

Dancing, artistic and social. Rev. and enl. ed.

Scott, Edward.

London, G. Bell, 1920.

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433012388140>

HathiTrust



www.hathitrust.org

**Public Domain in the United States,
Google-digitized**

http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-us-google

We have determined this work to be in the public domain in the United States of America. It may not be in the public domain in other countries. Copies are provided as a preservation service. Particularly outside of the United States, persons receiving copies should make appropriate efforts to determine the copyright status of the work in their country and use the work accordingly. It is possible that current copyright holders, heirs or the estate of the authors of individual portions of the work, such as illustrations or photographs, assert copyrights over these portions. Depending on the nature of subsequent use that is made, additional rights may need to be obtained independently of anything we can address. The digital images and OCR of this work were produced by Google, Inc. (indicated by a watermark on each page in the PageTurner). Google requests that the images and OCR not be re-hosted, redistributed or used commercially. The images are provided for educational, scholarly, non-commercial purposes.

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 01238814 0

DANCING

ARTISTIC & SOCIAL



EDWARD SCOTT.

July 30
9/6



ANTIQUARIATO
W. TOSCANINI & C.
Books, Engravings, Autographs
Via Cerva 19, MILANO

9404

V MCRL
Scott

DANCING

ARTISTIC AND SOCIAL

DANCING

ARTISTIC AND SOCIAL

BY

EDWARD SCOTT

AUTHOR OF

"DANCING AS IT SHOULD BE," "DANCING IN ALL AGES," ETC.

REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION



LONDON

G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.

1920



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
BRUNSWICK ST., STAMFORD ST., S.E. 1,
AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

FOREWORD

It has been my endeavour in the present volume to treat of dancing in a popular manner; but at the same time an attempt has been made to instil into the reader's mind a somewhat higher conception of the subject than that which is usually entertained.

Expression has been given to a conviction that, with the present rapid advance of culture, the day cannot be far distant when dancing will resume a recognized position among the fine arts, and be generally taught and studied in its higher phases, like music and painting; when it will once more form an essential and important branch of education, as it did long ago in ancient Greece; when proficiency of performance among amateur dancers will again command admiration, as in our own Elizabethan era. The greatest philosophers and deepest thinkers of all ages, from Plato to Herbert Spencer, have looked upon dancing as a subject not unworthy of their attention. The latter would indeed seem to regard dancing, even in its purely social aspects, as something more than a frivolous pastime, for in speaking of the æsthetic sentiments in his *Principles of Psychology*, he says: "The feelings from time to time received along with perception of graceful movements were mostly agreeable. The persons who exhibited such movements were usually the cultivated, and those whose behaviour

yielded gratification. The occasions have usually been festive ones—balls, private dances, and the like.”

There has unfortunately been of late a tendency to substitute the practice of mere gymnastic exercises for dancing lessons at schools. But such exercises, however useful they may be for developing the frame, will never suffice to give that ease and grace of bearing which result from the practice of those beautiful movements of the body and limbs that properly belong to the art we are about to consider.

In the present edition, beyond making such emendations as appeared necessary in the text, I have altered some of the illustrative plates and added new ones. Descriptions are also given of dances that have obtained a more or less transient popularity before and after the great war.

EDWARD SCOTT.

*Rochester House,
Holland Road,
Hove.*

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	I
II. ADVICE TO PUPILS CONCERNING INSTRUCTION .	10
III. DANCING TO MUSIC	18
IV. THE FIVE POSITIONS AND THEIR MODIFICATIONS	21
V. ON NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL MOVEMENTS, WITH PREPARATORY MUSCULAR EXERCISES . .	27
VI. STEPS AND MOVEMENTS USED IN DANCING, WITH EXERCISES FOR PRACTISING THE SAME .	34
VII. RULES OF GRACEFULNESS TO BE OBSERVED BY THOSE WHO WOULD BECOME GOOD DANCERS	64
VIII. ORNAMENTAL AND SOLO DANCES	78
IX. DANCING AS A PASTIME	89
X. STYLE IN DANCING	97
XI. QUADRILLES OR SET DANCES	104
XII. A DESCRIPTION OF MOVEMENTS AND EXPLANATION OF TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN QUADRILLE DANCING	109

CHAP.		PAGE
XIII.	MODERN SQUARE DANCES	118
XIV.	MODERN SOCIAL DANCING	124
	Correct Position of Partners.	
	Standard and Ephemeral Dances.	
	The Polka, Schottische, Barn Dance, Highland Schottische, Polka Mazurka, Two Step, One Step.	
	Alien Dances.	
	Tango and Maxixe Brésilienne.	
	The Fox Trot.	
	"Boston" and "Hesitation" Waltz.	
	Waltz Variations.	
XV.	THE WALTZ	147
XVI.	THE HIGHER CULTURE OF DANCING	173

DANCING.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IN undertaking to write the following chapters, I am animated by the hope that observations founded on actual experience in teaching, and careful investigation into the more scientific aspects of dancing, may prove useful alike to professor and pupil. In order, however, that the matter contained in these pages may be rendered clear and comprehensible to every reader, it will be assumed at the outset that he or she has no knowledge of the art which it will be my endeavour to explain.

The student who would seek real information concerning dancing, finds it necessary to make research into old volumes treating of the subject, as, for instance, those of Tabouret, Gallini, Blasis, Rameau, etc. These and similar works appear, for the most part at least, to possess the merit of having been compiled by men of culture and discernment; but, unfortunately for the general reader, they seem to have been designed chiefly for the use and

B

edification of those who are already acquainted with the technicalities of dancing.

I can imagine the disappointment that would be experienced by an inquiring pupil or embryo teacher who, having purchased some ancient work on the subject in the hope of finding therein reliable descriptions of old-time dances, discovers on perusal, that at a given juncture the dancers perform "*assiettes de pied*," "*coups de ciseaux*," or a "*demi queue du chat*."

If, as is usually the case, he be unacquainted with Terpsichorean technology, the terms will convey to his mind a very indistinct notion—if indeed any notion at all—of the nature of the required movements. The words are French, it is true, but even a perfect knowledge of that language will fail to enlighten him in regard to their signification. If the reader be ignorant of French, the most painstaking research in dictionary and grammar will but lead him to the conclusion that the terms must imply something more than their actual meaning. He ascertains that there is something about plates of feet, a stroke of the scissors, and half a cat's tail—information which certainly does not tend to make the matter clearer, and only leaves him, if anything, a little more hopelessly bewildered than he was before.

