer than the others.

The actual division of time, and the accent, may be learnt from reading the following, and paying particular attention to the punctuation:

one, two, three; hóp, one, two, three; hóp, one; hóp,
two; hóp, three; hóp, four; hóp, one, two, three; hóp, etc.

the semicolon, of course, corresponding to the pause.

It is quite probable that this book will fall into the hands of many who have not the slightest practical knowledge of *music*, but I think it may safely be presumed that it is not likely to be purchased by any one who is unable to *read*; therefore, in my explanations, I take advantage of that which I know you *can* understand. Only a comparative *few* will realize the relative values of a quaver and a semiquaver, but *all* will at once perceive the relation of a comma to a semicolon. It may also help you to form an idea of the rhythm of the Schottische if I mention that it is similar to that of trochaic verse in poetry, which, as you know, consists of an accented and an unaccented syllable alternately. Thus for the first two bars you can say—

Splen'-dours bright'-er
Now' in-vite' her ;

and for the next two of alternate steps and hops :

Turn'-ing, burn'-ing,
Chang'-ing, rang'-ing.

I hope, indeed I trust, that all this is sufficiently clear.

Now with regard to the turning, you may take each of the first three steps and hops in any direction you please, but in the four alternate steps and hops you should turn twice round ; that is, half round each time.

Bearing in mind the suggestions made in describing the steps of the ordinary Schottische, we will now turn our attention to the movement by which it was superseded.

THE BARN DANCE

did not begin to find favour in England until it had already enjoyed several years of popularity on the other side of the Atlantic. It was at first sometimes, but quite incorrectly, spoken of as the Society Pas de Quatre, because it was danced to the music written for a Pas de Quatre, or dance for four performers, in the burlesque of *Faust Up to Date*. The name by which the dance is now best known comes from the title of a song, "Dancing in the Barn" ; but in America it is also called the Military Schottische and the Kentucky Jubilee. At least seven years before the Barn Dance was at all generally known in England, I received a description of the steps and figure from the American National Association of Teachers, of which body I had been elected an honorary member ; and occasionally I taught

it to children. I merely mention this fact because it shows how long a dance may be in existence before it begins to be appreciated and taken up by the public. If ball-room frequenters were as readily disposed to learn new dances of a refined nature as they are to acquire those wretched innovations which disfigure the Lancers out of all shape, some improvement in the general style of dancing might be hoped for. But, although the Barn Dance, properly performed, is pleasing and graceful, it is a movement which may easily degenerate into a mere romp, and, unfortunately, one of the chief features of attraction in the Barn Dance appears to be the facility afforded by the nature of the step to make a very pronounced and audible stamp with the foot at the first beat of the bar. Now, in dancing proper, such a thing as a stamp is unknown. The *pas frappé* is allowed in certain character dances, but to stamp the foot in a ball-room is rightly regarded as a vulgar and quite inadmissible proceeding.

Assuming that you wish to learn to execute the Barn Dance gracefully—not disgracefully, as so many do—I will explain how the steps should be taken.

Supposing you to be the male partner, in commencing present your right hand to the lady, who places her left therein, palm downwards, and turn each to face the direction in which you are dancing. Remember that it is contrary to the rules of art to allow the arms to bend so that together they form a figure like a **W**. Endeavour to raise the elbows as you raise the hands, and bend them outward so that they are not visible from the front.

The rhythm of the Barn Dance is similar to that

of the ordinary Schottische already described, but the steps are taken in a different direction.

Starting with the left foot a little raised, at the first beat of the bar place it *softly* down at a convenient distance directly in front of the right, and transfer the balance of the body to the right leg: at the second count bring the right foot up to the left heel, throwing the balance of the body on the right leg, and simultaneously raise the left foot a little in front; at the third count spring forward on to the sole of the left foot, raising the right behind and bending the knee in preparation for the next movement; and at the fourth count make a little hop on the sole of the left foot, simultaneously extending the right limb raised in front, so that the toe is pointed downward and outward towards your partner's toe.

This completes one bar of the music, the steps having all been taken in a forward direction. In the next bar the steps are taken in a similar manner, only with the opposite foot, thus:

One, place the raised right foot *softly* down a little before the left. *Two*, bring the left foot up to the right heel, throwing the weight of the body on to the left leg, and at the same instant raising the right. *Three*, spring forward gently on to the sole of the right foot, raising the left behind and making a slight flexion of the limb in preparation for the next movement. *Four*, make a little hop on the right leg, and in doing so extend the left raised in front, so that the toe is pointed downward and outward in a direction away from your partner.

The lady's steps for these two bars are the exact counterpart of those above described, she beginning

with her right foot in the first bar, and with her left in the second.

Now follows the rotary movement, which also occupies two measures of the music, and is danced precisely as in the original Schottische. You take your partner by the waist, place your left foot softly down, bend the knee and hop, then you place your right foot down and hop: thus four times alternately, together turning half round at each of the hops. Many prefer to waltz this part of the dance.

THE ALSATIAN POLKA,

like the dance just described, consists of two distinct parts. In one, the hands only are joined, and in the other the partner is held by the waist. It is not by any means so new a dance as many people imagine. Like the Barn Dance, it had already been in existence many years before it began to attract attention in this country. As a matter of fact, the movement bears a strong resemblance to a figure of the original Polka as it was danced in Paris half a century ago.

The following is a description of the steps for the gentleman; the lady dances with the opposite foot.

In commencing, take your partner's left hand in your own right hand, as in the Barn Dance, and together you face the direction in which you are moving. For the first measure dance the ordinary Polka step forward, counting *and* one, two, three, as already described. For the second measure point the right foot a little in advance of the left with the toes turned well down and towards your partner's toes, at the same time making a little hop on the left or supporting leg. For this count

and one, two. Then bring the pointed foot close behind the left heel, while again hopping on the left leg, simultaneously turning the body towards your partner and joining opposite hands, that is, taking the lady's right hand in your own left. Count *and* three, four, for the second hop and point.

For the third and fourth measures repeat the above movements in the opposite direction, you beginning with your right foot and the lady with her left.

The second part of the Alsatian Polka is also composed of four measures, which are danced as follows:

Taking your partner by the waist, as in the ordinary Polka, slide the left foot a little to the side, counting *and* one, two, then bring the right foot up to the left heel and instantly slide the left foot again to the side, counting *and* three, four. The balance of the body in these movements must be sustained on the left leg, but immediately after the fourth count you bring up the right foot again to the left heel, allowing it to take the weight while you count simply *and*. This movement, which is taken in a direct line, completes the first measure.

For the second measure take the steps as for the ordinary Polka, and, in doing so, turn half round to face the opposite direction. The accent and rhythm of this part of the dance may be expressed thus:

left : right left ; right left, right, left.

Please observe the colon after left, and the absence of a comma after right.

For the third and fourth measures simply repeat the

above movements, beginning with the opposite foot, after which again join right and left hands, and re-commence the first part of the dance.

Sometimes the second part of the Alsatian Polka only is danced. In this form it is known as the Coquette.

THE BERLIN POLKA

resembles the Alsatian so far as the first part is concerned; but in place of the Coquette, four bars of the ordinary Polka are danced for the second part.

The step of

THE GALOP

is almost too simple to need explanation. The forward movement, or that used in going straight down the room, is a perfectly natural one, such as a little child instinctively makes when it is pleased. Whichever foot you start with is continually kept in front, and the other brought up quickly behind, the weight of the body being allowed to rest momentarily on it while the first is slid forward again. Thus, supposing you are the gentleman, the music being simply one, two, one, two, etc., all the one's will be taken with your left foot in front, and all the two's with the right foot behind. Meanwhile your partner will always have her right foot in front.

The rotary movement is similar to what is termed the *valse à deux temps*—if such a movement may properly be called a Waltz—and consists simply in sliding round with a quick *chassé* step, counting one *and* two, one *and* two. In the first bar the one and the two are taken with the left foot, while the *and* is taken quickly with the right; and in the next bar the one *and* the

two are taken with the right foot, while the *and* is taken quickly with the left.

THE TWO STEP

is a dance composed mainly of the *chassé*, as above described, either executed with the same foot continually in front, or with right and left alternately (*chassé à trois pas*).

The name of the dance speaks for itself, the term "two step" being an American equivalent for the *chassé*.

But the dance known as the Two Step differs from the ordinary Galop inasmuch as it is performed in regulated sequences, the movement usually changing at the fifth bar or half cadence of the melody, which should be written in six-eight time, or six quavers to a bar.

The simplest and most popular manner of dancing the Two Step is as follows.

Take your partner by the waist, and place her in front of you, but *well to the right*, so that her face looks over your shoulder.

Now do the *chassé à trois pas* four times forward, beginning with your left foot. Thus, the first bar will be :

Left ; right, left—pause ;

and the next

Right ; left, right—pause ;

one foot being slid forward, the other brought up very lightly behind, and the commencing foot slid again

forward. During the pause the opposite foot is brought round ready to be slid forward at the beginning of the next bar.

Actually the first slide occupies the first two counts of the music, the bringing up of the rear foot occupies the third count, while the second slide and pause complete the measure ; but the whole movement is done so rapidly that one is scarcely conscious of the six beats, and it is easier to count " right *and* right, left *and* left," the and representing the bringing up of the other foot, which should be done lightly and without stress.

The lady begins by sliding backward with her right foot.

At the fifth bar, instead of continuing the forward movement, begin moving the shoulders round and drawing your partner, taking the steps in a similar manner, only sideways, as it were, in turning. Then, when you become expert, you can so arrange matters that in commencing the next eight-bars, it is you who move backwards and the lady forwards.

There are many possible variations of the Two Step, for instance, the *chassé* may be continuous in the second part, or the " racket " and other American movements introduced ; but the *chassé* must always be the foundation of the dance, or it cannot properly be called a Two Step.

THE POLKA MAZURKA

is, of course, an old and now neglected dance, but since it is graceful and may be taught with advantage in children's classes, it may be as well to include a description of the movement.

Supposing you to have thoroughly mastered the step of the ordinary Polka you will experience little difficulty in learning the Polka Mazurka. Remember, however, that the music of the Polka Mazurka is in three-four time, like that of the Waltz, only the one's are somewhat less pronounced, and the steps are isochronous, or of equal duration.

The first two steps are precisely the same as those of the ordinary Polka, described on page 15, and are taken sideways; but at the third the foot, instead of being placed to the ground, is brought back behind, at right angles to the other, on which you meanwhile make a slight spring or jump. This movement is technically termed a *fouetté*.

The next three steps are danced exactly the same as in the Polka, *beginning with the foot that was drawn back*, or the same as that with which you began the first three, and turning half round while taking them. You will find it rather difficult to manage this when practising just at first; but in dancing one, of course, feels inclined to put forward the foot on which the weight of the body is not at the time resting; and if you only remember that you must not put any weight whatever on the foot that passes behind at the *fouetté*, or the one that is drawn back, it will come quite natural and easy for you to start again with that foot.

You will, I think, find it helpful to repeat in practising :

left, right, *back*, left, right, left,
right, left, *back*, right, left, right, etc.,

the backward step being taken with the foot with which you start.

The first three steps in each case are taken in a straight line, you and your partner moving sideways as you face each other—you to your left and she to her right, with your toes pointed in the direction in which you are going ; the last three steps are taken in turning half round. Thus, if you start facing the wall, with your left foot, you should be looking away from the wall, or, rather, you should have your back to it when you start with your right.

THE " BOSTON "

Reader, I wish you particularly to note that not one of the foregoing dances is here set forth as being either new or fashionable. They are merely described for what they are worth.

The popularity of ordinary dances is so ephemeral that if, at the time of writing, I were to mention this one or that one as being in vogue, it might, even before the book could be printed, have already fallen out of favour. On the other hand, there is always the chance that some of the older movements may be revived, as they often are, *under a new name*.

It is mainly from America that old dances are returned to us rechristened.

For instance, some kind of movement that is spoken of as the " Boston " crops up at least once in every decade. The name alone would appear to possess for certain dancers a kind of comforting influence akin to that which the old woman experienced from repetition of the " blessed word Mesopotamia," since the name is fixed, though the movement itself varies according to the taste and intelligence of the individual. There are different

kinds of "Boston." There is the one that comes direct from America, which I will presently describe, and there is the "Parisian Boston," which is quite a different thing, consisting for the most part of running backwards and forwards in turning the shoulders. Then there is the popular conception of the "Boston," which seems to be that you can do whatever you please and call it the "Boston," on the assumption that others don't know anything more about the matter than you do yourself. Suppose, for instance, you are apt to get into a muddle with your steps, suppose you kick or crush your partner's toes. Should she inquire: "Whatever are you doing?" you simply say: "I'm doing the Boston." That ought to silence her. But suppose it does not, and she says: "Well, please don't do it again," you have only to go on until you once more come to grief. Then you can excuse yourself by explaining: "Oh, that was the 'Half-Time Slither,' the 'Running Waltz,' or the 'Boston Skid.'" It will be readily seen that this kind of "Boston" is merely a euphemism for bad waltzing.

There is also a weird kind of "Boston" that certain exponents appear to have evolved out of their inner consciousness, and impart to the credulous as the "real thing," on the principle "*Populus vult decipi, decipiat*," which, being interpreted, means: "People wish to be deceived, then let them be deceived."

Let us, however, consider the American "Boston"—the Boston "Boston," so to speak—which, coming straight from the city whence it takes its name, is presumably the original and most correct form of "Boston." It is danced thus: You make, with the left foot, a long slide backward, which occupies two counts of the music,

and, at the third count, pivot on the sole thereof in turning half round. Then you make, with the right foot, a long slide forward between your partner's feet, and, at the third beat, pivot half round on the right foot to complete the turn. This, of course, is nothing but our old friend the "slide and a twist," an inevitable reaction from the ridiculous hoppy movement that is fortunately almost extinct. The step is absurdly simple, provided you are able to sustain your balance in turning. But, as a matter of fact, this kind of "Boston" goes better if the man only does it and the girl dances the correct Waltz. People who have been so fortunate as to acquire the real feeling of the Waltz—and this is not obtained by mere acquaintance with the steps of the dance—are by no means likely to trouble themselves about the "Boston." They know that what they do is perfect and cannot possibly be improved upon.

SET DANCES.

To the writer of a book bearing the title that has been chosen for this one, no small difficulty presents itself in attempting consistently to describe the figures of set dances. The reader on perusal may sometimes be tempted to exclaim: "Oh, but this is not as I have seen the figure done!" and I can only say in reply: "Perhaps not. It all depends in what circle you mix." There are different ways of doing the figures, the same as there are different styles of dancing the Round Dances. As a matter of fact, many of the figures, as they frequently *are* danced, could only consistently be described in a book called *Dancing as it should not be*.

As regards what is termed the first set, or ordinary

Quadrille, there is less difficulty. The Quadrille, as you know, is not really popular, and is seldom danced except at Court balls and smart formal dances.

It is customary in Society to simply walk through Quadrilles, and to this practice may be attributed much of their unpopularity, because we find that among those with whom rapid movement, such as galoping, waltzing, and twisting at corners, is tolerated, they are more frequently danced and apparently enjoyed. A slow, walking movement, however graceful, can never produce that feeling of exhilaration that is experienced in rapid whirling motion ; and whatever pleasure is to be derived from the " Squares," if walked through, may, I think, be regarded as mental rather than physical.

If, then, we accept this conclusion, it naturally follows that in order to enjoy the Quadrilles, and do justice to them, it will be necessary for the dancers to exercise their brains a little as well as their feet ; and those who consider this too great a task, or whose calibre is not equal to grasping the intricacies of the figures, had better at once give up all idea of practising them.

I know that to assert that many people do not know their right from their left appears rather absurd, but it is nevertheless a fact. Of course, if they gave the matter a certain amount of consideration, and said to themselves : " Let me see, which hand do I use in drinking ? which in eating bread-and-butter ? " etc., they would probably arrive at a correct conclusion ; but have twenty people in a line before you, then, suddenly, and without warning, call out, " Advance right foot and left arm," you will find that very few are prepared to respond immediately, and, of those who do, half will have either the

wrong arm or foot forward. Again, notice how many mistakes are made in the third figure of the first set, when the right hand should be given in crossing and the left in re-crossing.

I would suggest to all Quadrille dancers that they should carefully consider the relative positions of right and left. Thus, if two persons are facing one another and they each move to the right, they will go in opposite directions ; while if they are standing with their faces the same way, it is evident they will go in the same direction. If your partner stands on your right side, it follows that you will be standing on her left. If the gentleman turns with the corner lady on his left, the lady will be turning with the corner gentleman on her right. The third couple in a Quadrille stand at the right of the first ; accordingly the first is at the left of the third. Very few persons could give immediate answers to questions on these matters without occasionally making mistakes, yet it is for want of attention to them that the Square Dances are generally muddled. Of course they are things that all dancers might and do know if they would only think ; but then they don't think. Some will say : " Oh, but the Quadrille is such a bore, it is not worth thinking about ! " Still, you will probably agree that if you intend to dance it at all it is better to dance it well.

The practice of walking through the Square Dances, though it does not produce that feeling of exhilaration of which I have already spoken, has, at least, many advantages. It affords chaperons and others an opportunity of participating in an amusement not inconsistent with the dignity of advanced life, yet who could not

possibly, or with propriety, dance if twisting and galloping were permitted. It also makes an agreeable change from the more lively movements of the Round Dances, and admits of pleasant conversation being carried on between the partners; for, of course, after awhile the figures may be gone through almost mechanically, and without that consideration which is indispensable to beginners.

Assuming, reader, that it is your privilege to attend Court or other dances at which the first set of Quadrilles is likely to be down on the programme, I will endeavour to explain, as clearly as it can be done on paper, how the figures should be danced. If you already know something about them, all the better; you will be able to appreciate whatever remarks I may make that accord with your own experience.

I will, in this instance, suppose that you belong to my own sex. We are the more stupid, you know, in learning, and for this reason require the more coaching; besides, we have in all dances the more difficult part to perform. Not only have we our own steps and movements to consider—quite trouble enough for some of us—but we are expected to look after the safety and comfort of our partners. Ladies always have the credit of dancing better than men, but perhaps if they had to take the lead and help us round—which they sometimes very good-naturedly do—they would not appear to dance so much more gracefully than we. The long skirts they wear partially conceal any awkward movements they may make with their feet, while the slightest clumsiness on our part is at once discernible.

It is always advisable for any one not very proficient

in dancing to take a side position in the Quadrilles. He will then have an opportunity of refreshing his memory by watching the movements of the other couples. It is a rule that the gentleman, if he dances well, should take the lady whom he has engaged to the top of a Quadrille, if the place be vacant ; but in your case it will be better to stand on the left side of the first couple—generally the couple with their backs to the orchestra ; you will then be the fourth gentleman. Now, supposing you to be standing thus, I will endeavour to conduct you through the five figures as if I were personally present by your side ; no technical expressions shall be used until the movements they indicate have been explained, and for the benefit of lady readers your partner's movements will also be described as we proceed. As it is a part of my plan to be concise as well as intelligible, I will conclude the fuller description of each figure with a very brief summary of the same, that you will do well to commit to memory.

THE FIRST SET OF QUADRILLES

is announced, then, and the dancers are taking their respective places. A side couple, perhaps, is wanted. You will now lead your partner to the position I have already indicated, and take care that she stands at your *right hand*. You will have to see that she remains on this side throughout the Quadrille, except in two instances, which I will explain in due order.

First Figure

The music begins. It is a popular tune. You know the air, perhaps. So much the better, you will be more

likely to keep correct time. At the first note you turn and bow very slightly to your partner, then to the lady on your left. That is all you have to do for a time, as the first and second couples commence the figure. Watch attentively what they do. They have ceased dancing. It is now your turn. Do not be over-anxious ; you will get through it all right. You begin by walking with your partner to the opposite place, crossing on the *outside* of the advancing lady (your *vis-à-vis*). Directly you have passed her, incline to the right, keeping your face to your partner, so that when you arrive at the opposite place and turn round—which you must do, so that your face is towards her in turning, and not your back—she will still be on your right-hand side. Now immediately do exactly the same in returning to your own place, and you will have overcome the first difficulty. This ought to give you confidence. The movement we have just completed is technically termed *right and left*.

You turn round and face your partner ; then, keeping your eyes on her—not staring, of course—take four steps to your right, then four back again to the left. She also does the same, starting with her right foot, consequently you go in contrary directions. After this, you each give both hands and walk slowly round, finishing with your faces to the opposite couple, as before. This is called *setting to partners and turning*.

Your partner now gives her right hand to the opposite lady in crossing, and with her left hand passes round the opposite gentleman—that is, she gives her left hand to the opposite gentleman, and passes round him ; you, meanwhile, standing quite still until your *vis-à-vis* approaches, when you turn her with your *left hand*. The

two ladies then cross back again, giving their right hands to each other, and their left in passing round their respective partners. Thus you see that you have nothing to do but stand in your place and turn each of the ladies with your left hand. This movement is called the *ladies' chain*.

You now take your partner by the right hand and, keeping to the right, so as to allow the other couple to pass on your left, cross over to the opposite place. In returning, separate from your partner, and pass *outside* the opposite lady, inclining to the right, as in the first movement, and taking care that your partner shall be on your right side when you arrive in your own place. This movement is termed *half promenade, half right and left*, and completes the first figure.

Second Figure

After having watched the leading couples, you will find this a very easy figure to dance, though it is also one in which any clumsiness is very apparent. You begin by advancing four steps by the side of your partner, the opposite couple doing the same; that is, you must take three actual steps, beginning with the right foot, and at the fourth bring the left foot up behind, while gently *rising* and falling on the sole of the right. This you must be particularly careful about. I have seen a gentleman advance carelessly, and then, suddenly recollecting that his *vis-à-vis* was also advancing, pull himself up with a jerk, just in time to prevent his nose coming in contact with that of the lady. I need scarcely remind you that this kind of thing is very ungraceful. Having advanced, as I suggest, carefully, but at the same

time naturally, retire in the same manner, left foot first. Now cross with your partner to the opposite place *outside* the advancing lady, but *not* inclining to the right, as you did in the last figure. Thus, when you arrive in the place of your *vis-à-vis* and turn round, your partner will be on your *left*-hand side. In this case it is correct that she should stand so, it being one of the instances to which I have already alluded. Do exactly the same in returning; that is, advance and retire, then straight across, outside the lady, to your own place, when, having turned round, your partner will be on your right side again. (It seems almost unnecessary, but for the sake of perspicuity I will mention that the lady in these cases always crosses *between* the advancing couple, allowing the gentleman to pass on the outside.) Now set to your partner, as you did in the last figure, that is, four steps to the right and left, or rather three actual steps sideways, and rise and fall on the sole of the foot, as in advancing and retiring, then turn her with both hands. The whole of the movement is to be repeated, and the second figure is finished.

Third Figure

This is, perhaps, the most difficult figure in the first set, at least, it is the one in which beginners, and even experienced dancers, most frequently come to grief. Most of the confusion, however, is caused by people forgetting which is their right and which their left hand, thereby arranging the line so that three dancers have their faces turned one way and one has his turned in the opposite direction. Now, that you know the most frequent cause of failure, you will, of course, be on your guard against it.

The first lady and opposite gentleman commence the figure—notice what they do ; then, when it is your turn, and it will be the third time, you must begin by crossing over (without your partner) to the opposite place, giving your right hand in passing the opposite lady (who also advances) and your left in returning. Do not leave go of her *left hand*, but fall in a line, taking the right hand of your partner. The two gentlemen will now have their faces turned in the contrary direction to those of the ladies. In this position all *balancez* ; that is, balance yourself on one foot, on which you rise and fall, then again on the other. Now disengage your left hand from that of your *vis-à-vis*, and, keeping the right hand of your partner still in your own, cross with her to the opposite place, taking care that she shall be on your right when you arrive there. You now advance and retire twice, without your partner—the opposite lady doing the same—each bowing on advancing the second time. Mind, bow ; don't bob your head or nod, but lower it gently, bending forward slightly and drawing your foot a little back as you rise. Do this as naturally as you can, not as if you were studying it. You again give your right hand to your partner, and together advance and retire ; then *half right and left* to places, as before explained.

These movements are now repeated by your partner, who gives her right hand to the opposite gentleman in crossing and the left in re-crossing, you having simply to remain in your place and give your right hand to your partner when she returns to fall in a line. You must also recollect that after crossing to the opposite place, it is your partner who advances twice and bows to her

vis-à-vis, while you again remain still. Then, when she retires after bowing, you give her your right hand as before, and both together advance, retire, and *half right and left* to places, as before.

In this figure each lady and opposite gentleman cross over in succession, passing to the right and giving the left hand in returning to fall in a line, the fourth lady and third gentleman to finish.

Fourth Figure

There are, or rather were, two ways of dancing the fourth figure, but it will, I think, be sufficient to describe that which is invariably adopted now. When your turn comes to take a part in the dancing you will notice that the third gentleman leads his lady forward twice, the second time leaving her with you on your left. You now experience the happiness of finding yourself between two ladies. Present your right and left hands to each of them simultaneously, and with them advance four steps. As you retire the opposite gentleman advances, of course alone. You again advance with the ladies, but this time you must give them both up to the other gentleman, who, in his turn, advances between them while you return companionless. On his advancing the second time, you all join hands and turn round in a ring as far as the opposite place, then immediately return *half right and left* to your own, crossing, as you know, outside the opposite lady, and taking care your partner is on your right-hand side when you finish.

The next and last time it will be your turn to lead your partner forward and leave her with the opposite gentleman; after which the figure is continued in the

same manner. In this figure each gentleman leads his partner forward in regular order.

Fifth Figure

The fifth figure begins by all the dancers joining hands to form a circle, advancing to the centre and retiring, then turning partners to places. After this you stand still, while the top and bottom couples continue the figure, only recollect that immediately after the ladies' chain you must be ready to join hands and advance in a circle again.

Now it is your turn to advance and retire with your partner, as you did in the second figure, remembering that in this case also you are not to change sides on arriving at the opposite place (this is the second instance of which I spoke in which your partner will be on your left). Advance and retire again and re-cross. All this exactly as in the second figure, only now, instead of setting to your partner as you did before, the ladies will give their right hands across, with the left passing round the gentleman, this being called the *ladies' chain*, as I have already explained in the first figure.

When you have turned your partner, you will again advance in a circle as before. After this the movement is repeated by the top and bottom couples, and also by the sides, this figure, unlike the others, being danced by the first and second and third and fourth couples alternately; then the Quadrille is finished.

The "Flirtation" Figure

For some time past it has been a custom among those who are not rigidly severe in their manner of dancing

to adopt in the place of the last figure one somewhat resembling the second of the old Caledonians. It is termed the "Flirtation" figure, doubtless because in it you have an opportunity of dancing, if not of flirting, with each of the ladies in the set.

This is how you proceed :

After the first eight bars of music all the dancers join hands, as in the figure just described, and form a circle. Advance to the centre, retire, and turn partners. The four ladies advance, courtesy, and retire. Now you and the other three gentlemen advance. Turn round so as to be facing the corner *lady*—the one who was on your left as you stood first—and bow. Be very careful. It is she, the corner lady, not your partner, to whom you must set. Now turn and promenade with her (the corner lady) right round the figure till you arrive again in your own place. Your partner has left you ; she is with the next gentleman. Never mind, she is all right. Advance in a circle again and turn the lady who is with you.

The ladies, then the gentlemen, advance to the centre as before, and again you set to the corner lady ; this time it will be she who was standing opposite when you began. Turn, promenade round, advance in a circle again, and turn the lady who is with you—your own partner being opposite. Ladies advance, then gentlemen, and set to corner lady—who, you will find, is the one who was on your right at the commencement of the figure. Promenade round, form circle ; advance, retire, turn lady ; ladies advance, then gentlemen ; now you find that the lady to whom you have to set is your own partner, you having danced with each of the ladies,

while she has been taken by each of the gentlemen in succession. Having turned your partner and promenaded, you once more advance in a circle, turn partners, and the "Flirtation" figure is concluded.

A Few Hints

I will now recapitulate the things about which you will have to be most careful in going through the Quadrille, and offer a few words of advice as to your manner of dancing.

First, then, you must remember that the lady should always be on your right hand, except when you cross to opposite places in the second and last figures. Sitting at home in your arm-chair you may perhaps exclaim angrily: "Oh! why does he keep on mentioning this? What does he take his readers for? Surely I should never be such a fool as to make a mistake in this matter after having been told so often!" But I know from experience that you *will* be likely to make mistakes, no matter how often you have been told; besides, is it not better that you should be bored by my reiteration than that others should be bored by your bad dancing? You may see it all clearly enough as you now sit comfortably by the fire, but you must make allowance for that natural feeling of excitement and nervousness when you are actually dancing, that is likely to take many of your well-considered and clear-headed ideas away, and leave you only hazy and confused notions of what you are to do. This is why, at the risk of tautology, I constantly repeat the things in which you, and all people, are most likely to fail, in order that they may be so indelibly fixed in your mind that in spite of all excitement and

apprehension, your *natural inclination will be to go right.*

I have said very little about time in describing the figures, because I did not deem it advisable to give you too much to think about at once. If I had bracketed off the number of bars, you would have been bothering about that, instead of thinking of where you had to go. If all the rest of the dancers keep correct time, the probability is that you will keep time also; but if the others go wrong the certainty is that you will go wrong too. This, however, is how the figures are really divided. The number of bars occupied in making each movement is either four or eight: thus, when you advance and retire, count four each way—that is, two steps to each bar—and when you cross to opposite places count eight—that is, four bars. In setting to partners count four each way—that is, four steps or two bars, four bars in all—and in turning partners count eight, or four bars. Right and left occupies eight bars or sixteen steps, and so on.

But on no account must your counting be done aloud. It is all very well when practising alone, but think what an intolerable nuisance it would be for your partner to have to listen to your calculations. Tread lightly. Rise and fall on the ball of your foot. Never pull yourself up with a sudden jerk. Endeavour to look interested in what is going forward, and do not appear as if you wished you were elsewhere; in short, don't look bored, even if you feel so. Do not ignore your partner and give all your attention to a prettier girl who happens to be in your set. Having once taken your place in a Quadrille, never leave it to go into

another set, as those with whom you were first standing might take it as an offence. Never exhibit annoyance. It has been said by a French writer that, "to be always polite, we must be sometimes insincere." This is especially true with regard to dancing. Never take the top place unless you know thoroughly well what you are about, and then be careful that you do not make any errors in dancing. Remember, that if you are standing either at the top or bottom of a Quadrille, eight bars of music must always be played before you commence. The only exception to this rule is the last figure of the Lancers, to which dance I shall presently direct your attention. Be very careful that you do not tread on and tear the ladies' dresses. They may smile and say it is of no consequence, but they are angry all the same. Do not allow yourself to be deceived by the insincerity of their politeness.

THE LANCERS

Remarks

For some, to me, at least, wholly unaccountable reason, there has for many years been a tendency among dancers to continually change the figures of this popular and once fashionable Quadrille. If any of the numerous innovations that have from time to time been introduced had possessed artistic merit, or had even been conducive to rational enjoyment, there would be no special reason to deplore the practice. But who would have the hardihood to assert that the figures of the Lancers, as they are now done, can bear any comparison with the figures as they were originally danced?

I will not go quite so far as to say that *every* innovation

has been worse than the one by which it was preceded, because a final figure bearing some resemblance to a children's game of "Oranges and Lemons" is less objectionable than a figure suggesting clumsy evolutions of infantry on a battlefield.

But although in most classes of Society a certain spirit of rompishness has invaded this particular dance, it has by no means always manifested itself in the same manner. Commencing in what was appropriately named the "Kitchen" Lancers, and culminating in what was still more appropriately named the "Rowdy" Lancers, the particular rowdyism of one class has been different from the rowdyism of another class, just as the slang of one class is different from the slang of another class. Each in its way may, however, be equally objectionable.

At really smart balls the Lancers is seldom put down on the programmes, and is often omitted altogether; but there are other balls where, after the Waltz, it is apparently one of the most frequently occurring dances of the evening.

Now beyond the fact that this book is intended for those who are interested in dancing, it is not addressed to any particular class of reader. You may, for all I know, assuming that you belong to my own sex, be a lord, a professional man, a clerk, or a shop assistant. You may even—though it is less likely—be a dustman. But whatever your social position, if it is your wish to acquire the most correct modern style of going through the Lancers (not, perhaps, the style you will most often see), I will now take you through the figures, as in the Quadrille.

I must first caution you, however, to be very careful not to mix up the figures of one Square Dance with those of another. This has also five, but they are totally unlike the figures of the first set. They do not afford such facilities for conversation, as the partners have frequently to separate, and there is not nearly so much time spent in waiting. It also frequently happens that the four couples are dancing at the same time ; consequently the movements appear more intricate, and the effect is in many respects more pleasing to the onlooker.

First Figure

Suppose, then, that you are standing in the same position as you were in the last dance, that is, to the left of the top couple, and are, consequently, the fourth gentleman. You will commence as before by bowing to partners, then to corners, directly the music begins. Now watch. The first lady and opposite gentleman will advance, retire, and turn with both hands in the centre ; after which the leading couple will cross over to the opposite place between the lady and gentleman facing them ; then they will separate so as to pass on the outside in returning. You have now, simultaneously with the other three gentlemen, to turn towards the lady standing on your *left*, to whom you set—that is, take four steps to the right, then four to the left, as described in the Quadrille—and then turn her with both hands, after which you return to your place. Your partner, having meanwhile turned with the corner gentleman on her right, also returns to her place at your right-hand side.