With regard to modern works on dancing it is not necessary to say much. They are for the greater part made up of promiscuous extracts taken from old books, by compilers who appear to have no very profound knowledge of the subject. In some respects they resemble the treatise of the learned Shimei on "Effecting Impossibilities," which contains not a single original observation, and makes equal sense read backward or forward.¹ Most of the "Ball-room Guides," as they are termed, contain merely perfunctory

¹ *Atroy*, by Lord Beaconsfield.

descriptions of certain society dances, without even an allusion to those preparatory exercises and movements, by the practice of which alone a pupil is enabled to execute even the simplest dance with any degree of gracefulness.

Of course one can scarcely expect to find an elaborate dissertation on dancing in a work of waistcoat pocket dimensions; but really it would seem as if it were the aim of some compilers to give as little information as possible for the money. Like the celebrated Frenchwoman, they might almost write, "*Je commence parceque je n'ai rien à faire. Je finis parceque je n'ai rien à dire.*"

Sometimes it happens that writers of books on dancing are better acquainted with the art practically than they are with the proper application of the words they use to express their ideas. In one of the best of these small works, I find the *fifth position* thus explained, "Place both feet parallel and quite close together, with the toes turned outward, so that the heel of the front foot touches the toes of the rear one." There is absolutely no meaning whatever in the above description, because if the feet are *parallel* side by side, the toes cannot be *turned outward*, and if the toes are turned outward, *one foot being before the other*, then the feet cannot be parallel—at least not according to Euclid's definition of the word. The same writer informs us that when the *traversé* figure of a quadrille is "performed simultaneously by two couples, the gentlemen cross in a semi-circle to the left" Clearly, the gentlemen could not cross in a *semi-circle* without knocking the side couples out of their places. What the writer *means* is that the gentlemen in crossing describe an *arc* of a circle—a circle much larger than could be contained within the area of the figure formed by the dancers. I do not think that these and other inaccuracies of statement are the result of carelessness,

because the author seems to have been at great pains to make his sentences euphonious, and has succeeded in compressing a great many long adjectives into a very small space. There are a few instances in which sense has been sacrificed to sound; but in this peculiarity the writer errs in good company. Do we not find, if we come to analyse many of the finest sounding passages in our literature, that there is very little real meaning in them? Does not Wordsworth tell us of a sensible lady, who, hearing Professor Wilson read the lines—

“Where Andes, giant of the western star,
With meteor standard to the wind unfurled,
Looks from his throne of clouds o’er half the world”—

and express great admiration for them, declaring they were splendid, asked, “*But what do they mean?*” “Mean!” exclaimed the professor in his broad Scotch accent, as he dashed the book on the ground, “I’ll be daumed if I can tell!”

M. Coulon, who was one of the first professors, if not the first, to introduce the polka into England, commences his description of the dance with the following remarkable statement:—“There are only three steps in the polka, which are all jumped, and occupy one bar of music, the fourth interval being only a repose to give time to prepare for the next foot.” There is something unique about the expression, “Prepare for the next *foot*.” Young ladies, when dancing with clumsy partners, find it necessary to hold themselves in readiness for “the next foot,” lest it should chance to descend upon their own; but that is not what the writer means, he means the next *step*. What, however, is most peculiar about M. Coulon’s description is, that after telling us that the steps of the polka “*are all jumped*,” he proceeds in the next paragraph to explain that “the gentleman for

the first step springs lightly upon the right foot, and almost simultaneously slides the left foot to the side, finishing on both feet with the knees bent." The instructions to *slide* the left foot hardly agree with the previous statement that all the steps are *jumped*. The two following steps of the polka M. Coulon describes as *jettés*, and he tells us, in concluding, that "this description of the polka step may be danced either to the right or to the left." The words certainly convey the impression that it is the *description* which may be danced; but of course the author means the step according to his description.

I have quoted these instances, especially the last, because I wish to show how easily a person who thoroughly understands his art may fall into errors of description, even when attempting to explain a dance with which, in the nature of things, he must be perfectly familiar; and if a man of M. Coulon's experience and skill has occasionally blundered in his descriptions, I trust the present writer may be pardoned if he should chance to do the same. The late Mr. Proctor, in one of his books, has a remark to the effect that if any one would test his literary powers, let him sit down and try to describe clearly some simple game, say a game of cards. He will be surprised to find how difficult it is. To describe a movement in proper terms is ten times more difficult. In the present work I will endeavour to make my meaning clear, in giving explanations; but should the reader fail to grasp it, he will, I trust, be lenient to the author, and not say very unkind things about his stupidity.

I have hinted that as a rule the compilers of modern works on dancing, whatever may be their shortcomings in other respects, cannot be accused of prolixity. It may be that like Sam Weller they consider the great art of writing is to cause one to "wish there was more," and that this

principle applies to ball-room guides as well as to love letters. Perhaps by the time the reader dips well into the present treatise he will begin to "wish there was *less*." That will be an unfortunate state of things, for if he be tempted to skip any part of the book, he may not be so well able to understand what follows. I will promise him, however, that if he takes the trouble to go through the different chapters carefully, and *in their proper order*, he will find that there does not occur a single technical term or expression, unless some attempt is, or has been, made to explain the same intelligibly.

I am only too well aware that the reader who does me the honour to peruse the descriptions of movements carefully will find some dry reading. But it may be assumed that whoever wades through the practical part of this work will do so with the idea of deriving profit rather than amusement therefrom. If, then, he will set himself the task of conscientiously practising according to the instructions given—beginning at the beginning, and not attempting the more difficult dances until he has satisfactorily mastered all the preliminary exercises, he will find, I trust, that the result will repay him for the time and trouble expended.