This movement is repeated four times, each lady
D. E

advancing to the opposite gentleman in proper order. When the third lady—the one opposite to you—advances, you must go forward four steps to meet her, then retire, slightly bow, and, giving both hands, turn once round in the centre of the figure. Now cross over with your partner on the outside of the opposite couple, and in returning take your partner by the hand and pass between them. After this, set and turn at *corners* as before. The next, and last, time it will be your lady who advances, and then it will be for yourself and partner to cross over between the opposite couple and pass outside in returning. The figure finishes with setting to corners and turning.

If, instead of setting and turning with both hands, the other dancers waltz at corners, it will be better for you to do the same, although, of course, it is not strictly correct.

Second Figure

In the second figure you will have an opportunity of watching what the other couples do before it is your turn to lead ; but you must be on the alert, as it will not be long before you have to take a part in the dancing.

You will notice that the first gentleman gives his right hand to his partner, and with her advances and retires twice, the second time leaving her in the centre of the figure ; they then set and turn with both hands to their place. This, at least, is what they *should* do.

Now you must separate from your partner, giving your left hand to the lady on your left, your partner giving her right to the gentleman on her right. Thus two lines of four are formed. In this position, all

together, advance and retire, then turn your partner—who should be facing you—to your own place.

NOTE.—If the other couples merely waltz round the figure, it will be better to waltz also, only remember, when side lines are formed—that is, when either the gentleman opposite or yourself begin—you have not to separate from your partner, but only to take the hand of the lady on your left, your partner also taking that of the gentleman on her right, so that you and she occupy a position in the middle of the line. Mark well that the lines should be kept *perfectly straight*, and all should advance together. The very name of the dance suggests military precision.

Third Figure

This figure is danced by all the couples at the same time. Your partner and the other ladies all advance to the centre. You then, with the other three gentlemen, advance and join hands in a ring, the ladies passing underneath to the outside and placing their hands on your arms. In this position you all turn round in a circle to the left till you arrive again in your own places.

The four gentlemen now advance to the centre. Turn and face your partner, making a very slow bow. Recollect that the music is here marked *rallentando*, *i.e.*, slower and slower, so you must not hurry. Now present your *left* hand to the gentleman opposite—the other gentlemen also giving their left hands across yours—place your right arm round your partner's waist, and, without leaving go of the opposite gentleman's hand, promenade round.

N.B.—To take the opposite gentleman by the arm

instead of by the hand is very bad style, and to turn backwards the second time instead of forwards is simply idiotic.

There is also another way of dancing this figure ; but as it is now rarely, if ever, introduced, a description of it would, perhaps, only prove confusing instead of helpful.

Fourth Figure

The more correct modern way of dancing this figure is as follows :

The leading couples will visit first the right-hand, then the left-hand couple. When they are facing you, give your right hand to the gentleman, while the ladies also give their right hands across yours. With right hands thus joined, walk round four steps to the left, starting with your left foot. Now unjoin your right hands, give the left across, and walk back four steps to the right, beginning with your right foot. After this form a circle of four, as you stand, and pass once round, breaking off in your respective places. The other couples are also doing this at the same time. The movement is now repeated by the leading couples, only this time they visit first the left, then the right-hand couples ; consequently, it will be the second couple with whom you are to join hands instead of the first, as before. Afterwards you and the opposite side couple will visit first the right, then the left, and proceed in exactly the same manner ; then, the second time, you visit first the left, then the right, and the figure finishes with the two rings and round to places.

NOTE.—Sometimes, as in the other figures, the couples merely waltz round before giving hands.

N.B.—To join *both* hands across after the pattern of a turnstile, instead of joining them in a ring is objectionable because the figure thus formed is inartistic. To put the arms outside the girls' waists, and swing, or endeavour to swing, them off their feet by centrifugal action is more than objectionable, it is outrageous.

Fifth Figure

We now come to that terror of all beginners, the chain, in which there is frequently so much confusion, and in which one bad dancer has it in his power to hopelessly entangle all the other dancers in the set. This is how the muddle generally occurs. One gives the wrong hand, that causes the next to do the same. Then comes one who, finding something is amiss, refuses to give either hand. Now someone suddenly discovers that he is in the wrong place ; he makes a frantic rush to recover what he imagines his own, but which turns out to be his neighbour's, and when at length, he reaches the right place he finds to his dismay that he is dancing with the wrong lady. Just think, reader, if this were *you* ! Would you not hide your face for shame ? But no ; you will not so far disgrace yourself, you will get through the figure all right enough if you only pay attention to what I am about to say, and keep a cool head.

First, then, there must be no misapprehension about right and left. Think of which hand you throw with, which side your heart is ; anything, in short, that will help you to remember. Above all, do not forget your sex. You smile, but indeed it is no uncommon thing

to see a gentleman dancing where the ladies ought to be, end *vice versa*. You will have a natural inclination to follow your partner in the chain, especially, I suppose, if she is interesting ; but you must not. In this figure you will have very little to do with her. Now we commence.

Chain. Give your right hand to your partner—say good-bye, as it were—leave her, and go right round to your *right*, giving your left hand to the next lady—the one on your right—then your right hand to the next lady—the one who was opposite—then the left hand to the next lady—the one who was on your left—and once again your right to your partner, whom you will meet in the opposite place. Pause just a second, and then go on again, continuing in the same direction, away from your partner, giving your left hand to the next lady, then the right to the next, then left, and once more the right to your partner, whom you will meet this time in your own place.

But it is of no use beginning to talk, for directly the first couple have led or waltzed round the figure, you will see that the opposite couple are falling in behind. You have to stand with your partner behind them, and, lastly, the second couple behind you. Thus, you form two lines, one of gentlemen—black and sombre—the other of ladies—bright and variegated—all with the faces turned one way. Now the gentlemen cross behind the ladies, who pass before them in the contrary direction ; that is, you pass behind your partner four steps to the right, while she passes before you four steps to the left ; *balancez* forward—that is, rise and fall on each foot—then cross back again behind the lady and stand as be-

fore. *Balancez* again, and wheel round to the left, the ladies meanwhile wheeling to the right, You have only to follow the gentleman in front of you. Do not take hold of his shoulders or coat-tails, but simply follow him and keep going round, round, round to the left, till you are in a line again, the four gentlemen with hands joined, facing the four ladies—among whom your partner is, or should be, directly opposite you. Now, all together advance and retire in two lines, and once again you recover your partner, whom you turn with both hands to your own place.

But you only meet to part immediately. Chain! Off you must go again, right away from her, giving your left hand to the next lady, right, left, right to partner; left, right, left and right to partner in your own place. This time you fall in immediately behind the second couple, and then proceed in exactly the same manner; only your faces will all be turned in the opposite direction.

The next time it will be the couple opposite who lead round, and you will simply remain in your place, the first couple falling in behind them and the second immediately in front of you. Continue in the same manner as before, only you will notice that the lines will be formed at right angles to the direction they have previously taken.

Lastly, it will be your turn to lead your partner round, and remember that your faces must be turned *outwards* from the figure, the other couples falling in behind you. Also, recollect that after crossing and re-crossing behind your partner you must lead round to the *left*, while she goes to the right. You each wheel round in opposite

directions until you meet again at the bottom, then give her your hand and lead up, the others following. When you arrive in your own place, separate, and, taking the hand of the gentleman who was behind you, form lines again, your partner being opposite with the other ladies. Advance and retire all together, turn partners and finish with the grand chain, as described at the commencement of the figure.

Thus, you see, the grand chain is done five times : once at the beginning of the figure before the first couple lead round, immediately the music starts ; also before each of the other couples lead round ; and lastly, to finish the dance. If in one of these chains you happen to meet a gentleman, you may know at once that something is wrong—that one of you has followed the lady. If you see other gentlemen coming after him, then you are at fault ; if, on the other hand, ladies are following, then it is he. In either case “ the game is up,” and chaos and confusion are the inevitable result. Mind that it is not *you* who are the delinquent.

NOTE.—The above is the *traditional and correct* form of the final figure, and if you study it attentively, you will easily be able to take part in any variation that happens to be popular with the particular set in which you move.

A NEW RING DANCE

If you are fond of variety in dancing and would like to try something out of the ordinary groove, you should send to Messrs. J. B. Cramer and Co., London, or order a copy of “ THE ROUNDABOUT,” “ a dance in a circle for any number of couples.” There is with the music

a very clear description of the dance, which the *Queen* speaks of as being "a merry dance indeed, enticing, and with agreeable music." As the steps employed consist of the Polka, the *chassé* or "Two-Step," and the Waltz, it follows that the dance contains the enjoyable elements of these movements and is, in the nature of things, exhilarating. It is proving, in fact, wherever introduced, a general favourite.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In describing the figures of the Set Dances I have perhaps laid myself open to the charge of levity, but experience has convinced me that it is altogether unwise to make a serious matter of dancing—especially in teaching. Besides, it is incongruous. It should be remembered that dancing is a pastime, a diversion, and there is nothing at all serious about it. Bright, cheerful faces, friendly interchanges of looks, smiles, and general good-nature, are what is wanted. Yet I have occasionally seen people who look thoroughly unhappy when they are dancing, whose faces in going through a Quadrille wear an expression of profound melancholy that would accord better with a funeral than a festive gathering; indeed, who seem as if they were there only to fulfil the purpose of the terrible object at the Egyptian feast, so much is their general demeanour at variance with the surroundings. May not this unnatural state of things be the result of their never having been allowed to laugh or smile during the dancing lessons when they were young? I have elsewhere made observation on the teaching of children; but with regard to those who had not the good fortune to learn in early life, if their most

enjoyable hours were devoted to the consideration of subjects that were truly serious, and now that they are grown up they wish to cultivate a source of enjoyment that was neglected in youth, who shall blame them ?

Only very disagreeable people would really be annoyed at the mistakes of a novice—of course, provided that he was not egregiously clumsy ; yet any one who has seen much of dancing cannot have failed to notice that if an experienced dancer happens to make a slight error he only smiles and apologises, whereas a beginner—in whom such a thing is far more pardonable—appears as much concerned as if he had committed a serious offence.

A nervous, anxious state of mind is not at all likely to carry one successfully through a Square, or, indeed, through any dance ; and what I want so much to impress upon you, reader, is that if you should happen to make a mistake, never mind. Try not to, of course ; but if you *should*, do not let it worry you, for if you allow it to, it will be pretty certain to lead to another, and in the end you will get so confused that you will scarcely know what you are doing. Others will soon forget all about it, and so must you.

Do not be self-conscious. Nobody is paying particular attention to you : and even if you were noticed—what then ? There must have been a time when the others did not know the dances any better than you do.

HABITS TO CULTIVATE OR AVOID

The following are a few observations that will apply in a measure to all ball-room dances.

It would be difficult to enumerate the many awkward,

disagreeable, painful, and even objectionable ways men have of holding their partners, though I believe that whatever appears objectionable is far oftener the result of inadvertence or ignorance than of intention.

The practice of putting the arm as far, and as tightly, round the lady's waist as possible is particularly to be avoided. It is unfashionable to do so; but for other and obvious reasons it is to be condemned. If a gentleman does this, the lady with whom he is dancing should bend her back out and draw herself away in a manner that will show him unmistakably that she objects to being squeezed so tightly; he will then very soon alter his manner of holding her. It was undoubtedly this kind of thing that called forth Byron's satire on the Waltz and the remarks about "close-bosomed whirlings" to which I have already alluded. If we do not wish to give the enemies of dancing a real foundation for their prejudices, we must never again relapse into such a reprehensible style!

Do not, on any consideration, dig your fingers into the lady's back; though not so culpable as the former practice, it is equally common and particularly disagreeable. On the other hand, you must not fall into the opposite error of holding your partner so loosely that she feels no support, or she might as well be dancing alone. Also be careful never to hold her so that you are both looking in the same direction.

After all these negative instructions you will most likely ask: "Well, then, how *am* I to hold her?"

This I will tell you.

You and your partner must stand so that you are exactly opposite, each looking over the right shoulder

of the other, and your right hand should not reach further round her waist than just beyond the middle of her back ; any attempt to make it reach further brings the right shoulder of the gentleman too near the left shoulder of the lady, and in every way impedes her movements. From your right hand and arm she must derive her whole support—for she ought not to lean on your shoulder—and you, knowing this, should be very particular how you control the movements of this arm. It must not be kept too rigid ; yet it should possess all the firmness of iron, combined with the pliability of india-rubber—strength where strength is wanted, and elasticity where elasticity is wanted. The hand should be kept perfectly flat, the wrist strongly bent, the arm gracefully rounded, and you really ought to hold the lady so that there would be almost room for any one to pass between you : if we all did this, even the most censorious could scarcely complain. You cannot possibly hold your partner comfortably if you stick your chest out ; it is not necessary to do so in dancing, but at the same time you must not stoop ; and the head should be kept erect, or it will throw your centre of gravity forward, as well as look very ungraceful.

Now, please to recollect that it is *you*, the gentleman, who have to conduct and take care of your partner ; you have no right to expect any assistance from her ; she ought to feel thoroughly comfortable and well supported, and experience that perfect sense of security and confidence in your guidance among the throng of dancers that an old lady does in the guidance of a policeman across a crowded thoroughfare.

You will, I know, have to acquire much experience

before this happy state of things can come about ; but at least I tell you the qualifications necessary to ensure proficiency.

Now, with regard to the ladies—and they have their uncomfortable little practices as well as we—one of the most common causes of unsuccessful dancing is a habit they contract of twisting or screwing their bodies as if they were trying to turn themselves round, forgetting that they have not to turn on their *own axis at all*, but on a centre between themselves and their partners. As this peculiarity is a frequent cause of non-success in waltzing, I shall again have occasion to refer to it.

There is a notion very prevalent among ladies that the fact of offering resistance at the waist would tend to make them heavy ; consequently, they fall into the other extreme, and seem as if they were continually coming towards you. I must not lay myself open to the charge of being ungallant by asserting that this is unpleasant, but, at least, I can say that it is awkward so far as the dancing is concerned ; for if there be no reaction to form a connecting link, as it were, between yourself and partner, it is impossible that there can be perfect unanimity, as neither can tell exactly what the other is going to do. It is necessary that the dancers should draw *slightly* away from each other in all Round Dances, but in the Waltz it is absolutely indispensable to elegance and comfort ; therefore, I will explain the matter more fully in my next chapter.

The practice of leaning on the shoulder of the gentleman is especially to be avoided, as it throws the weight to the left side, and if the lady be inclined to be *embon-*

point she is likely, by so doing, to impose a severe task upon her partner. Any downward pressure tends to make one appear heavy; lateral resistance is quite a different thing.

Closely allied to this habit is that of nipping the gentleman's arm with the left elbow. This is a very undesirable thing to do; it not only restrains the movements of the lady—for where there is no free action of the limbs there can be no free motion—but it makes the gentleman's arm ache terribly if continued for any length of time. It also causes the lady to dance with her left shoulder lower than the right—they ought, of course, to be perfectly even, and her left hand should rest as lightly as possible on her partner's shoulder without any pressure whatever.

The influence which the movements of a heavy woman will exert upon her partner—especially if he be slender—will be at once apparent if we consider that the force which one body exerts upon another body opposed to it is always in proportion to its *velocity, multiplied by its weight*, or quantity of matter. It therefore follows that when the revolutions are rapid and the lady stout, she should modify her resistance to balance the power of her partner, for if she pulled away *too* much it would naturally cause him to topple over. There is a happy medium in all things.

The lady should not attempt to take the lead in Round Dances, but should rather have a tendency to keep passive—that is, unless she has the misfortune to find herself in company with a very poor dancer, in which case she may generously give him a little assistance. A slight, almost imperceptible, pull with the right hand,

at the right moment, will often do wonders towards bringing him round.

Of course, as I have already hinted, a gentleman ought not to attempt to lead a lady through a dance before he has himself attained some proficiency, but people don't always do exactly as they ought to ; we must take them as they are, not as they should be. Some young men are diffident, and underrate their capabilities ; not many—most of them think their dancing a great deal better than it really is. It is certain that at nearly all parties are to be found a few men who can dance, but won't try ; and a great many who will try, but can't dance. Such is the perversity of human nature !

Again, there are people who would make really excellent dancers, but won't take the trouble to learn ; and there are others, as we know, who would take any trouble to learn, yet would never make good dancers. That, of course, is their misfortune ; they are to be commiserated. We always strive after the unattainable. The author of *Faust* had a great desire to become an artist, and prided himself more on a drawing of a knife-handle that he had executed than he did on the works that have immortalized his name.

THE WALTZ

"We join the throng
Of the dance and the song,
By the whirlwind of gladness borne along."
—SHELLEY.

"Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling groups they meet,
To brisk notes in cadence beating
Glance their many twinkling feet."
—GRAY.

WE now come to the consideration of what is by general consent regarded as the Queen of Modern Dances ; and there must, indeed, be something peculiarly attractive about a dance which, after nearly a century of uninterrupted popularity, has at length monopolized the favour of Society to such an extent that, so far as ball-room enjoyment is concerned, it is better to be proficient only in waltzing than to dance all the other dances perfectly and be unacquainted with this particular movement.

It is not improbable that the opposition which the Waltz first encountered on its introduction to our shores may have proved an incentive towards its ultimate favourable reception by attracting attention that would not otherwise have been accorded. "No event," says Raikes, "ever produced a greater sensation in English Society than the introduction of the German Waltz." And well it might ! Hitherto the youth of Great

Britain, even in the highest circles, had been obliged to content itself with the performance of Jigs, Reels, and Country Dances—at least, until the arrival of the French Quadrille in 1815. But the Waltz was something entirely different from all these. That young people of opposite sexes should whirl round almost embracing—according to an old description of the dance—or, as Byron says: “Like two cockchafers spitted upon the same bodkin,” was too much for our ancestors’ notions of propriety, and we can scarcely wonder that the movement should at first have been unfavourably regarded. But it was soon taken up by the leaders of Society, its chief pioneers at Almack’s being Lord Palmerston, the Princess Esterhazy, and Madame de Lieven.

Dr. Burney, having seen a Waltz performed by a select party of foreigners, before it had reached this country, says: “We could not help reflecting how uneasy an English mother would be to see her daughter so familiarly treated; and still more so to witness the obliging manner in which the freedom is returned by the females.” The amount of uneasiness experienced by English mothers nowadays would be a subject too painful for Dr. Burney to contemplate. But since his time things have altered; our ideas have altered; the Waltz has altered—at least, our manner of dancing it has; and although we are still occasionally made aware of the existence of people who have escaped its almost irresistible fascination, and even of some who persist in associating the dance with all that is improper, still the opposers of waltzing are greatly in the minority, and to most right-minded people it represents merely an innocent and agreeable pastime.

Let us, then, consider a few of the qualities to which the Waltz owes its chief attractions.

First, there is its truly reciprocal nature—the fact that in perfect waltzing, whatever actions assist the progress of, and are pleasurable to, the one dancer are equally helpful and agreeable to the other; indeed, from the time the circular movement commences, the partners become as one body on which the laws of gravitation act. There is also the pleasant glow of excitement caused by excess of blood sent to the brain. Then the figure of the Waltz is a series of graceful curves, not exactly circles, but rather a succession of open loops, as would be seen if the dancers could leave the trail of their progress on the floor—a movement rendered agreeable by the alternation of rotary with onward progression. Besides this, we may allow for the easy, gliding nature of the movement—the fact that very slight muscular effort is required to produce rapidity of motion.

That the intervals of time and the steps in waltzing are not precisely equal, according to the most approved modern style—in which the first is long and the second taken rapidly—only intensifies the pleasure of the dance and relieves it from the monotony which characterized the old Waltz. This inequality of time and action gives the movement an undulating, wave-like rhythm, and imparts a special pleasure depending on the gradually increasing and decreasing intensity of motion, that could not otherwise be obtained.

If to all this we add the consideration that some of the most delightful melodies have been, and are, continually written to accompany its steps, and think how comparatively few of these factors in the sum total of

enjoyment enter into the composition of other dances, we shall not, perhaps, find it so difficult to account for the popularity of the Waltz.

But, it will be asked, what particular movement is it that is capable of producing all these pleasing effects, in short, what is really the correct Waltz?

Well, for my own part, I should answer unhesitatingly: *the correct Waltz is that which combines the greatest measure of enjoyment with the most perfect grace of action.* You will doubtless admit the reasonableness of this; but, at the same time, may feel inclined to ask: "How, then, about the deux-temps, the trois-temps, the Sauteuse, the 'Hoppy' Waltz, the 'Boston,' the Slow Waltz, and 'New Valse,' that I am always hearing about?"

Now it will perhaps surprise you to hear that the action of the upper part of the body has quite as much, if not more, to do with good waltzing than the movements of the feet. There was a great deal of truth in Lord Chesterfield's remark that "every man who danced well, danced well from the waist upwards." There is only one principle on which the steps of the Waltz can be *satisfactorily* taken, that is, in strict accordance with the laws of motion; and it is certain that all persons who really waltz well take them in very much the same manner.

It happens, however, that some of the above Waltzes (?) are constructed on a plan that would render it impossible to arrive at anything approaching grace of action in their execution, as the movements are themselves intrinsically ungraceful; I will therefore dispose of them as briefly as possible.

The Valse à Deux-temps.—The Waltz in two time,

two in three, three in two ; that is, three beats, or intervals, and two steps, or actions. An anomalous, worn-out, sideways, crab-like movement, that could have no real attraction for any one with an ear for music or any perception of graceful motion. That it was once exceedingly fashionable is no criterion whatever of merit or beauty. All kinds of hideous and inartistic things have been, and still are, fashionable. If it were the fashion to dance on all fours, I daresay plenty of people would be ready to say they admired it, and found it came natural to them to do so—to some it might.

The Valse à Trois-temps.—The Waltz in three-time. Of course ! How else could it be properly danced ? A graceful, continuous movement ; somewhat wearisome and monotonous as it was danced by our grandmothers. If forms, however, the foundation of our beautiful modern Waltz.

The Sauteuse.—The “Hop” Waltz. A makeshift, silly step, only practised by people who are too idle to learn, or are unable to waltz properly.

The “Hoppy” Waltz.—This movement differs from the correct Waltz rather in the manner of taking the steps than in the steps themselves. The knees are kept bent, and the balance of the body is changed from one limb to the other with a flexible, springy action of the muscles.

As I pointed out in a magazine article some time since, the fact that any action a little peculiar or exaggerated in a ball-room attracts considerable attention has caused many people to imagine that this manner of waltzing is a good deal more general than is really the case. It happens that half a dozen jumping couples, like

the half-dozen importunate grasshoppers of Burke's well-known simile, will attract more notice than will fifty orderly gliders meandering gracefully through a Waltz, and to the casual and non-observant onlooker it may appear as if the majority are doing the "hoppy" movement. But it is only an optical illusion. The majority of good dancers invariably waltz smoothly.

Concerning the so-called "Boston," I have spoken elsewhere in this little treatise.

The Slow Waltz.—A not unpleasing variation of the proper movement, of which the chief characteristic and difficulty consisted in keeping a prolonged balance on each foot. It is possible to waltz slowly, however quickly the music is being played, by allowing three steps to occupy two bars instead of one.

The "New Valse."—The *bête noire* of the would-be-fashionables. A Waltz that at present has no actual existence out of advertisements, since that which was once new cannot, in the nature of things, always remain so. The name, however, is doubtless a valuable source of income to those professors who are ready to impose on the public credulity. People who really waltz well are not likely to trouble about "New Valses," and rarely ask: "What step do you do?" It is those who are not sure of their waltzing who are most easily drawn into the meshes; and, after all, it generally turns out that the "New Valse" happens to be that particular movement that each of them finds it easiest to teach, no matter if it really is an old one.

Mind, I am not speaking of qualified teachers. If you went to a first-rate professor and asked to be taught the "New Valse," he would probably say: "I don't

know what you mean by the ' New ' Waltz ; but if you come to me I will teach you to waltz properly." It is not, of course, every teacher who could afford to be so candid, and if you went to a dozen minor ones, you would probably learn as many " New Valses," all of them different and all equally worthless.

This is, perhaps, rather a sweeping assertion to make ; but I am in a position to speak plainly. I make it a practice to ask all pupils coming to me for private instruction—and I have a great many from all parts of the United Kingdom—in the event of their having previously taken lessons, to show me first what steps they have been taught, so that, if wrong, I may at once give a corrective exercise ; and, making every allowance for the pupils' idiosyncrasies—I have indeed seen so many various, strange, and unaccountable combinations of rises, falls, shuffles, and hops, that I have long since ceased to wonder why there are so many bad waltzers. Some have assured me that they have had dozens of lessons and still could not waltz properly. And no wonder ; if they had gone on taking lessons and practising *ad infinitum*, they would have been no nearer the mark, seeing that what they had learnt was in itself imperfect.

I am afraid that very little real improvement is to be hoped for in waltzing until all professors are courageous and conscientious enough to tell their pupils that they will only consent to teach that which is intrinsically beautiful.

I will give an instance of how reports of new Waltzes are circulated. Some years since, at a country party, a lady asked me " if I had heard of the New Valse that

was now so much danced." I asked if she meant the Slow Waltz. "Oh, no," she replied; "I mean one much more recent than that." Then, to give me some idea of it, she informed me that the second step was specially accented. Noticing my look of surprise, she continued that that was the peculiarity of the dance, and added that it was "quite the rage now." She admitted that she was not herself acquainted with the step, but a friend of hers had learnt it from a professor living in a small town in one of the Northern Counties, who had assured her that it was "the latest thing in London."

Now, had my informant possessed any theoretical knowledge of waltzing, she would have known well enough that a dance in which the second step was accented, whatever else it might have been, could not properly be called a Waltz, and that it could not be danced to any of the Waltz music that has yet been written. No doubt there had been a mistake somewhere, but at all events *she* was *quite certain* it was all right, and, I daresay, thought I was a long way behind the times in not having heard of it. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his *Study of Sociology*, says that "Often mere assertion, with great emphasis and signs of confidence on the part of the utterer, will produce a fixed conviction where there is no evidence, and even in spite of adverse evidence." It was so in this case. She succeeded in convincing nearly all the other members of the party, and many were anxious to learn this wonderful "New Valse."

As a matter of fact, however, most of the so-called New Waltzes, especially if ridiculous fancy names are

attached to them, are nothing more than antics started by silly young men, who think they can hide their ignorance of dancing under pretence of introducing something new—"the latest style"! But, indeed, instead of disguising their ignorance they only proclaim it, for any one who really waltzed well would never permit himself to disgrace the art he pretended to admire. Unfortunately, frivolity appears contagious; these enterprising youths are imitated by others as idiotic as themselves; and as the majority of people do not seem to have "drawn a prize in the lottery of human faculties," so the absurdities obtain.

On one occasion a young man called on me and asked if I would teach him a certain silly movement that was at that time, quite erroneously, supposed to be smart.

He explained that he had been told it was "the correct thing," and was anxious to exhibit it at a particular ball which he was about to attend. I told him plainly that I taught people to dance, not to make fools of themselves, they could generally do that without instruction; but if he was particularly anxious for a lesson he might apply elsewhere. He ended by making an appointment to come and learn to waltz properly, but, as I expected, never turned up.

This brings me to the consideration that it is frequently affirmed by critics—generally those whose personal Terpsichorean achievements are nothing to boast of—that dancing men have more capacity in their heels than in their heads; while others assert, more plainly, if less politely, that "the biggest fools make the best dancers." Now this I can most emphatically deny. I think Addison was nearer the truth

when he remarked that : " No man was ever a good dancer who had not a good understanding." If any professor were asked whom he would prefer to teach, it is pretty certain he would reply : " Someone possessing an ordinary amount of intelligence." That *some* dancers have more capacity in their heels than in their heads I do not dispute, but that they should have it more particularly developed in their heels is certainly better than if they had it nowhere.

I have before said that we very seldom see anything approaching perfection in waltzing. This may in some measure be accounted for by the variety of inelegant movements that are taught ; besides, I am convinced that very little is really generally known of the laws which govern the Waltz. We are, in this respect, rather like Hogarth's dancing-master, who said that he had been studying the graces of the Minuet all his life and still knew nothing.

It is true that a great many people may be said to waltz fairly well ; that is, they manage to keep time with the music, and their actions are not characterized by any particular inelegance. But it generally happens that there is something wanting. That unanimity of action in which each of the dancers assists, and by perfection of movement contributes to the pleasure of the other, is rarely exhibited ; yet, unless there is the strictest accordance between the partners, they cannot be said to dance properly, and do not experience the real enjoyment of waltzing.

Some people pretend to admire the Waltz simply because it is fashionable to do so. This is certain, since it cannot possibly be through any pleasure they

derive from their own dancing ; at least, it would appear so to others. They may, perhaps, experience a kind of amusement akin to that with which we set about the solution of a difficult enigma—the puzzle in this case being how to get round. This, in itself, is quite sufficient to exercise their ingenuity for some time ; and then, when it has been accomplished to their own satisfaction—if not to their partner's—there comes the still more difficult problem, how to make progress.

It is really quite distressing to watch the Sisyphean efforts of some young men to move their partners from the place whence they start. A few turns, it is true, may take them a little onward, but the next few are just as likely to bring them back again. The reason of this is generally because they have been taught, or have acquired, a movement consisting only of circular steps, and no forward or progressive ones ; hence their difficulty.

This brings me at once to the more practical part of what I have to say about waltzing.

Before giving any definite instructions for acquiring the dance, it may be as well to set forth a few axioms, or rather propositions, for their truth may not be quite so evident to others as it is to me, and consequently some of them may need illustration.

1. *A Waltz should consist of six distinct steps, or actions of the feet, one for each interval of the bar. Three of these steps or actions should be rotary and three progressive.*

2. *Neither of the feet should ever be taken completely off the floor, they should in all cases glide smoothly over it.*

3. *Not a fraction of weight should be allowed to rest on either foot while it is actually in motion ; and in the second*

and fifth steps the foot should pass over the floor without any pressure whatever.

This may at first appear impossible, but it will be seen that it may easily be accomplished when we consider that during the dance there is always one foot either quite stationary, or simply revolving, on which the whole weight of the body may rest while the other is in motion, since it is certain that both the feet cannot be making progressive movement at the same time. To keep the weight only on the foot that is resting, and to have none whatever on that which is moving, is the whole secret of waltzing lightly, which has nothing to do with getting on the toes, as is generally supposed. In such dances as the Schottische and Polka, lightness of movement is attained by bending the knees, rising on the toes, and springing; but in a dance like the Waltz, wherein the feet are never raised from the floor, it is merely a question of having the balance on the proper foot, and avoidance of frictional resistance: and it stands to reason that the balance of the body can be longer and more perfectly retained on the whole of the foot than on a small part of it. It is certain that men who waltz always on their toes make very uncomfortable partners; the practice renders them incapable of assisting or supporting the ladies, and gives their movements a feeble and undignified appearance. I will explain this further in describing the step.

4. *All movements must be made in a forward and backward direction; any steps taken sideways necessarily broaden the base on which the dancers rest, and thereby increase the difficulty of turning.*

5. *In good waltzing the feet of each partner should be*

continually playing in and out of, and between, those of the other.

This, I think, is pretty generally admitted; but a little consideration will convince that it would be impossible if the steps were taken in any other than a forward and backward direction, since any movement to the side must inevitably bring the foot of one waltzer in contact with that of the other which is between.

N.B.—It should be understood that in these cases by backwards is meant not necessarily backwards in a *line*, but simply in a *direction to the rear of the body* and away from the partner in turning.

6. *The Waltz is a dance in triple time, and the first step of each three must always be the one specially accented, otherwise the character of the dance is destroyed. The rhythm of the Waltz is dactylic.*

7. *The first step must not only be the one specially accented, but it must also be specially prolonged, occupying, in fact, exactly half the bar; that is, an interval and a half. The second step must be taken proportionately quickly, occupying only half an interval; while the remaining interval is occupied in taking the third step. Thus, it will be seen that the first step takes three times as long as the second and half as long again as the third.*

It is true that these divisions of time may not have been accurately determined by other writers or teachers, but it is certain that the steps of all good waltzers bear this relation to each other, though few, perhaps, have any idea that it is so. If the steps were of equal duration they would have the appearance of running, and the movement would lose its greatest beauty.

If any one doubts this, let him try the effect, or he may observe it in nearly all beginners and bad waltzers.

8. *The steps must be begun and not finished when the note is sounded ; therefore, if we accept No. 7 as true, it follows that the first step of each three must be continued, and the weight of the body must not fall upon the foot with which it is taken until after the commencement of the second interval of the bar.*

That this is correct will, I think, be evident on consideration ; but it comes almost natural to fall on the foot directly the note is struck, and for those who have been accustomed to dance in this way it will require some practice and determination to overcome the tendency. The effect of the habit—one of the most common—is to cause the waltzers to turn too quickly in making an unconscious effort to come in with the music at the beginning of the third bar, having really taken nine steps in the first two. The momentum thus acquired impels them onward at the same rate, and though they always imagine they are keeping time with the music, they are in reality turning and taking their steps half as quickly again as they should. We frequently hear people throw all the blame on the musicians, and complain of the rapidity with which they play, but in nine cases out of ten it is their own fault, because nine dancers out of ten do not keep perfect time with the music. They would not believe it if you told them so ; but it is nevertheless a fact. Nearly all waltzers waltz too quickly.