In the present section, I intend to treat of dancing both as an art and as a pastime, apart as much as possible from all those artificial, frivolous, and too often injurious surroundings and accessories with which the practice has somehow come to be almost inseparably connected. It is the wish of my publishers that, consistently with the purpose of their "Handbooks," dancing should be regarded as a healthful exercise,¹ that may be practised beneficially

¹ When Socrates was caught by his friends practising the dance Memphis, he observed that "Dancing was a gymnastic exercise for every limb."—*Deipnosophists of Athenæus*, Book I. 37.

with ardour by the young of both sexes, and with greater moderation by those of more advanced age—an exercise and pastime that may be agreeably pursued upon the smooth lawn in the glorious summer daylight, or in the spacious lamp-lit room, or even cosy parlour when the evenings lengthen. The idea of dancing in a cosy parlour will seem strange to many readers with whom the word is almost synonymous with waltzing; but nevertheless there are not a few very enjoyable and beautiful dances that require but limited space for execution.

Dancing *itself*, whether pursued as an art, exercise, or pastime, is healthful, grace-giving, beautifying, and refining, when practised with discretion and at proper times; but, like all other pursuits, however beneficial in themselves, it may become positively harmful when allowed to encroach on those hours which nature intended should be devoted to the recuperation of exhausted energies in refreshing sleep.

Although in the course of my explanations and remarks, I may have frequent occasion to allude to ball-room practices, the work should not be regarded as a ball-room guide. It is to be taken rather as a treatise on dancing *per se*, in which natural gracefulness, and the scientific means by which that desirable but rare quality may be cultivated, will claim our attention before conventional rules of deportment and etiquette. These remarks are made in no disparaging spirit whatever. I merely wish to point out that such matters do not necessarily come within the scope of the present work, and will therefore be referred to incidentally, rather than as if they formed a part of the general plan.

At the same time, in treating of dancing as a pastime, I shall not neglect opportunities of pointing out those qualities among ball-room performers which tend to elevate

or degrade the practice of dancing. Individual dances and styles of performing them may have a certain vogue; and then be heard of no more; but dancing itself does not go out of fashion; and in dancing, especially when performed by couples, there are certain elements of refinement and of vulgarity which no passing caprice of fashion can ever change. For example, at one time it may be considered "good form," as it is termed, to walk quietly through a square dance, while at another time it may be quite the correct thing to galop through the figures. These matters are regulated entirely by custom. One or the other style may be out of date, but neither is intrinsically vulgar. On the other hand, it could never in any circumstances be considered correct, either from a standpoint of art, courtesy, or good taste, for a man to squeeze a lady to whom he has just been introduced closely against himself in executing a waltz. Such a practice would always be wanting in refinement and delicacy, even though princes should set us the example. Again, suppose that the objectionable, though unfortunately not altogether uncommon practice, among partners in round dances, of extending the arms outward to the annoyance and endangerment of other dancers, should ever commend itself to a few recognized leaders of fashion, and consequently, owing to the ovine tendencies of human nature, come to be regarded as "good form"—that fact would not cause the practice to appear any the less objectionable from a rational point of view, and certainly it would not suffice to render it artistically correct.

I shall not, then, in the following pages commend or condemn any practice simply because it happens to be fashionable or otherwise at the time of writing. My views on dancing are, I trust, based upon a foundation more solid than a passing caprice of fashion. I shall seriously advocate

only what is artistic, and discourage only what is inelegant and vulgar; but at the same time I shall naturally give preference to styles at present in vogue where they do not actually militate against the principles of gracefulness.

But, it may be urged, do not our ideas of what is graceful alter even as the fashions change? It may be so with regard to dress. That I admit. But it is not so with regard to natural gracefulness. The rules of art, compared with the constantly changing decrees of fashion, would seem to be almost eternal, and are precisely the same in many respects to-day as they were two thousand years since.¹ Else why do we continue to study drawing from the antique? The attitudes of the figures in antique sculpture are surely taken into account as being worthy of imitation, as well as their proportion and symmetry.

In the very highest sense, perhaps the finest lessons may be obtained in the art galleries of Rome and Florence. I do not of course mean lessons in practical dancing. But in these galleries the perceptive faculties may be gratified, the understanding enlightened, and, above all, the taste refined by the contemplation of all that has ever been accounted most lovely, most graceful, most perfect in art. There you may observe the vast superiority of the antique and also of the modern styles over the mediæval and pre-Raphaelite—of the free, natural, and unconstrained over the stiff, angular, and conventional. Notice the freedom yet grace of posture exhibited in those priceless gems of antique sculpture, the Apollo Belvedere, the Perseus, the Satyr of Praxiteles and Capitoline Venus in Rome; the Venus de Medici; the Dancing Faun, the Apollo, and others in the

¹ No one who has observed the beautiful attitudes of the figures known as the Dancers of Pompeii, which must have been painted previous to the destruction of the city in A.D. 79, will deny this.

Uffizi Gallery at Florence. Or take more modern works. The lovely and familiar statuette of Cupid and Psyche, the Flying Mercury of Gian Bologna, Canova's Venus. From the study of these, and countless others of the world's art treasures, we may learn much that may be useful in dancing as well as in drawing. We shall perceive what positions of the body and limbs are by the universal consent of all civilized people in all countries and all ages, pronounced graceful; and then, if we come to analyse these positions in detail, we shall perhaps succeed in discovering *why* they are pleasing, and eventually we may learn something of the true essence of gracefulness.

CHAPTER II.

ADVICE TO PUPILS CONCERNING INSTRUCTION.

Two familiar observations occur to me in commencing this chapter. The first is, that "He who teaches himself has a fool for his master"; and the second, made I think by Goldsmith, is that, "People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy."

Neither of these observations is particularly encouraging to the beginner who intends to enact the double *rôle* of pupil and teacher; but though it is far from my intention to advocate self-instruction, I feel constrained to hazard the suggestion that the masters of those who teach themselves are by no means the only masters who deserve to be included among that portion of the population whom Carlyle declared were in the majority. In all arts there are plenty of professors ever ready to impart to others knowledge in



Second Position.

Fourth Position.

Accordant Attitudes.

To face page 10.

which they are themselves far from being proficient ; but the domain of dancing seems to afford a regular happy hunting-ground for charlatans of every grade of incompetence, both male and female, whose only qualifications for teaching are a superficial acquaintance with the steps and figures of a few easy dances, a moderate amount of executive ability, and unbounded assurance.