9. *Accuracy of time is really of more importance in waltzing than accuracy of step.*

By this I mean that the exact position of the feet may vary by a few inches without materially hindering the

dancers, or actually causing them to stop ; but a fraction of time lost or encroached upon causes considerable inconvenience, and half, or even a quarter of an interval—that is, a twelfth part of the bar—would be quite sufficient to throw the balance of each of the dancers on the same foot, thereby causing an immediate stoppage.

Of course, for the waltzers to have their balance on the same side it is evident that they must each be resting on the contrary foot.

10. *It is impossible to attain perfection in waltzing by attending to the action of the feet only. The movements of the body are of quite as much importance as those of the feet.*

If a waltzer takes his steps with the most perfect accuracy, and even keeps strictly correct time, yet fails to move the upper part of his body harmoniously with the action of his feet, or holds himself quite erect and rigid while dancing, his movements will not have even a semblance of grace.

It is a common but fallacious idea that military men are almost invariably good dancers. Nothing can be further from the truth. We like to associate Mars with Venus, strength and bravery with gentleness and beauty, gallantry on battlefields with gallantry in ball-rooms, and therefore we credit our heroes with qualifications we think they ought consistently to possess ; hence their reputation for good dancing. It happens, however, that in drilling the movements are all stiff and angular, while in dancing they are supple and curvilinear ; there is, consequently, a certain amount of antagonism difficult to overcome. Firmness of movement gives vigour to dancing, just as firmness of outline gives vigour to draw-

ing—in which a certain degree of angularity denotes power ; and it generally happens that when a soldier waltzes well there is a decision about his dancing that is admirable. All soldiers would waltz well if they would only take the trouble to learn, and to overcome their stiffness of action. But very few will do this, and that is why the majority of them are poor dancers.

11. *The balance of the body must be kept perfectly on either foot without lowering the shoulder on the same side.*

Of course it is necessary, in order to retain the balance, that the centre of gravity of the body should be over the foot on which it is required to rest. Its adjustment is accomplished by carrying the whole body slightly to that side, from the ankle upwards. A little practice will enable any one to change the balance from one foot to the other without perceptibly moving the shoulders, and without lowering or raising them at all.

12. *In waltzing the partners have not each to turn on his or her own axis. The centre of rotation is a shifting centre, since to the circular movement there is also to be added progressive movement, but the centre is always between them, and the curve described is cycloidal.*

It is to the fact of ladies being ignorant of the above rule, and endeavouring to turn themselves round, that the uncomfortable habit of screwing the body, of which I spoke in my last chapter, may be attributed.

For the benefit of those readers who are unacquainted with dynamics, I will explain that a cycloid is the geometrical curve that would be traced by a point on the circumference of a moving circle ; that is, a circle that was making progressive movement, such as a wheel along a road.

If the centre round which the partners turn were not a shifting centre, sometimes nearer to one, and sometimes nearer to the other, they would clearly continue to gyrate in a given spot. This explains why three of the steps are more rotary and three more progressive.

13. *All sideways movements, or any actions that cause the body to oscillate or sway from side to side, are incompatible with graceful waltzing.*

Whoever possesses the faculty of observation must have noticed waltzers—especially stout ones—who sway from side to side all the time they are dancing, like an inverted pendulum. Of course there are some who really consider this practice elegant—there is no accounting for taste—but I don't think it has many admirers, most of those who do it being unconscious of the fact.

Those people who can discover elegance in this kind of movement generally commence the Waltz by rocking to and fro several times before they start, to get up the steam as it were. Some have actually cited Shakespeare in defence of the practice, as saying :

“ When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that.”

Now it is quite likely that the “ immortal bard ” when he wrote this had only a gentle, rippling, undulating movement in his mind, as of the sea upon a summer day. These people, however, seem to interpret the expression to imply a rolling motion as of great billows. I think not, for Shakespeare had certainly a keen perception of the beautiful ; but if he meant billows, what then ? Notwithstanding all his mighty genius, I don't see any

particular reason why we should regard him as an authority on dancing. If we are to go back as far as Shakespeare's time to gain our ideas of modern dancing, I would refer the introducers of "New Valses" to a still older authority, who tells us that "there is no new thing under the sun."

14. *It is essential in perfect waltzing that each of the partners should have a tendency to draw away from rather than lean towards the other, and their backs should bend slightly outward. The gentleman should especially draw his partner forward as he retires in turning during the first three steps, and the lady should draw away in turning during the last three, so that the action and reaction may be proportionate and reciprocal.*

This proposition I have reserved to the last because I think it is the one most likely to stick in the public throat. Of its truth I am myself perfectly convinced. I have tested it both by experiment and observation; by attention to it I can, in dancing as lady, compel a bad waltzer to keep perfect time and step merely by the movements of my back, and this when he has found it impossible to dance at all with others who have been considered excellent waltzers. And all to whom I have taught the practice have found the results equally successful. Is not this, then, ladies, a secret worth possessing?—to be enabled by the mere outward movement of your waist to compel your indifferent partners—and you know by bitter experience that they are many—to keep something like correct time and step?

I will tell you how it acts:

The gentleman in the third step has his weight and balance on the left foot, and you, by drawing backwards,

D.

G

induce him to put the right forward ; whereas, without this impellent action on your part, he would have put it somewhere behind and thrown you out altogether. Having once brought his right foot into the right place, your continued resistance will cause him to take the remaining steps properly ; then, just at the right moment—not a fraction of a second sooner—you cease resisting, and he takes his first step again in time with the music, simultaneously making an almost natural reactionary movement that will carry him safely through till you again begin the backward action. You will see the enormous restraining power a girl who knows what she is about can exercise on her clumsy partner when I tell you that so long as you keep the balance fairly on the foot and press downwards he will be unable to move you until you wish—that is, of course, unless he is prepared to drag as many stones as you weigh over the floor ; but this he is not likely to attempt. When, however, at the proper beat, your weight is transferred to the other side, you will fly forward like a feather, and he will wonder how it is that he manages to keep such excellent time in dancing with you.

To do this successfully will, I know, require a great amount of experience and ability on your part, but very little effort ; unless, of course, your partner should happen to be a thorough clown. But if this is the case, you had better not dance with him at all, if you are aware of the fact beforehand ; or, if not, you had better have a pain—for if you haven't you very soon will—and request him to take you to a seat. Or you can discover that your steps don't agree, which will be more

truthful. I know too well the misery of dancing with such people to recommend you to continue it.

And now with regard to fairly good waltzers. They will, I am sure, find that the fact of drawing away from each other in the manner suggested will materially contribute to their ease and comfort in dancing, since, by so doing, they take advantage of the natural force known as centrifugal, or that which has a tendency to throw a body from the centre. The amount of resistance you exert should be in proportion to the velocity with which you turn. Take a pair of tongs by the knob, whirl them round, and you will find that the legs fly open. So, again, with the governor-balls of a steam-engine ; the faster the engine goes, the wider these balls diverge, thereby closing a valve that lets in the steam, and so reducing the action.

I have merely introduced these familiar illustrations to show that the laws of motion actually require that we should pull away in turning, and to refuse to dance in accordance with them is simply to set up our own conventional ideas above the wisdom of Nature, and to render our movements stiff, constrained, artificial, and ridiculous. Little children pull away instinctively when they take hands and swing each other round, yet grown-up men and women, who have learnt dancing from professed teachers, are often unaware that it is required.

But little children do more than merely pull away from each other, they incline their bodies so that in turning they form a figure somewhat resembling the letter **V**, having a small base ; I have seen grown-up waltzers, however, who actually try to dance after the fashion of the letter **A**—that is, they spread their feet

out and bring their shoulders together. Now, it is quite evident than an object with a broad top and a slender bottom, or base, will revolve better than one constructed the other way about ; if you doubt this you might try to spin a peg-top inverted, and see how it will answer. Men who are shaped after the fashion of tops—that is, who have thick, broad shoulders, slender legs and ankles, and small feet, generally keep their balance well and waltz lightly ; while men who have narrow, thin shoulders, very thick legs, and large feet, rarely make good waltzers ; are heavy, and particularly troublesome to teach. So long as two dancers in waltzing continue drawing away from one another they form, as it were, one body, of which the centres of gravity and revolution are situated between them. Now, it will be apparent that by putting their chests out and their backs in, the outline of this body becomes concave ; whereas, by bending their backs slightly outwards, it becomes convex, a condition more favourable to revolution, as even the most sceptical must admit.

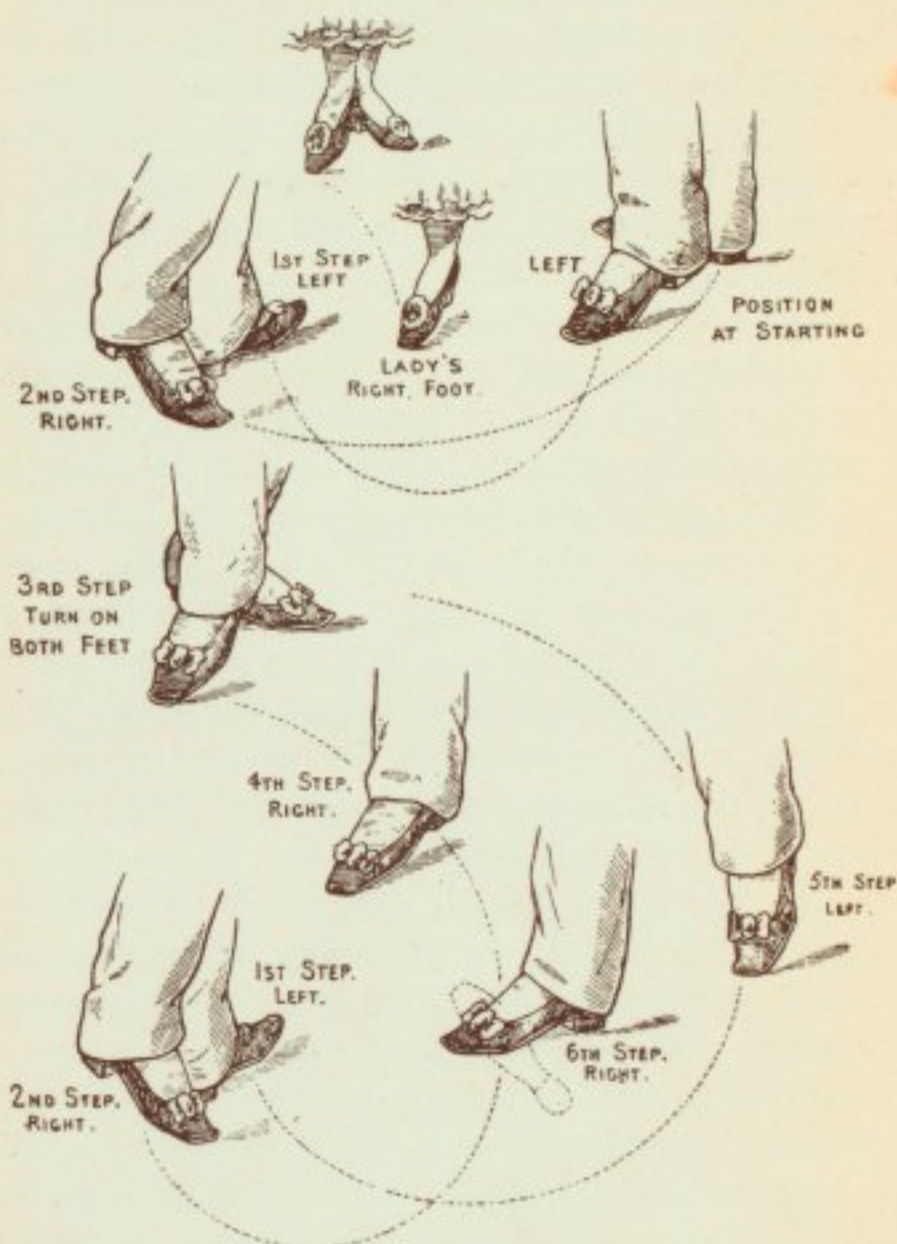
I find that as yet I have only spoken of the dance to which I am directing your attention as the Modern Waltz. Now, it is true that this term is less open to objection than the term “ New ” Waltz, since a thing may remain modern when it has ceased to be new ; that is, so long as it appertains to the present time. Still, the name conveys no definite idea of a movement, as any kind of Waltz might be called a modern one. The words “ modern ” and “ new ” are also subject to degrees of comparison. Someone will always be ready to come forward with a more Modern Waltz and a “ Newest ” Waltz.

In dance music, when "birdies" have been overdone, and all possible changes rung upon dreams, flowers, and love, these are generally presented to us again in the form of *rêves, fleurs, and l'amour*. Why, then, has it not occurred to some enterprising professors to announce that they impart "*La Nouvelle Valse*"? Those who do not understand French would be sure to think it was something they ought to learn, and many would reap a golden harvest of credulity.

But the Waltz to which we are now referring is not a matter of invention, but rather of evolution; it has come about empirically rather than rationally. Mr. Herbert Spencer says, in speaking of morals, that mankind have eventually gone right after trying all possible ways of going wrong—or words to that effect; and it would seem that it is so with regard to most things, even waltzing. As a matter of fact, the Waltz I am endeavouring to teach is that which is danced by the best waltzers in all countries of the civilized world. The steps or positions as here shown are those positions which the limbs automatically take when waltzing is perfect. They are, indeed, the positions into which the feet *must* fall before perfection can be attained, even though the dancers themselves may be quite unaware that their feet are moving thus.

It would be easy for me to demonstrate scientifically that owing to the mechanical construction of our bodies, the manner in which the various joints are articulated, and the action of the muscles thereon, that the sequence of steps here given is the only one that accords with perfection of rotary and progressive movement. To do this, however, would involve a considerable amount of

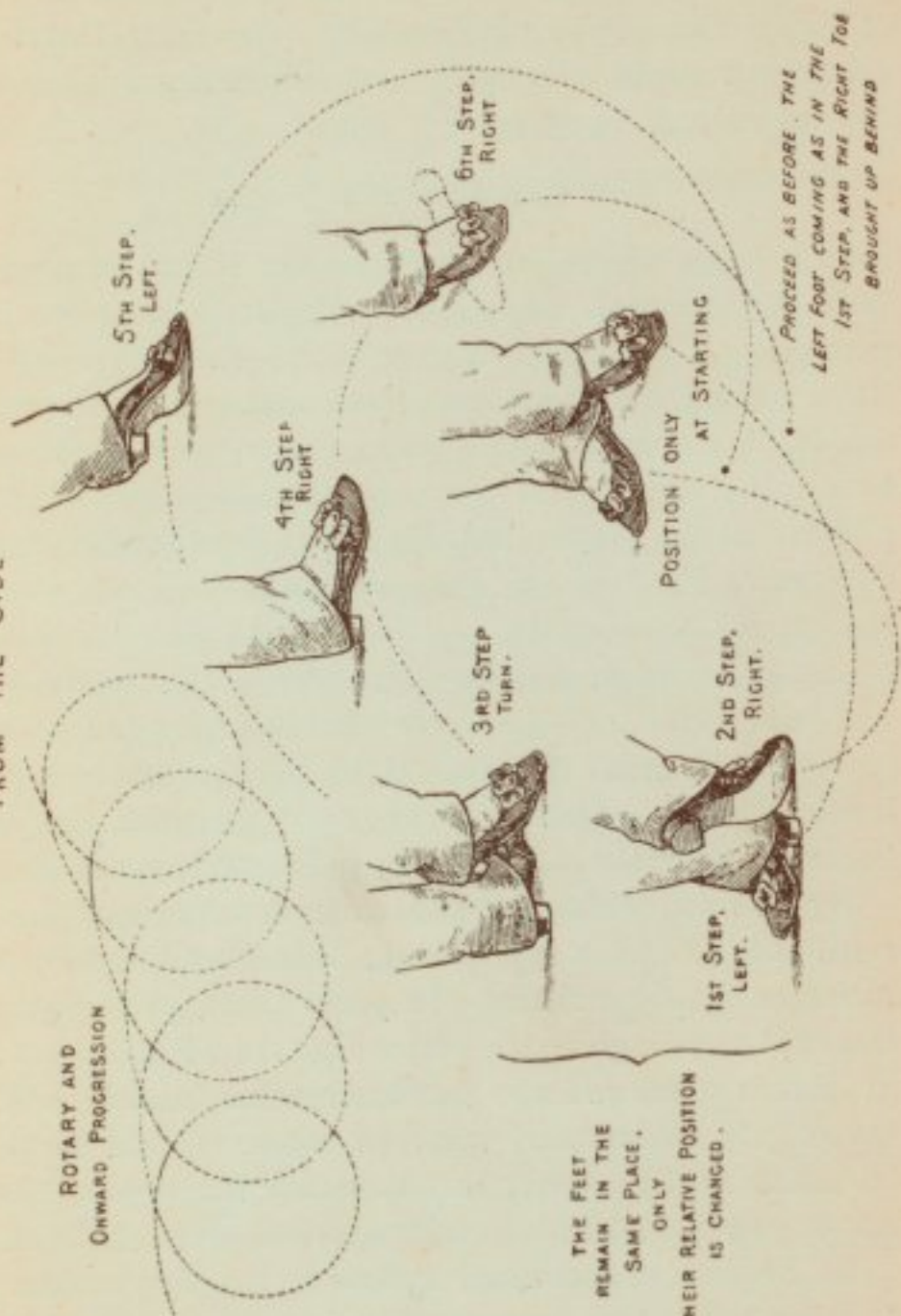
GENTLEMAN'S STEP. FROM THE FRONT.



* *N.B. THE FEET IN THE 3RD STEP ARE NOT ACTUALLY BROUGHT FORWARD;
THEIR RELATIVE POSITION ONLY IS CHANGED*

GENTLEMAN'S STEP FROM THE SIDE

ROTARY AND
ONWARD PROGRESSION



anatomical explanations that might only have the effect of boring the ordinary lay reader. You must therefore accept my word for its truth, and we will simply consider the movement as being

THE ONE PERFECT WALTZ

In a book addressed to all readers I can, of course, only give general instruction. Pupils coming to me personally, I teach according to their individual peculiarities ; since the only system of instruction that can prove *invariably successful* is that which is particularly adapted to the individual, and which must necessarily alter in porportion as people are physically and intellectually different. For instance, there are some pupils on whom theoretical information would only be thrown away ; others it would materially help. Some can waltz well without understanding exactly what it is they do ; others know exactly what they should do, but are unable to put it into practice. Clearly, the only way by which such can be made to waltz is by literally pulling them into form.

By this expression I mean to lead, urge, and impel until they *feel* what is required ; this a book cannot do, however clearly written. In some cases, perhaps, the less explanation given the better ; in others it is essential ; in all it is a *sine quâ non* that the teacher himself should thoroughly understand what he is about, and be able to satisfactorily answer any question the pupils ask—not to put them off with evasive replies, as so many do.

To become a successful *waltzer* it is only necessary to know the correct movement and to be warned against one's individual false tendencies ; but to be a successful *teacher*, one must not only be able to waltz perfectly,

and know how to direct the movements of others, but it is also necessary to be acquainted with every awkward habit and tendency ever acquired, or likely to be acquired, by pupils. These qualifications can, of course, only be attained by large and varied experience, much practice, and close observation.

Now, if a dozen private pupils came to me, I might find it necessary, or at least advisable, to adopt as many different methods of instruction ; but it is clear that I cannot do this with a dozen readers. Supposing, however, that you are of ordinary build and intelligence—which, after all, is a great thing in learning to dance—this is how you had better set to work :

I am again supposing you are a male reader, because you will experience so much greater difficulty in learning—having, as in all Round Dances, to support, lead, and help your partner.

From the position indicated in the plate, keeping the balance of the body entirely on the right leg, glide the left foot smoothly round in the direction shown by the dotted line till it reaches the outside of the lady's right foot, which she meanwhile advances. In making the movement be sure to turn your shoulders well round. This is the first step.

Now, having transferred the balance of the body to the left leg, bring the right foot very lightly behind the left at right angles to it, allowing the toes only to touch the ground as shown in the drawing. This is the second step in which the lady's left foot will be advanced as your right is drawn backwards.

Now turn on both feet, still keeping the whole balance on the left, so that the heel of the right foot

comes to the instep of the left, in what is called the third position. In turning, the left foot may be drawn back a little if the action be found more convenient to the pupil; but the weight of the body must on no account be allowed to rest on the right, of which, as in the preceding step, the toes only should touch the ground.

This is the third step—in which the lady's right foot will again be advanced a little—and the finish of the bar.

Left, right, left. Weight and balance on the left.

Now, for the fourth step, slide your right foot a little forward in the direction of the dotted line, so that it would go between your partner's feet, and then, when it has ceased moving, throw your weight boldly on it, keeping the knee stiff.

For the fifth, slide your left a little beyond it, without any weight whatever, as indicated in the plate. In this step your partner's right foot is passed behind her left heel, simultaneously as your left advances.

For the sixth step you slide the right foot again a little forward, simultaneously turning, till it is in the position indicated by the dotted foot in the drawing. In making this movement the balance of the body should not be transferred to the left foot, but the right should be impelled forward by a similar kind of muscular effort to that used in leaping; only the foot must not, of course, be raised from the floor. Mind that the right foot in finishing this movement is turned *completely round*, or it will inevitably come in contact with your partner's toes. Your whole body must also be turned so that you are ready to take the first step again with your left foot as when you started, the lady meanwhile turning on the

sole of her left. These complete the last three steps and second bar.

Right, left, right. Weight and balance on the right.

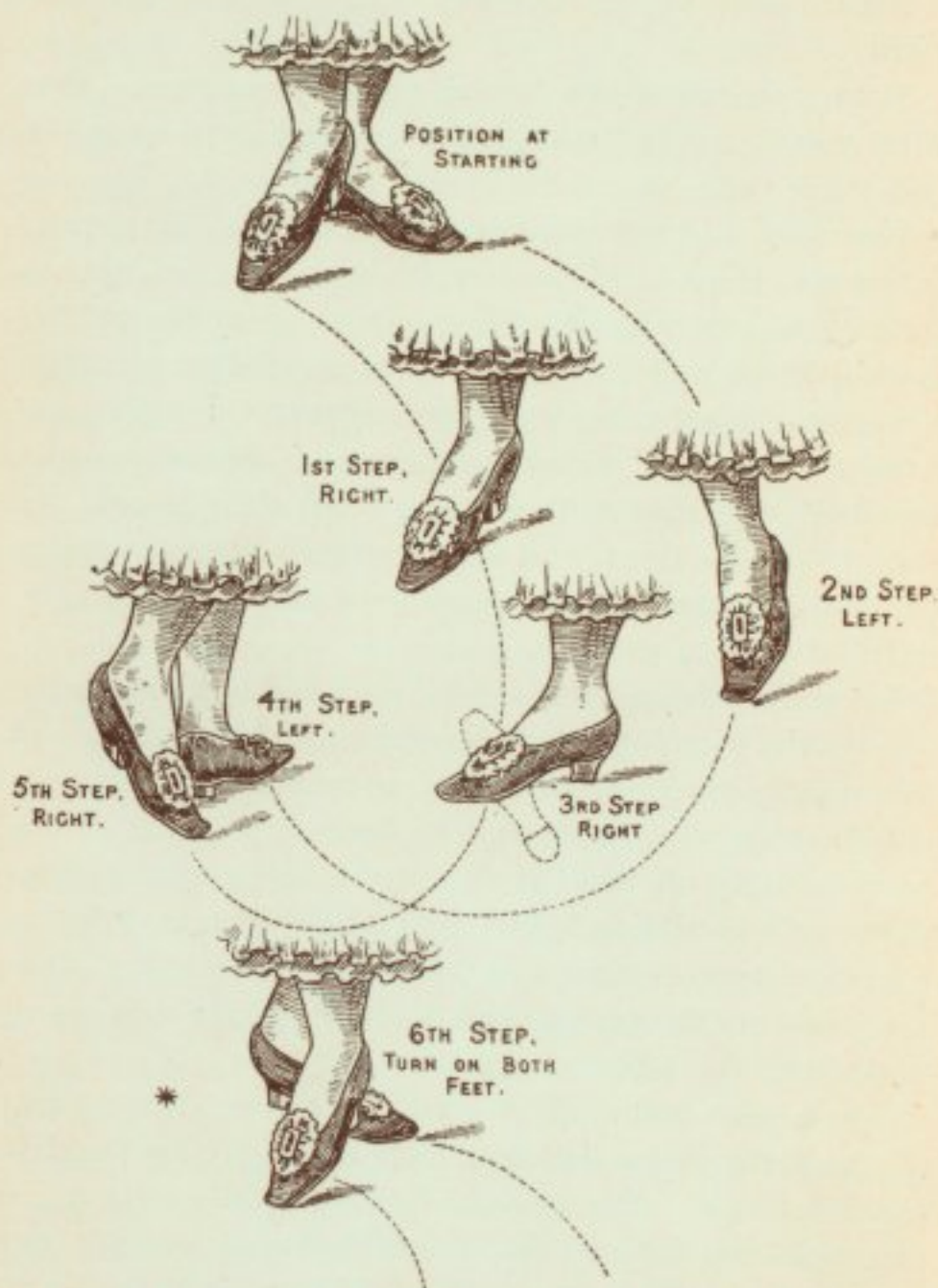
From the indications I have given, you can see that what you do in the first three steps the lady does in the last three, and so on.

Now why do I tell you to put your heels to the ground in certain steps? Why, simply because I want your dancing to have vigour and manliness about it, and because I know well enough that it is impossible to retain a perfect balance on the foot, support the lady, and draw her forward, unless you do so. Men who caper about on the tips of their toes, bend their knees, run round their partners, and keep losing balance present a particularly undignified appearance that it would be well for you to avoid.

Why do I tell you to allow no weight whatever to rest on the foot during the second and fifth steps? For the reason given in my third proposition. They are merely accessory steps, and to keep the weight of the body entirely off them is one of the first considerations in the art of waltzing lightly. It will be seen that during the short time occupied in taking these steps the other foot remains stationary, and is consequently capable of sustaining the entire weight.

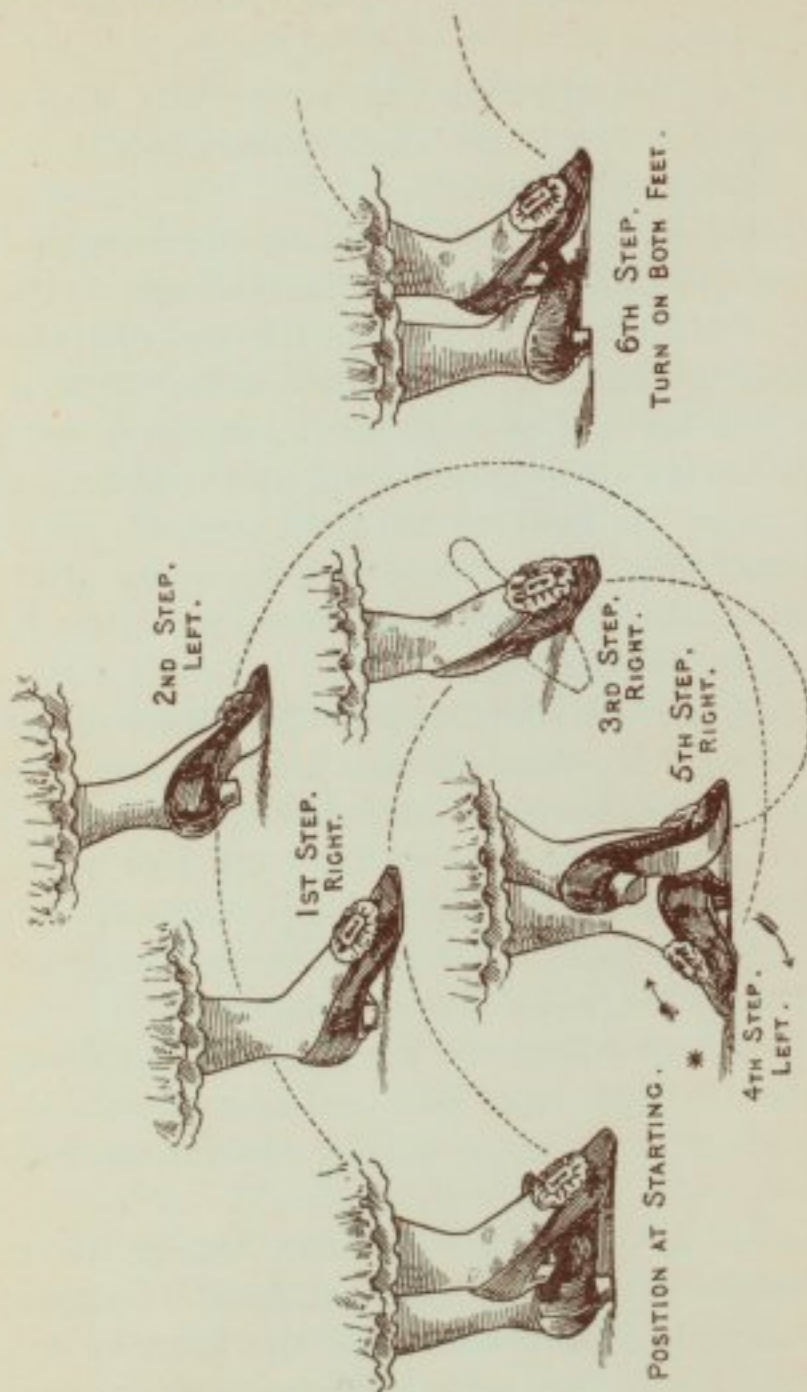
These steps you must go constantly over, always turning well round in the first three, and taking the last three forward. You will really, in rapid waltzing, be *turning all the time*, by the natural force of inertia; but do not try to do so during the last three, until the sixth, or you will turn too often and go round like a teetotum,

LADY'S STEP. FROM THE FRONT.



* N. B. IN THE 6TH STEP THE FEET REMAIN IN THE SAME PLACE AS IN THE 5TH ; THEIR RELATIVE POSITION ONLY IS CHANGED.

LADY'S STEP, FROM THE SIDE.



* N.B. IN THE 6TH STEP, THE FEET DO NOT MOVE FROM THIS PLACE ;
THEIR RELATIVE POSITION ONLY IS CHANGED.

as many do. Recollect, you have only to turn once in the six steps.

Having described at length the waltz steps for the male reader, I will now briefly explain how they should be taken by the lady.

First Step.—Beginning from a position similar to that shown in the drawing, with the balance of the body thrown entirely on the left leg, slide the right foot forward in the direction represented by the dotted line, till it is just between your partner's feet, as shown in the plate for the Gentleman's Step, and then transfer the balance of the body to the right leg.

Second Step.—Allow the left foot to pass lightly over the floor in the direction of the dotted line to the position shown in the drawing.

Third Step.—Without taking the balance of the body off the right leg, slide the foot a little forward, with a similar kind of muscular effort to that which you would use in leaping; but do not allow the foot to come off the floor, and as you take the step, simultaneously turn your body so that your foot comes into the position indicated by the *dotted foot* in the plate.

Fourth Step.—Slide the left foot round to the outside of your partner's right foot, and as soon as it reaches its destination throw the balance of the body boldly on to it.

Fifth Step.—Bring the right foot behind the left at right angles to it in what is termed the fifth position, with the toes only lightly resting on the floor.

Sixth Step.—Turn on the left foot without removing the right toe from its position, but merely bring the right heel as you turn, against the instep of the left foot,

in what is called the third position, as shown in the drawing. You may, if you find it facilitates your movements, draw the left foot back a little as you turn; but you must not take the balance off it nor separate the feet.

If now, having learnt to execute the steps and movements of the Waltz exactly as here described, and taken careful note of all the hints given, you find that you fail to derive enjoyment from your waltzing, and that your movements are still unsatisfactory, you may rest assured that there is something wrong with the muscular *action of your limbs*, or that the actions of your limbs and body are not co-ordinate. In this case it is of no use to waste time and money in lessons from the ordinary dance-teacher, who can merely teach you the steps of dances. Your only chance is to go to some teacher who thoroughly understands the anatomical aspects of dancing, and who may be able to set you right in less than an hour, even though you may have had dozens of lessons without success from ordinary teachers.

In no instance does a correct knowledge of muscular action prove of greater service to the male waltzer than when he is attempting the reverse. It is, in fact, only by substitution of extensor for flexor contraction in the arm, that he indicates to the lady his intention to change the direction of rotation. He should never do so by word of mouth. If he does, he is pretty certain to land himself in difficulties. His partner, instead of being merely passive, is very likely to make an attempt on her own account, especially if she is a suffragette, and then he may not himself be ready. On the other hand, when he is prepared to change, the girl may not be ready to respond, and so the psychological moment is

missed. No ; " do it and don't talk about it " should be your motto in connection with reversing.