I remember to have read in one of Haslitt's Essays a remark to the effect that a person who possesses a majestic and imposing exterior, albeit of meagre intelligence, is far more likely to achieve worldly success than is a person of lofty intellect who has the misfortune to be of humble presence and address. Experience of men and things has convinced me that there is much truth in this observation, and I am positively sure that the quality vulgarly but expressively termed "cheek" carries all before it among the uncultured many. Not a few teachers of drawing-room dancing appear to owe their success to the fact of their having been in a position, at the outset of their career, to adopt the policy of the bad flute-players alluded to by Xenophon.¹ But though there are undoubtedly many people engaged in teaching dancing who have never even troubled to qualify themselves for the undertaking, I must also admit that there are, scattered about the United Kingdom, some excellent masters and mistresses. In the course of my professional duties I have personally made the acquaintance of between two and three hundred ladies and gentlemen who gain a livelihood by giving instruction in dancing, many being teachers of the highest established reputation ; and though the measure of their success does

¹ "If a bad flute-player would pass for a good one he must, like those of established reputation, expend considerable sums in rich furniture and appear in public with a large retinue of servants."

not seem to have been uniformly consonant with their knowledge of the choric art, there are some among them who really deserve to be recognized as first-class teachers.

There are four distinct grades of teachers, whose several qualifications I will endeavour to set forth briefly and concisely.

Teachers really worthy to be placed in the foremost rank are at present comparatively few ; but we will hope that ere long their numbers will greatly increase. They include only those who teach according to the recognized canons of the art, and would scorn to countenance and propagate any practice, however ephemerally popular, that was incompatible with propriety, good taste, or true gracefulness.

Teachers whom I would place in the second rank are those who, instead of teaching what *should be* done, simply teach what *is* done. Such teachers are popular, obtain a large *clientèle*, and often get rich, because they make a special feature of imparting any style that happens to be fashionable, or is reputed to be so, be it good or bad—in short, they concern themselves more with what is new and fashionable than they do with what is true and artistic. If you ask teachers of this class why they tell you to hold your partner thus, or why dance in this or that particular manner, instead of explaining the scientific principles by which they are guided—for the obvious reason that they are not guided by any—they will simply aver that such a style is correct or fashionable ; and you will have to take their word for it that it is so. Such teachers generally dislike to be asked many questions.

The distinguishing feature of the instruction imparted by third-rate professors is that instead of teaching dancing as it should be, or even as it is performed in society, they teach it simply according to their own notions ; and these notions

not being founded upon conventional rules, scientific requirements, artistic propriety, or even fashion, are, to say the least, sometimes very peculiar.

Rapidly descending the social ladder, I would place in the fourth rank those teachers whose personal knowledge of dancing has been acquired—or shall I say “picked up”—at places of amusement, public gardens, etc., and who having, as they think, perfected themselves in the art, are willing for a small consideration to impart to young men and maidens the steps of the round dances and the evolutions of the various “sets”—and wonderful evolutions they are too! Of course the “style” which these professors impart is the style that obtains in the places where they graduated.

Now if you should go for instruction to a teacher of the third or fourth class, I doubt if you will find the present work of much service to you; for certainly the ideas concerning dancing herein expressed will not accord with those of your master or mistress. But as I do not for one moment suppose that you intend to do anything so unwise, I will proceed to give a few hints by which you may ascertain the qualifications of the instructor under whom you intend to or have already placed yourself, and my remarks will apply to male and female teachers alike.

But first I would seriously advise you to try to discover a really first-class teacher. If the lessons should appear expensive, do not let that deter you from taking them. You will, in the end, find it far more economical to receive only the very best instruction. Surely it is far better not to take lessons at all than to learn what is imperfect. If you go at the outset to a good teacher you will not afterwards have anything to unlearn. Remember that a fee of even a few shillings spent in a profitless lesson is simply a waste of money; while a guinea spent in a lesson which results in

an honest guinea's-worth of improvement, can hardly be regarded as an unprofitable investment.

So much for private lessons. With regard to class lessons, parents who from mistaken notions of economy are content to allow their children to receive terpsichorean instruction from amateur or second-rate teachers, should remember that dancing is pre-eminently an art in which a good foundation is all important. False habits of movement acquired in early youth are extremely difficult to overcome in after years; and a child's future may be more influenced by the possession of a graceful carriage and elegant demeanour than people are generally disposed to admit.

Many who call themselves teachers of drawing-room dancing are only acquainted with the five positions, the slide, the jump, the hop, and the balancing step. Beyond these simple movements, and of course the figures of certain dances, the whole art is to them a sealed book. Sometimes, if occasion requires them to do so, they will learn some particular fancy dance, which they will describe and impart as *the Fan Dance*, *the Gavotte*, etc. Such teachers may rightly be termed dance-teachers; but between them and a master or mistress of the art of dancing there is a wide difference. Dance teachers know nothing beyond the particular dances which they have themselves learned from other teachers, and even the movements of these they may be unable to analyse and technically explain; but a master or mistress of dancing, in the true sense of the term, would be able to describe the true nature of each movement employed, and would teach you as many fan-dances or gavottes as you required, arranged with easy or difficult *enchaînements* according to the progress you had made.

Now in order to find out if you are in the hands of a mere dance teacher, do not hesitate to ask questions about

the dance you are learning, or indeed any other dance ; for in a sense, no question concerning the art of dancing is irrelevant to any particular movement. If your teacher really understands the art, he or she will only be too pleased to give you information concerning it ; but if you are put off with evasive answers you may conclude that your teacher's own information is limited.

But do not expect your teacher to know everything about dancing. All of us have something yet to learn. If you ask a question, and your master tells you frankly that he does not know, then you may at least believe that he is honest. As a rule only teachers of very good reputation can afford to admit candidly that they do not know a dance ; yet is it at all likely that any teacher can know every movement that exists or has existed ? When Dr. Johnson was asked by a lady how it was that he came to describe a certain word incorrectly—pastern, I think—he replied simply, “Ignorance, madam ; sheer ignorance.” Johnson's knowledge was known to be so extensive that he could afford to admit that there were things about which he was ignorant. It is only those who are really generally ignorant who imagine they know all there is to be known on any subject.

Beware of teachers who adopt the course to which allusion is made by Bacon when he says—“Some are so close and reserved that they will not show their wares but by a dark light, and seem always to keep back somewhat ; and when they know within themselves that they speak of that which they do not well know, would nevertheless seem to others to know of that which they may not well speak.”¹ Particularly is this the case with second-rate teachers, whose very aristocratic connections for the greater part reside in cloudland,

¹ Essay on “Seeming Wise.”

but who in a mysterious manner would seem to imply that they had taught all the princes, princesses, dukes, and duchesses under the sun. Teachers of really good standing and refined nature rather avoid making any display of aristocratic patronage. They consider it a greater honour to be known through the intrinsic excellence of their style of teaching.

Teachers of the stamp above alluded to, who obscurely hint at exalted patronage, often disguise their personal deficiency by assuming what they believe to be a very dignified deportment, which forbids their making much use of their limbs; and if they be ladies they will sometimes affect a long train in giving lessons, which style of costume possesses the double advantage of giving them an air of dignity, and of effectually hiding the movements of their legs and feet.

If you are in doubt about the correctness or propriety of any movement that your teacher may be imparting, do not hesitate to ask why you are thus taught. The answer, "Because it is correct," should not suffice. A good teacher will always have a definite reason to give and explanation to offer. At the same time you cannot always estimate your teacher's skill by his loquacity. He may be a great talker, and yet a very poor instructor. It is by the *quality* and not the *quantity* of his utterances that you must judge. Solomon tells us that "he that hath knowledge spareth his words"—and, by the way, I dare say there are teachers who fully recognize the force of another of this great writer's observations, that "even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise." Moreover, people do not as a rule learn to dance so readily by explanation as they do by imitation, a faculty which has doubtless been inherited by us from a very remote line of ancestors, with whom some are strongly

averse to claim relationship. Hence it is that women generally learn to dance more readily than men. The perceptive faculties work more quickly than the reasoning ones, and the former are more strongly developed in the ladies. These observations will not, I trust, appear ungallant. In other respects women are much further removed from our simian progenitors—even Darwin admitted this; but they do not reason about things as do men. While a man is considering about how a step should be taken, a woman will have acquired it.

A teacher who understands his profession, and has also some acquaintance with anatomy and physical laws, will in giving private instruction have recourse to endless expedients to bring about a required result; but, as I have already hinted, he would, if pressed to do so, be able to give a satisfactory reason and explanation for everything he does. He would never trouble his pupil to learn needless movements or aimless exercises. In whatever he requires you to do there will be some definite purpose. If you find, after going a few times to a teacher for any particular dance, say the waltz, that you do not make progress, and that he always adopts precisely the same plan in teaching you, the chances are that if you took dozens of lessons of that teacher you would not succeed in becoming a good waltzer, even though he should have taught other pupils who have turned out excellent dancers. The reason will be that his system is empirical rather than scientific. He may, perhaps, have some particular "improved method" of his own, which he uses on all pupils alike. With some this method may answer admirably. If it succeeds with you, well and good; but if not, and you find that you do not make progress, the better plan is to take lessons of some master who will teach you scientifically, and then you may have more chance of success.

C

CHAPTER III.

DANCING TO MUSIC.

It is a general, but perhaps not altogether correct notion that the possession of a good ear for music is a *sine quâ non* to him or her who would aspire to anything approaching excellence in dancing. Most undoubtedly it is a great advantage to the pupil if he be already to some extent acquainted with the grouping of measures; but, at the same time, it is by no means essential that he should be able to distinguish the various notes of the scale on hearing them played indiscriminately. Doubtless with regard to those who would attain a perfect mastery of the "Poetry of Motion" in its highest form, a knowledge of music, combined with an exquisite ear for melody, will enable them to execute their steps and movements with more perfect grace and faultless expression than would be possible if they did not in a measure *feel* and enter into the spirit of the music by which they are accompanied. But so far as ordinary ball-room dancing is concerned, I have known some excellent and accurate performers who had so little ear for musical sounds that I do not believe they could have told the "Old Hundredth" from "Yankee Doodle" if the tunes had been played in equal time. How, then, did it happen that in dancing they were enabled to take their steps in strict accordance with the accompanying music? The reason is, I think, easily explained. Although their ears were sadly defective with regard to the relation of one note to another, so far as *pitch* was concerned, they could readily enough distinguish the *rhythmic relation* of the notes, and

would unhesitatingly accent the beat that was required to be accented.

The fact is, that for purposes of dancing it is far better to have an accurate perception of rhythm than an ear for tune. The musician requires both, of course, but the ordinary dancer can get on very well if he possesses only the former. He must not, however, be quite so insensible to music as was Lady Finch, who, while admitting to George III. that she had heard there was some difference between a psalm and a minuet, declared that she had never herself been able to detect it.¹ A dancer should be able to distinguish the minuet by its peculiar rhythm and accent on the second beat, in the same manner as he should be able to tell a waltz, a mazurka, or a polka. He must be able to distinguish whether the rhythm of the music be anapæstic or dactylic, iambic or trochaic; whether the time be triple or dupal; whether there be three, four, or six beats in a bar.

There are, of course, instances in classical composition when it is difficult even for an experienced musician to immediately detect the position of the primary beats, especially in cases of syncopation; but, as a rule, the time in dance-music is so well marked, that the grouping of the notes into bars of three or four intervals is readily perceived even by the untrained ear.

The chief stress in all music generally falls on the first note of the bar, but this is more especially the case with regard to music that is arranged for dances. The pupil should therefore accustom himself, whenever he has an opportunity of hearing dances being played, to notice when the primary beats or *ones* occur. Generally speaking, the

¹ At the court of Charles IX. of France, the "*Danses basses*" were actually performed to Psalm tunes, and were so solemn that clerical dignitaries frequently took part in them.

first note of each bar is accented in the melody; but this is not always the case. Sometimes, in waltz music, for instance, it may happen that the first interval of a bar is occupied by a sound which is merely a prolongation of a note that was struck in the preceding bar; or a rest of either a whole or half interval may occur before a note is struck; or, again, the strong accent may occasionally be shifted on to a note occurring later in the bar. But whether or no an accented note be present in the melody, it will almost invariably happen that the triple measure of the waltz is maintained by the accompaniment, or bass, in which the first note of each bar is strongly marked.