Perhaps it is better, before attempting to waltz in the opposite direction, to practise going straight up and down the room either forwards or backwards. If you intend changing your rotary course to a backward movement, it must be done immediately after taking the first three (or circular) steps, in which case, instead of putting your right foot forward, between the lady's, you slide it back, and continue going backwards in a straight line, using each foot alternately, and having the balance during one three on the right, and during the next three on the left, the same as in going round. You must also linger a long while on the first step of each three, and take the second very rapidly and lightly, keeping up the exact rhythm of the Waltz as explained above. If you intend to go forwards and impel the lady backwards, the change must be made after your last three steps, in which case, instead of putting the left foot round you slide it forward. In doing this you must, of course, indicate your intention to your partner by means of the arm that is round her waist ; and mind that you do not push forward more rapidly than she can retire. There should always be a certain amount of tension on your arm, or you will be unable to direct her movements in resuming the rotary action. In going backwards in a line you must not draw away from the lady nearly so much as you did in turning, because, as you will see, there is no centrifugal force at work ; if you did, you would very soon have her over. I daresay very few waltzers are aware of the vast amount of difference in the quantity of resistance offered in rotary and recti-

lineal movement, because we are acted upon unconsciously by the forces of Nature, and therefore the difference is not apparent.

When you wish to waltz round in the opposite or reverse direction you will always have to put your left foot forward between the lady's in the progressive steps, and your right round and outside your partner's left in the circular ones. In reversing, your feet may be kept wider apart, as you have constantly to impel your partner, which you cannot do on too narrow a base ; but the same rules apply with regard to the regulation of the weight and balance as in going the ordinary way.

When you have once made up your mind that you intend to reverse, there must be no vacillation afterwards—no uncertainty of action on your part ; for if you do not exactly know what you are about yourself, how can you possibly convey your ideas to your partner ? It is of no use saying anything ; that will only confuse her : your intention to change the direction in which you are turning must be imparted by the movements of your arm and the action of your body.

It is comparatively easy for ladies to reverse ; that is, of course, provided they have good partners. They need only be careful never to change the order with which they take their steps—always right, left, right, left, alternately—and when once they are turning in the opposite direction to always put the left foot forward.

In bringing this section of my book to a close I would remark that it has not been anywhere announced that its mere perusal would enable you to dance without the aid of a master ; but for all that I trust you may find a good deal in it that will help you to dance well. I know,

at least, that it contains some information you are not likely to obtain elsewhere, and possibly more practical instruction than all the dancing-without-master books put together. I do not claim to have invented any New Waltz—that was not required. The movement herein described is in itself a perfect one, which, if danced perfectly, fulfils all the conditions of enjoyment to which attention has been drawn. What I do claim, however, is to have discovered some of the laws which govern the most beautiful of modern dances; to have been the first to formulate rules by which the movements in waltzing may be taken in strict accordance with the natural laws of motion. These things are not generally known; if they were, it is certain that people would generally waltz better than they do.

It has been my endeavour all along to inculcate a refined and chaste manner of dancing and of holding the partner that, if generally carried out, would at once disarm the enemies of dancing of their keenest weapon. I admire the art I profess to teach, and am grieved to see so much that is ungraceful and unbecoming practised and imparted—so much of the base metal passing for gold. I am convinced that little real enjoyment can be derived from imperfect dancing any more than from imperfect music. Still, where dancing is good it is almost impossible to over-estimate its value as a diversion.

Seriously, in this world we all have sufficient care and trouble, and, unfortunately, few of us are likely to derive much consolation from reflecting, with Lord Tennyson, that it is “but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million of suns.” The thought itself is a source of uneasiness to many. If, however, we can, by practising

some innocent and rational amusement, occasionally be "drawn out of ourselves" and away from the more serious considerations of our lives, then it were well that we should do so ; and I should be pleased to think that anything said in this book has helped my readers to sometimes pass a few pleasant hours.

Apart from all its health-giving, invigorating, beneficial influences, if this alone were the province of dancing it would not be a thing to despise.

Only the puritanical, who regard all worldly pleasures as sinful, or the misanthropic, to whom, for want of sympathy with their fellows, such pleasures are vain, would do so ; not the truly philosophical.

The Creator has endowed us with faculties for enjoyment and amusement ; may we not, then, infer that He means us to exercise them ?

The glorious sunshine, the songs of birds, the myriad beauties of Nature, enliven for us the golden hours of summer ; by the cultivation of dancing, music, and kindred arts, we may ourselves enliven the gloomy hours of winter.

EDUCATIONAL DANCING

Still unaccomplished may the maid be thought
Who gracefully to dance was never taught.

—CONGREVE'S *Ovid*.

As I have already hinted, there is no art concerning which people are generally less enlightened at the present day than the art of dancing. Few even know what are the characteristic features that constitute *good style*, whether as regards the ornamental or merely recreative practice of the art. Few can distinguish the dross from the gold.

I will now for the moment assume that you, reader, are a parent, and also one of the few whose aspirations at least incline towards what is really good, and who wish your children, if they learn dancing at all, to be thoroughly well taught. As an observer you have doubtless been surprised, probably shocked, at exhibitions of the rougher element in dancing of late years, at the manner in which the Set Dances have been frequently romped through, even in places where you would hardly have expected to encounter a display of bad taste.

And I daresay you have noticed girls whose manner is, to say the least, decidedly *gauche*, who appear to have merely "picked up" their dancing, so to speak,

whose every movement is utterly devoid of grace, and whose walk is either a waddle or a stride.

On the other hand, however, you must also have come across many young girls who appear to have been trained *after a fashion*, but whose deportment in a ball-room seems *entirely out of place*, girls who have evidently been taught and encouraged to adopt what may be termed the *showy style*, to move, courtesy, and flourish their skirts in a manner that would be more in keeping with a circus performance than a social gathering.

Now *you*, of course, know that this kind of thing is execrable, that, in what is termed "Society," it is not considered good form *to courtesy at all* except to Royalty, that although one may strive to gain approbation by the neatness and excellence of one's dancing, any attempt to show off in a ball-room is in the worst possible taste. We might, not unreasonably, have expected that since the teaching of dancing has been relegated more especially to lady professors, as it has now been for some years past, its practice as a social pastime would have become *more and more refined*, but we have seen that *the exact converse of this* has been the result. And why? Not, of course, because women are less refined than men, but simply because in their system of teaching they have neglected the substance for the shadow. Instead of basing their operations on a secure technical foundation, they have too often sought to allure the uneducated eye by flimsy spectacles of ribbon waving and skirt-flapping, while social dancing has been left to take care of itself, with the result that Square Dances have degenerated into mere romps—childishness without childhood's charm—and in place

of the graceful Waltz we see couples skipping around like so many grasshoppers.

Parents who wish their children to acquire a good style of dancing at the present day have indeed a difficult course to steer. On the one hand lies the Scylla of *gaucherie* and rowdyism, and on the other the Charybdis of affectation and vulgar display.

I will, however, offer a few practical suggestions by which you can easily tell if your children are being, or have been, properly taught. First ask them to show you the *five positions of the feet* which form, as it were, the foundation upon which the whole superstructure of the art is raised. Unless the teaching has been of the most perfunctory kind, these they will know. But now ask them to show you the *five positions of the arms*. If they do not know or have not been shown these, you may rest assured that there is something deficient about the system of instruction. Also ask to be shown the proper arrangement of the fingers, and the various accordant positions and actions of the arms and legs together. If the children have learnt any kind of fancy dance, ask them to show you the same with the *arms free*, that is, without holding the skirt or any accessory. Then mark the positions and action of the arms. Mark if they are angular, or delicately rounded as they should be, and note also if the movements are graceful and undulating. Ask the children to show the simple steps, such as the *jetté*, the *coupé*, the *bourrée*, *pas de zéphir*, the various *battements*, *temps levé*, *fouetté*, etc.—all used in ordinary dancing. Ask them of what steps the Polka is composed. If they have not learnt, or at least been shown all this, it is precisely the same

as if they had been taught music without having learnt the notes of the stave, or the difference between a crochet and a quaver.

People can speak a language without knowing a noun from an adjective, they can draw although ignorant of perspective, they can play tunes without being able to name the notes, and they can dance, *after a fashion*, without knowing the steps; but would you consider that any of these had been *well taught*?

Your answer will, I venture to think, be emphatically "No."

There has been a good deal of talk lately about "classic dancing," and there is no doubt that many of our modern ungraceful girls would derive considerable advantage if they were taught to imitate those beautiful attitudes which the maidens of ancient Greece employed in executing their *Dipodia*, one of the dances most frequently depicted on the great vases.

But the great beauty of Greek dancing lay in the fact that it was not confined to any particular part of the body. Head, shoulders, trunk and limbs were all harmoniously employed, *as they always should be* in dancing that is worthy to be so called.

In one of the articles that I wrote for *Sandow's Magazine of Physical Culture*, I explained that the educational object of dancing is, or should be, to cultivate a true perception of gracefulness, to stimulate the artistic faculties, and impart perfect control of the muscles in the execution of movements of a finer and more delicate nature than those employed in the ordinary functions of life.

Remember that when dancing is *properly* taught, the

exercises belonging to the art are in themselves sufficient to ensure freedom and strength of limb, evenness and normal development of frame and muscle, especially as regards girls. But if you would have your children derive real benefit from dancing lessons it is better to send them to a class where they will receive individual attention. Teachers who hold public show classes are naturally tempted to give exercises that *look pretty* in preference to those which *do good* without having a pleasing effect. In genuine dancing, many of the exercises designed to promote flexibility do not, to the casual observer, look so pleasing as mere skirt-flourishing movements, which are practically of no benefit whatever.

For my own part, although I am always pleased that the parents and relatives of children who attend my classes should be present to watch the lessons, I make it a rule not to admit strangers, because this now too prevalent practice has a most pernicious effect on the pupils. It causes the shy and backward ones to become still more embarrassed, while it is apt to engender conceit among the more alert. It also encourages them to "show off."

Now there is no more delightful spectacle than that of a child or young girl dancing for the pure love of the art, expressing in poetic pose and motion the life and joy that is within her. Such dancing, as I have elsewhere pointed out, inspired by the same impulse as the singing of the lark, produces an effect on the beholder entirely different from the effect of dancing performed solely with a view to exciting admiration.

Unhappily, however, what is really elevating and

lovely in dancing is more seldom taught, while mere "showing off" is far too much encouraged.

In a recent historical work, *Dancing in All Ages*, I endeavoured to show what dancing has been in the past, what it is in the present, and also what it may become in the future. I attempted to trace the causes of its unquestionable decadence, and to point out how its total disuse as a recreative art may be best averted. As suggested therein *mothers especially* may help in the work of regeneration by seeing that their children are taught *genuine dancing* by cultured teachers—teachers who understand the grammar and technique of their art, with all those beautiful, harmonious exercises of body and limb that properly belong thereto: exercises more beneficial to delicate boys and girls than ordinary gymnastics, since they promote true gracefulness and physical well-being without undue muscular strain.

A FEW PLAIN WORDS TO TEACHERS

The foregoing remarks have been addressed to parents, but teachers of dancing, especially those who are starting on their professional career, would do well to heed what I have written and also am about to write. It is, as you will, of course, admit, only just and honest that you should thoroughly qualify yourself in any subject that you intend imparting to others. No one will, I suppose, attempt to deny this *theoretically*, whatever may be done in practice. The unfortunate thing is that there are so many mediocre professors who, not content with giving lessons to private pupils, actually undertake to train young teachers in the art, relying on the fact that those who apply to them are, for want

of experience, unable to detect how little their would-be instructors themselves know.

Now to any teacher, young or old, I would point out that it is mere waste of time and money to go for technical instruction to other teachers who know but little more about the art than you do yourself. You may, from such teachers, learn a dance or two that you do not already know; but what you do *not* learn, and what it is most requisite you should acquire, is the *proper way of executing the steps and movements*. Moreover, you do not learn what the steps really are, and what they should be called, nor are you taught the corresponding and accordant *arm action* to each movement. What teachers do not know themselves, they cannot possibly impart to others.

The great advantage of distinguishing the steps and movements used in dancing by their proper technical names (and they are not difficult to learn, if once you are taught how to call and pronounce them, even if you don't happen to speak French) is that the names are the same in all countries, and are understood by all *genuine* professors of the art. The words are mostly French, but a few, like *capriole* and *entrechat*, are derived from the Italian (e.g. *capri*, a goat, and *intralciare*, to interweave).

Some of the movements are known among a *certain order* of professional exponents by familiar names, such as "stays," "scissors," "splits," "grape-vine," etc. But teachers using such terms give themselves away, because they proclaim the kind of school in which they graduated. Those who understand the real technique of dancing would say *pas de sissonne*, *temps échappé*, *pas tortillé*, etc. "Scissors," as a term, is less open to objec-

tion, being equivalent to the *coup de ciseaux* of the genuine art.

But suppose a young beginner wishes to perfect himself or herself in dancing as a fine art, and learn something of its technique, how is he or she to know which teachers to seek and which to avoid? Ah! there is the difficulty! But understand this: There is no authority on matters connected with dancing other than the authority of dead writers who have passed beyond the sphere of envy, the authority of tradition, of great exponents, and of the few individual teachers who have long and conscientiously studied their art.

Pray do not for one moment imagine that the addition of all the letters of the alphabet to a man's or woman's name would form the *slightest criterion* of his or her ability or knowledge of the art. Between ourselves, the best teachers are the ones least likely to have recourse to such expedients. The letters, if they mean anything at all, mean that those who use them belong to some society or other partaking of the nature of a mutual benefit society, which may be all very well in its way, but is by no means indicative of personal qualification or attainment.

Let me be clearly understood. I have not a word to say against such societies—there are, I think, two or three—so long as their aims are legitimate aims. The members, like all of us, while looking with one eye towards the amelioration of their profession, take good care to keep the other eye steadily fixed on the main chance. For this who shall blame them? Certainly not I. But no society has the least right to arrogate to itself any kind of *authority* whatever, since the best

and most exclusive teachers, for obvious reasons, prefer to remain independent of any society.

No, in selecting a teacher under whom you can train awhile for the profession, or to whom you can go for casual instruction, or to acquire artistic dances, be led rather by his or her personal reputation, and you may take it as a pretty safe rule that those who have been teaching the longest know the most—at least they *ought* to. *Docendo discimus.*

It is no exaggeration to say that you may learn more of the art from one teacher in an hour than you would from another in a year, for, as I said just now, a teacher can only impart *what he himself knows*, and if he knows very little, so much the worse for the pupil. However small the amount paid for such instruction, it is only money wasted.

Whoever is your instructor, don't hesitate to ask for explanations. You may, if you are sharp, learn a good deal thus. Anyhow, as hinted in my preliminary remarks, you may at least discover if you are in the right hands. You should carefully read and learn the names of steps given in my next chapter. Ask your teacher to explain these. You will find them more fully described in my work on *Dancing*, in the All England Series, and also you will there find the axioms of gracefulness in arm and body action clearly set forth. See if what you are learning coincides with these axioms, on which you may rely as being absolutely correct, according to tradition and the practice of the greatest exponents of dancing that the world has known. No teacher who really understands his art minds being asked questions; on the contrary, he delights in explain-

ing. If you came to me, I should be pleased if you asked me all you wished to know.

There is, perhaps, no dance about which so much is *talked* and so comparatively little *known* as the *menuet de la cour*. If you want to learn the *real thing*, and you go to a teacher who shows you a dance in which the partners bow and courtesy several times, in which they are constantly raising hands, and in which the figure of a **Z** does not occur, then you may be quite sure that what you are learning is not the *menuet de la cour*, whatever else it may be. If you want to know what the Minuet was really like, and to learn *exactly how it was danced* in the days of Louis XV, you will find all the steps, figures and movements clearly explained in the special chapter devoted to the Minuet in *Dancing in All Ages*, and from this you can discover if what you have learnt is correct, or merely a fancy dance that has been passed off as the genuine *menuet de la cour*.

Another matter to which I would draw the young teacher's attention is that the method of explaining ordinary social dances which I have adopted in these pages is by no means the method I should adopt if I were teaching them personally in a class.

Here I have presumed that the reader has not had the advantage of technical training, and that he or she at the outset knows very little, if anything at all, of dancing as an art. In a class, however, my first object would be to instruct pupils in the rudiments of the art, starting with the positions, *battements*, etc., proceeding to the various steps and exercises for proper arm and body action. In an educational class even such a simple dance as the Polka would be explained as con-

sisting of *temps levé*, *glissade*, *pas coupé* and *jetté*, all, of course, modified to accord with what is considered good taste in ball-room dancing.

And this is the only proper way to teach in an educational class. Nor do the technical terms present the least difficulty to the children if they are clearly explained, as the Italian terms used in music are always explained by the teacher. But all teachers of music who are worth their salt know what *allegro*, *adagio*, *semplice*, *pomposo*, etc., mean; why, then, do not all teachers of dancing learn the technique of their profession—and learn it *correctly*—from educated masters of the art?