I shall have occasion to revert more particularly to the relation existing between the steps and music of the various dances when I come to describe them. At present I may suggest, however, that in dancing to music the *steps are not necessarily taken in strict coincidence with the notes of the melody, but should agree rather with the accompanying bass, which generally marks the rhythm of the movement.*

This is a rule that the pupil will do well to constantly bear in mind. It is obviously correct, for, supposing the dance to be a polka or a waltz, the duration, accent, and position of the several steps will be precisely the same in each recurring bar; but if the notes of the melodies were also arranged in this manner, the monotonous effect produced thereby would very shortly become intolerable to the ear. Nevertheless it is a good plan, when teaching any particular dance or movement, to select tunes at first whose notes shall very readily accommodate themselves to the required steps or actions, or, if possible, exactly correspond with them. Afterwards, as the pupil practises and progresses, the nature of the melody may be varied and elaborated till he is able to keep a perfectly timed accompaniment with his

feet to any irregular arrangement of notes proper to the rhythm of the dance.

A pupil in learning to waltz will sometimes exclaim—"I am sure I could get on better if a tune were played for me to dance to!" But so soon as he tries, he not unfrequently finds that the music, instead of facilitating matters, as he expected, only presents a new difficulty; and very often it happens that the fonder he is of music, the harder it seems for him to make his steps accord with the rhythm of the movement. The reason is that he listens too attentively to the *tune*, and whenever he hears a prolonged note he is inclined to take a correspondingly long step; while a succession of short notes induces him to attempt rapid little movements with his feet, which altogether destroy the character of the dance.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIVE POSITIONS AND THEIR MODIFICATIONS.

THERE are only five positions of the feet, of which it is necessary to take account in ordinary dancing. This statement may at first appear almost incredible, when we consider the infinite variety of steps employed; but a little reflection will show that it is correct. In whatever posture we may be resting, or in whatever direction we may be moving,

it is clear that at a given juncture, one foot must either be to the side of, before, behind, or close against the other foot.

If the feet be kept close together, with the toes turned outward, say at an angle of 90° to each other, which is quite sufficient for ball-room dancing, the heel of one foot may be placed either against the heel of the other foot, against the hollow thereof, or against the toe. Here, then, we have the three close positions. The remaining two, or open positions, are those in which one foot is to the side of or before the other. The weight of the body may rest on both feet, or on one only, or both feet may, for the instant, be raised from the floor; but their relative position is considered only as if they moved on a plane, and is not technically affected by elevation. Thus, if the foot be placed lightly on the ground, with the heel against the toe of the supporting limb, it is said to be in the *fifth position*. If now the foot be raised from the floor quite perpendicularly until it is as high, or even higher than the knee of the supporting limb, it is still said to be in the *fifth position*, the elevation of the foot being expressed by the addition of the word "*raised*" or *en air*. The latter technical term, however, is perhaps more usually employed to express open than close positions of elevation.

Beauchamp, the celebrated dancer, to whom allusion is made in another section of this work, is, I believe, credited with having been the first to formulate these five positions in their present recognized order; the arrangement being such as to facilitate the movement of the limbs by the alternation of closed and open positions.

Let us proceed to place the right foot in each of the five positions, taking them numerically.

When standing in the FIRST POSITION—viz., with the heels close together and the toes wide apart—it is usual, and

indeed it appears most natural, for the weight of the body to rest equally on both feet. But before we can move either foot into another position, it will be found necessary to transfer the balance entirely to the foot that is to remain at rest.

Having, then, placed the weight on the left foot, which must be accomplished without lowering the left shoulder, by moving the whole body from the ankle upwards very slightly and imperceptibly to the left, extend the right leg to the side, letting the foot rest lightly on the floor, with the heel raised and the toe turned downward. When thus placed the right foot is said to be in the **SECOND POSITION**, *point*—the word *point* implying that the foot is pointed downward, while the balance of the body is sustained by the opposite leg.

From the above position it is only necessary to draw the right foot back, placing the heel thereof against the hollow part of the left foot, exactly midway between the toe and heel, and you will be standing in the **THIRD POSITION**.

Now advance the right foot, as in walking, to a convenient distance, with the toe pointed downward lightly touching the floor, and it will be in the **FOURTH POSITION** *point*.

From this position draw back the right foot until the heel thereof touches the toe of the left foot, and you will be standing in the **FIFTH POSITION**.

The above directions may for reference be very briefly condensed thus :—

1st Position	...	Heels together.
2nd	„	...
3rd	„	...
4th	„	...
5th	„	...
		Move right foot to the side.
		Bring right heel to hollow of left foot.
		Advance right foot.
		Bring right heel to left toe.

These five positions, which must be mastered before

any dance is attempted, should now be practised with the opposite foot, the balance being sustained throughout upon the right leg, while the left foot is moved first to the side, then back again with the heel to the middle of the right foot, after which it is advanced and again drawn back till the heel touches the right toe.

These positions may be taken in their regular order with astonishing rapidity. In the course of a conversation with Mr. John d'Auban, the well-known teacher of stage dancing, I happened to remark that I did not believe half the people who professed to teach ball-room dancing really knew the difference between a *coupé* and a *jetté*. "*Coupé* and *jetté* !" he exclaimed ; " why they don't even know the five positions correctly." And as he spoke, without his being perhaps aware of the fact, his right foot took all the positions consecutively in an instant.

It should be remarked that to the intermediate open position no special name has been given, although certainly it might be reasonably argued that if the second position be taken immediately to the side, and the fourth directly in front, there would be ample room for another position midway between them. But if there were six positions, the foot in taking them, beginning naturally from a close position, would finish at the sixth in an open position ; and this would appear awkward and incomplete. In these circumstances we may assume that in the *second position* one foot may either be placed immediately to the side of or a little in advance of the other, and that in the *fourth position* the advanced foot may either be placed directly in front of, or a little to the right or left of the rear one. In the accompanying plate, the pointed foot in the *second position* is represented as being slightly in advance of the stationary one, and in the *fourth position* as being slightly to the right

of the rear one, as in ordinary walking; these being the most natural positions for the feet to take in action.

Throughout the following pages, whenever I wish to express a forward position a little more to the side than usual, or a side position a little more in advance, I shall call it the second or fourth "intermediate" position, or if exactly midway, simply the "*intermediate open position*."

In commencing this chapter I mentioned the fact that one foot in an open position must necessarily be either to the side of, or before, or *behind* the other foot, and as yet we have only considered the positions as they are taken in advance. But the possibility that the pointed foot may be placed to the rear of the supporting limb does not involve extra positions; it is merely a question of changing the balance from one leg to the other.

For instance, suppose we are standing on the left foot with the right leg extended, and the toe pointed in the *fourth position*. If now without moving the feet we simply transfer the balance of the body from the left to the right leg, so that the heel of the left foot rises, then that foot is said to be in the *fourth position behind*. The same applies to other positions when the balance is sustained on the front leg, and it is useful to practise moving the pointed foot to the various positions behind (technically *en arrière*) as well as in front (*en avant*).

For example, standing as before with the balance sustained solely on the left foot, which rests firmly on the ground, from the first position, which is always the same, extend the right leg, pointing the foot downward, a little to the rear in the *second position*. Then bring the foot back so that the hollow thereof comes against the left heel in the *third position*. Now move the foot back as if preparing to take a step backward, but let the toe only rest on the floor, and it will be in the

fourth position. Finally, bring the toe of the pointed foot to the heel of the supporting one, and it will be in the *fifth position.*

In addition to these five positions, in which the toes and knees of the dancers are, or should be, invariably turned outward, and which are sometimes designated the five *true* positions, account has also been taken of what have been termed the five *false* positions, in which the toes and knees of the dancer are turned inwards.

These inward positions, however, although not unfrequently legitimately employed in stage dancing, are by no means necessary for ordinary ball-room practice. Moreover, the tyro need not be at any pains to acquire the false positions; they will come to him as readily as fibs to a child. Though not, as I have already hinted, proper for the ball-room, it would be quite a mistake to say that they are never exhibited therein—at least by bad dancers, among whom the second false position seems to be a general favourite. It is not at all an uncommon thing to see a man standing in a set-dance with his feet apart and his toes turned inward; a position which, I need hardly suggest, is not impressively graceful.

In case it may occur to the reader that I have been unnecessarily prolix in treating of these rudimentary positions, I would suggest that we are laying as it were a foundation upon which a most elaborate superstructure is to be raised, and therefore it needs to be firm. The whole Art of Dancing is based on the five positions. In executing the most rapid and complicated steps, the feet of the dancer are continually passing from one to another of them, and the movements of the feet ought always to be such that if an instantaneous photograph were taken at any juncture, the position represented would appear correct.

—
ed for
ie *fin*

es and
turne
e *trw*
: beer
knees

unfre
re by
More
: *false*
; to a
er for
: they
mong
eneral
: man
: toes
est, is

n un
ions,
ation
ised,
lanc-
most
: are
l the
if an
, the



Battements—Side Position.

To face page 27.

CHAPTER V.

ON NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL MOVEMENTS,
WITH PREPARATORY MUSCULAR EXERCISES FOR HOME
OR CLASS PRACTICE.

*To promote Firmness and Flexibility in the Lower Limbs
and Power of Sustaining the Balance.*

BALANCE.

It may be postulated at the outset that it is absolutely impossible for there to be anything approaching grace of movement or elegance of posture on the part of a pupil until he or she has attained a certain degree of facility in adjusting the balance of the body. Mind, I do not say that gracefulness in dancing depends solely upon the proper adjustment of the centre of gravity. That would be absurd, because there are many other things to be taken into consideration, as will hereafter be pointed out; but I do aver that no movement can be graceful, and that no posture—which is clearly the result of a previous movement—can be elegant unless a perfect balance be maintained during its execution.

Seeing, then, how very important is the subject of balance, it seems proper that it should be the first to claim our attention.

In the ordinary movements of everyday life we are constantly, though unconsciously, adjusting the centre of gravity in our bodies, or *that point about which all other parts equally balance each other*. If this were not done we should be continually falling down, as an infant does when

it is learning to walk. Thus in ascending a hill we lean a little forward, while in descending we incline the body backward. In rising from a chair, we first bend the body considerably forward and then draw the feet back. If the reader should feel inclined to doubt that it is essential to adjust the centre of gravity in making the simplest movements, let him stand with his heels against a wall and try to pick up something that may be lying on the ground before him. He will not be able to do so unless he puts one foot forward, because the wall prevents his throwing part of his body back to counterbalance the weight of his head and arms—an action that would be necessary if his feet remained in a close position.

I have said that people in making ordinary movements are enabled to adjust their centre of gravity unconsciously—the required changes of attitude having through habit become automatic; but in attempting to execute movements that are unfamiliar to them, grown men and women experience something of the difficulty that an infant does when making its first efforts in locomotion, minus, of course, the muscular weakness of the limbs.

We also find that in learning to dance, pupils are apt to utilize the methods of retaining their equilibrium with which they are most familiar, and which have become, as it were, natural to them. These methods they frequently feel constrained to employ from custom, notwithstanding the mental effort they make to obey the injunctions of their teacher;¹ for rather than run the risk of falling, as they imagine they will do if they trust solely to one foot for sustaining their

¹ Darwin relates that he made many determined efforts to keep his face pressed against the glass of a case containing a cobra capello; but though mentally convinced that he was perfectly secure, he could never succeed in overcoming the natural tendency to draw back when the creature darted at him.

balance at a given juncture, they will plant the other foot squarely down on the floor, and sometimes it will require a good deal of persuasion, not to say patience, on the part of the teacher before the pupil can be induced to make a movement in conformity with the rules of dancing.

What we have to remember is this:—That in order to sustain the equilibrium, it is necessary that a vertical line from the centre of gravity—the position of which is constantly shifted by any extension of limb or inclination of the body from the perpendicular—should fall within the base formed by the feet or foot on which the body rests.

Clearly, the broader the base, and the more directly the centre of gravity is above the middle of that base, the more firmly we shall be balanced. Thus, standing in the *fourth position*, with the weight supported equally by both feet, we should be better prepared to meet a forward or backward resistance, than if we were resting in the *fifth* or *third position*; and, similarly, if we were standing in the *second open position*, we could resist pressure from the side better than we could if our feet were closed in the *first position*. For the same reason we feel more secure when resting on both feet than when we are supporting the weight of the body on one foot only; on raising the heel from the ground the sense of security is still further diminished, and the pupil, until he has had considerable experience, feels constrained, when thus poised, to wriggle about till he is actually compelled to put the other foot down in order to save himself from falling.