Everything depends upon the laying of a good foundation on which to build. I have little pupils, five to seven years old, who could show you correctly every *pas* and *temps* mentioned in my next chapter if you merely gave them the technical names thereof. And not only could they show you the steps and movements, but could illustrate the proper and traditional arm actions by which the various *enchâînements* should be accompanied. You need not take my *ipse dixit* for this. If you care to do so, you can judge for yourself personally whether the statement is true. It may not be a complimentary observation, but it is nevertheless a fact, that there are many teachers not only taking money from private pupils, but also pretending to teach the art to other teachers, who do not themselves know so much of the theory of dancing as do these little girls.

The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing remarks, both by parents and young teachers, is this: that it is better and wiser to keep your money in your own pocket than to pay for inferior instruction.

STAGE DANCING

Who hath not owned with rapture-smitten frame
The power of grace ?

—CAMPBELL.

IN a former section of this work, when treating of dancing in its social aspects, I addressed my remarks principally to male readers ; but apart from the question of pure interest in the art, it is mostly girls who aspire to the practical attainment of its higher branches, and therefore it is to them that the following observations more generally apply. All the same, if a man wishes to become a really good dancer, even of ball-room dances, he would do well to give attention to what I am about to say, and also to conscientiously practise the positions and rudimentary exercises.

As regards the male reader who hopes to achieve any success as a stage dancer, it is absolutely imperative that he should not only practise as here set forth, but he should make himself thoroughly acquainted with the whole technique of dancing, and acquire the true principles of graceful action.

As these principles and rules apply to all genuine dancing, whether its exponents be male or female, what follows should prove equally useful to readers of either sex.

Remember, however, that we are here concerned

only with the classic or operatic style of dancing, not with the arts of the acrobat or the contortionist. To hold the foot perpendicularly above the head, to turn somersaults, to bend the body backwards until you can pick up a handkerchief with your teeth, may be very clever *as tricks*, and there is no harm in practising them if you care to do so. But pray don't for one moment imagine that these, and similar accomplishments have any place whatever in the art of dancing.

To some people it comes quite easy to do the things that I have mentioned, just as it comes easy to some to move their ears. It is more a matter of heredity than of art.

Even in the domain of legitimate dancing a great deal depends on natural aptitude. I have had girl pupils who could almost immediately move on the tips of their toes, even in ordinary shoes, without stiffening, and others to whom the action seemed almost impossible. Again, there are people who can perform *cabrioles* and *entrechats à quatre*, roughly of course, but almost spontaneously, if they are shown the way to do them; while others, even after considerable training, appear to find such steps extremely difficult.

To return, however, to the question of practice, if you desire to become a genuine operatic dancer you must first learn to *keep your balance*.

If, on the other hand, you aspire to shine as a knock-about performer, then your first consideration is to learn *how to fall*. But, as I said, that is an art with which we are not here concerned.

In comic dancing the movements that belong to the more serious art are exaggerated, travestied, or per-

formed in a grotesque manner ; but the comic dancer will gain much and be in a far better position to invest his performance with genuine humour, if he studies the true principles of the art which it is his business to burlesque, and if, on occasion, he is able to execute the steps, and movements really well.

In my treatise on *Dancing in All Ages*, which professional aspirants would do well to obtain, I defined dancing, in its simplest form, as :

A rhythmic progression of the body by varied and studied actions of the limbs.

In a higher form as :

A rhythmic motion or progression of the body by varied and studied actions of the limbs, combined with movements and attitudes arranged for the avowed purpose of displaying agility and personal gracefulness.

And in its highest form as :

The art of expressing gracefully and intelligibly, by movement and gesture, every emotion and sentiment of which the mind is capable, and every incident possible to human life.

The intelligent reader will at once perceive that the first definition applies to merely recreative dancing, the second to simple artistic or ornamental dancing, and the third to dramatic dancing.

Such is the dancing of the ballet, and to acquire the same successfully it will be necessary for you to study not only the laws of graceful action, but also the natural effect of the various emotions on our bodies, limbs, and features.

I cannot in a short treatise like this enter into a subject so exhaustive as the correct pantomimic port-
D. I

trayal of passions, sentiments and emotions, but it will be at once apparent that there are some which can only be successfully delineated by disregarding the laws of gracefulness which usually govern the dancer's movements.

To give a single illustration :

In ordinary ballet dancing, the fingers of the performer should be gracefully grouped in a manner which I shall presently explain ; but suppose in the course of the ballet he or she is required to express the emotion of great and sudden terror. Then the arms will be simultaneously raised, the mouth wide opened, the features distorted and the five fingers spread out and opened to their fullest extent. This action is altogether ungraceful *per se*, but, in the circumstances, perfectly consistent and correct ; above all it is indicative of fright, and as such its employment denotes the true artist.

Beyond these natural spontaneous gestures by which the sentiments and emotions are usually expressed, there are also conventional gestures employed in ballet dancing which are supposed to indicate matters less apparent to the onlooker—events and circumstances such as marriage, a battle, a revolution, the condition of servitude or the possession of power, etc.

Undoubtedly the greatest exponents of dramatic dancing are the Italians, for to them the art of expressive gesture seems to come quite naturally. Even in ordinary conversation they appear to talk almost as much with their limbs and features as with their tongues, especially in the south. I have read that there was once a ruler of the southern provinces who, being suspicious of rebellion, for a certain period forbade any of

his subjects to speak on pain of death, and that it was in consequence of this cruel restriction that the inhabitants of Sicily and Naples developed their marvellous aptitude for pantomimic action.

Those who intend to make a serious study of dramatic dancing should carefully note the expression of the human form and features, and attitude of the figure under the influence of rage, agony, despair, joy, love, remorse, wonder, awe, fear, horror, disdain and every kind of passion or sentiment as depicted in the works of great sculptors and painters. I have myself learnt much concerning the true principles by which dancing in its higher forms is governed, from careful observation of famous statues and pictures in the art galleries of England, France and Italy, especially the last-mentioned, which is indeed the cradle of modern art. And I would earnestly exhort those readers who have the opportunity to do likewise. The late Lord Leighton, though his work is sometimes slightly referred to as being of the decorative order, invariably depicted his figures in graceful and characteristic attitudes. No one who has any perception of the truly beautiful in art can fail to admire them.

But let us now turn our attention to those rudimentary details which have to be studied and assiduously practised by all who hope to attain any degree of success in the more ornamental branches of dancing.

POSITIONS AND EXERCISES

First of all it is absolutely necessary that you should learn and practise the five positions, which, as I have already said, form the foundation upon which the whole

art is built. For stage dancing the positions are somewhat different from those employed in ball-room dancing, which, although not always specified, have actually already been explained in the foregoing descriptions of dances. In the ball-room it is sufficient to place the feet at right angles to each other; but for the practice of fancy dances they should be turned outward as much as possible. Unless you are careful to observe this invariable rule, your steps and limb movements (*temps*, as they are termed) will lose all appearance of brilliancy. Briefly, the positions may be described as follows:

In the *first position* the feet are placed with the heels together and the toes apart; in the *second* the heels are separated by a space equal to the length of one's own foot; in the *third* the feet are brought together so that the heel of one comes to the instep of the other; in the *fourth* one foot is placed directly before the other at a convenient distance; and in the *fifth* the feet are again closed so that the heel of one comes to the toes of the other. In all of these positions the toes and knees of the dancer must be turned *completely outward*. Generally one foot is pointed, the toes only resting on the floor, while the other supports the weight of the body and is said to remain in the first position. When the pointed limb is extended midway between the *second* and *fourth* positions, it is said to be in the *intermediate position*.

Remember that, however far the foot may be extended to the side, or however high it may be raised from the ground, it is still in the *second position*, and however far it may be extended or raised in front or behind, it is still in the *fourth position*.

Having acquired facility in the employment of the

various positions, you have next to practise the flexions of the knees and risings on the toes, which movements should be executed in all the positions, and with the body supported sometimes on one and sometimes on both limbs. You must also devote considerable attention to the *battements*, or the raising, lowering, and extending of one limb while the other supports the body. It is usual to grasp a bar or take hold of some firm object in practising these movements, which are made in all directions. *Grands battements* are those in which the moving limb is raised high, and *petits battements* those in which the toes do not leave the ground.

It is only against the inane and altogether meaningless practice of kicking the foot repeatedly into the air that I have spoken. The pupil should endeavour to raise her limbs *as high as possible* in the *second position*, passing each from the fifth *en avant* to the fifth *en arrière*, with the knee turned completely outward, *the higher the better*.

The *high battement* is perfectly good style. It is employed in all genuine operatic dancing, and too much time cannot be spent on its cultivation; but the *high kick* is something altogether outside the domain of art. The perfect suppleness of the hip-joint which is so absolutely necessary in movements like the *temps de cuisse*, can only be obtained by what is technically known as "side practice."

The constant practice of these preliminary exercises will impart a considerable degree of freedom to the movements of your lower limbs, and will enable you to perform with ease the various steps employed in dancing. Of these the simplest are the *pas glissé*, or glided step;

the *jetté*, or step wherein the weight of the body is thrown from one leg to the other ; the *pas sauté*, or hop ; the *coupé* or cut step ; the *pas marché* or walking step ; the *chassé*, or chasing step ; and the *ballonné*, in which the foot moves as if it were passing over a ball. Among the more difficult are the *ailes de pigeons*, *capriole*, and *entrechat*—movements in which the feet or limbs are struck together, or crossed and re-crossed during a leap—*ronds de jambe*, *temps de cuisse*, *temps brisé*, *fouetté*, etc., and the various *pirouettes* or turnings of the body on the toes of one or both feet. Then there are compound steps, such as the *pas de basque*, *pas de bourrée*, *pas de sissonne*, *pas de zéphir*, and *pas de menuet*, which latter always begins with the right foot and occupies two bars of music.

These and other steps should be learnt and practised, and the names thereof committed to memory ; but be very careful that you do not apply wrong terms to the movements, as I regret to say many do who profess to teach dancing. You will find all the steps and movements generally used in dancing clearly described and technical terms fully explained in a larger illustrated book of mine, published by Messrs. George Bell and Sons, in their All England Series. Here space will only permit of my giving a few general hints to the pupil :

When you have diligently practised the steps and movements singly, you may begin to combine them ; but this, of course, can only be done satisfactorily at first under the direction of an experienced teacher. Such combinations of steps and movements are technically called *enchâînements*, and from a series of such *enchâînements* constructed in a tasteful manner on some definite

geometrical figure, which constitutes what is termed the *track* of the dancer, an ornamental dance is developed.

It must not, however, be supposed from the above statement that the mere acquaintance with a few steps and movements will enable anyone with an inventive turn of mind to arrange a successful fancy dance. Many amateurs, and not a few teachers, who have not sufficiently studied the grammar of their art, fall into this error. There are other matters to be considered. For instance, the natural and orderly sequence of the steps ; the judicious blending of light and shade, as represented by open and closed positions of the limbs, and alternation of calm and dignified movements with those of a lighter nature ; the harmonious action of the various parts of the body ; the poetry of posture ; the adaptation of the steps and movements to the nature of the musical phrases by which they are accompanied ; indeed, the successful arrangement of really artistic dances not only requires a perfect knowledge of dancing in all its phases, but necessarily involves some acquaintance with the sister arts.

It is not always fair, though, to judge the merits of a dance by the performance of amateur pupils. A poorly arranged dance, such as one sometimes sees on the stage exhibited by an accomplished dancer, will, in spite of constructive imperfections—apparent to the true critic—often look far better than will a dance of the most elaborate and artistic design, when executed by a performer who has not been well or sufficiently trained. In other words, the mind of the general spectator is more immediately concerned with the personality of the dancer than with the order and figure of the dance.

Along with the practice of steps and *enchâînements* it will be necessary to study and practise appropriate gestures, postures, and movements of the arms, body and head.

As I have already pointed out, the rules by which a dancer's movements should be governed are as definitely fixed as are those which the painter and musician obey. Indeed, they have proved far more enduring; for—although the works of modern artists bear but little resemblance to those of Cimabue and his contemporaries; and although mediæval notation is almost unintelligible to the ordinary student, while scarcely anything is known of Greek music with its various modes—it is certain that the rules of dancing are precisely the same to-day as they were two or three thousand years ago. The ancient Egyptians were taught to turn their toes outward and downward, to pose and move the limbs in opposition, to pirouette on one leg with the other extended in the second position, to execute many of the steps familiar to us, as we may convince ourselves by reference to their sculptures. The Greeks practised figure-dancing in their *Hormos* and *Dipodia*, *cabrioles* and *jettés* in their *Bibasis*, and slow movements and graceful poses in their order of dancing called *Emmelia*. We have specimens of the graceful attitudes adopted by Greek female dancers on ancient vases and in some of the figures painted on the walls at Pompeii, which, although situated in Italy, was a Greek city. Notably, there is one girl represented supporting herself on the left leg, while her right toe rests on the ground in the fourth rearward position. Her left arm is raised and brought a little forward, while the right is lowered.

Between the fingers and thumb of each hand she daintily holds some flowing drapery. The fingers are well grouped and the wrists delicately curved; the head is gracefully posed upon the shoulders, the face being turned in the direction of the raised arm.

This for *terre à terre* dancing is quite an ideal manner of disposing the limbs, and is employed as frequently to-day, among cultured dancers, as it was nineteen centuries since.

A girl who wishes to perfect herself in the art of graceful posing cannot, as I previously hinted, do better than study the attitudes of famous statues, both ancient and modern, and, above all things, she should constantly practise before a mirror—if possible, one in which she can see her whole body. The rules of gracefulness, as applied to dancing, are elaborately formulated in my larger work, and should all be carefully studied and learnt. A few general directions must here suffice.

The arms, in dancing, are not moved precisely as they are in the ordinary actions of life. Whenever muscular effort is put forth, the arms generally display angles, forming, as they do, natural levers, of which the elbow is the fulcrum; but when they are moved in dancing, there is no call for the employment of strength; gracefulness of action is alone the object in view, and angles are to be avoided. Consequently, whenever the hands are raised, the elbows should be raised with them, and turned outwards so that the points are not visible to the audience. This is a rule always observed by good dancers. But the arms should, generally speaking, be allowed to follow their natural inclination to move in opposition to the lower limbs. For instance, it is usual to have the

right arm forward when the left foot is forward, and *vice versa* ; also the arm opposite an extended limb is generally raised, while the one on the same side is lowered. Be careful always to bend the wrist a little when you have occasion to bend the elbows, in order to give the arms a rounded appearance. See also that your fingers are well grouped, the second and third close together and slightly bent, the first and fourth a little separated from the others, and the thumb curved towards the middle finger. The head should generally incline a little to one side, and, when drapery is used as an accessory, you should take it lightly between the finger and thumb and endeavour to move your arms according to the rules, as nearly as possible as if they were free.

As regards the correct grouping of the fingers, you will observe in Lord Leighton's well-known picture, "The Return of Persephone," that the girl's fingers are represented *exactly* as I have indicated in the foregoing paragraph. If you do not happen to have seen the original beautiful painting, there are reproductions of it from which you may gain ideas. The arms of Demeter, you will notice, are extended in the *third position* as she advances eagerly to welcome her daughter back to earth.

When once you have learnt to move your body and limbs in conformity with the rules of dancing, and have practised all the principal steps and *temps* under the guidance of a skilled teacher, the acquisition of any particular dance, such as a Hornpipe, Reel, Cachucha, Tarantella, Minuet, or Gavotte, will be a comparatively easy matter. It will also give you but little trouble to acquire ornamental dances in which accessories are

employed, such, for instance, as a fan, scarf, garland of flowers, tambourine or pleated skirt.

Dances performed without accessories perhaps afford the greatest scope for a display of real Terpsichorean talent. They are usually more difficult to execute, and require more careful study. I sometimes arrange dances in which the arms and hands, unencumbered in any way, are moved synchronously with the feet, their action being regulated by the nature of the steps, the characteristics of the dance, and of course, the requirements of art. The correct feeling of such dances I find it a little difficult to impart, even to teachers—many of whom come to me for artistic novelties—and, I need scarcely say, they can only be satisfactorily executed by those who are naturally graceful, and understand the rules of gracefulness.

A dancer's ability and knowledge are in no way to be gauged by the number of dances that he or she may happen to have learnt, *but only by the style in which the steps and movements are executed*. I frequently come across pupils who, although they have been taught to go through a great many fancy dances *after a fashion*, can scarcely be said to know anything whatever of artistic dancing, and make constant errors of movement.

In conclusion I would urge that, although you may learn dances innumerable, good, bad, or indifferent, from ordinary dance teachers, it is only from the few who have conscientiously devoted years of study to their profession, and are familiar with its traditions, that you can acquire the Art of Dancing