But provided that no opposing force be brought to bear upon the human body—such, for instance, as would be encountered in a strong current of wind—it is not at all a difficult matter to sustain a perfect equilibrium on one foot, or even a part thereof; and I will now proceed to

describe a few simple exercises, by means of which the pupil may in a short time learn to sustain his balance with ease in performing all the steps and movements of ordinary dancing.

EXERCISE: *To sustain the balance on one leg in close positions.*—Be standing say in the *first position* with the arms hanging down on each side, the shoulders even, and the weight of the body resting on both feet. Now, before attempting to raise one foot from the floor, take care that your balance be shifted completely on to the other leg. To accomplish this, let the whole body, from the ankle upwards, incline slightly to that side; but there must be no lowering of the shoulder or curving in at the waist on either side. You will find when you have thus adjusted your balance, that you can raise one foot from the floor, and sustain the equilibrium of your body on the other leg without the slightest difficulty, provided you keep still; whereas had you neglected the precaution of throwing your balance directly over the supporting foot *before* raising the other, you would have been wobbling about and stretching your arms out in all directions in trying to keep from falling.

This exercise should be practised repeatedly in the three close positions, until either foot can be raised without the body deviating in any appreciable degree from the perpendicular. The toe of the foot that is raised should be pointed downward.

EXERCISE: *To sustain the balance on one leg while the other is in motion.*—Having raised one foot from the floor in the manner just described, extend the leg forward till the foot is in the *fourth position*, with the toe pointed downward and raised from the floor (*en air*). As the foot is carried forward, the body will incline a little backward to counterbalance the leg. Now, let the limb that is outstretched swing backward from the hip joint, until the foot is in the fourth position behind, and it will be observed that, as it passes rearward, the body takes a slight inclination forward from the ankle upward. This movement should be made repeatedly with the muscles relaxed but without flexion of the knee, allowing the limb to swing freely by its natural pendulum action from the ball and socket joint by which the bones are articulated at the hip. The limb, in swinging

forward and backward may describe an arc, and the toe should be turned well outward and downward, so that when in passing it reaches the *second position* it just escapes the floor. With regard to the supporting foot, it is obvious that if it be turned well out in these exercises it will give the pupil a broader base to rest on, and he will be less likely to lose his balance and fall to the side, than he would be if he kept the foot pointed directly in front of him.

EXERCISE : *To retain the equilibrium with one limb raised and extended in the second position.*—As in the first exercise, the whole body must incline slightly to the opposite side as the foot is raised from the ground, and great care must be taken that there be no bending inwards at the waist to cause an awkward downward movement of the shoulder. An extension of the opposite arm would naturally tend to counterpoise the raised leg; but at present I would prefer that the pupil kept the arms rigidly pressed against the side, so as to prevent any possibility of its curving inward at the waist. The deviation of the line of the body from the perpendicular will necessarily be more pronounced, when changing the relative position of the feet in this exercise, than it was in the first.

EXERCISE : *To sustain the balance in progressive movement.*—*One :* Pointing the toe well downward, step forward with the right foot, letting it fall flat on the ground in the *fourth position*, and transfer the balance to the right leg. *Two :* Swing the left leg forward from the hip joint till the foot is in the *fourth position*, raised, with the toe pointed downward. *Three :* Swing the same leg backward till the foot is in the *fourth position*, raised behind. *Four :* Again swing the same leg forward, and repeat the four movements, stepping down on the left foot at *one*, and swinging the right leg. To remember this movement in practising say, "*Down, forward, back, forward ; Down, forward, back, forward,*" etc.

This exercise is an excellent one to practise in order to acquire a graceful carriage and easy gait. It may at first be accompanied by the following music, which is written to accord with the movement. Afterwards, when the pupil becomes accustomed to the time, it may be performed to any march tune that is well marked.

For the last Exercise.



FLEXIBILITY.

No attitude or movement of the body will appear graceful in which there is evidence of constraint or rigidity in any part or member other than what is consistent with the nature of the attitude or movement. For instance, the supporting limb may be kept firm, because in this an appearance of exerted muscular effort and power is pleasing. The extended arm may be kept rigid, with the hand clenched in an attitude of defiance; but any unnecessary expenditure of muscular effort should always be avoided. Indeed, we may safely take it as a general rule that in dancing all parts of the body should be kept flexible and free, except the limbs that are actively employed in supporting one's own weight or sustaining the balance of a fellow-dancer.

But even the supporting limb should be rigid only with the rigidity that is capable of immediate flexion. In other

words, the dancer should have perfect command over all his muscles, and be able, if occasion requires, to employ the extensors of one limb without in the slightest degree contracting the corresponding muscles of the opposite member. Then, in an instant, he should be able to make rigid the limb that was previously flexed, and simultaneously relax the one that was rigid, so that it hangs perfectly free and pliant by his side.

I think that a great deal of the awkwardness exhibited by most beginners in dancing may be attributable to the difficulty which they experience in employing a different set of muscles in opposite members. If they contrive to keep the limb on which they are balanced sufficiently firm, they also stiffen the limb that is in motion; or if they endeavour to relax the muscular tension in the moving limb and allow it to swing freely, they at the same time relax the supporting limb, and their dancing has in consequence a weak and undignified appearance.

The same thing occurs with the arms in round dancing. A man will often allow both his arms to remain limp, and neglect altogether to support his partner; or if, on the other hand, he contracts the muscles of the supporting arm to the requisite degree of firmness, he finds himself unable to avoid stiffening the opposite arm, in which no rigidity whatever is required, and in which the only muscles that need to be actively employed are the deltoid muscles, or those by which it is raised at the shoulder.

Some beginners have a tendency to habitually bend the knees, while others incline to keep the limbs rigid; of these, the latter are perhaps the more hopeful pupils.

The practice of the following exercises will help the pupil to obtain ready control over the muscular action of his limbs.

EXERCISE: *To give flexibility to the hip-joints.*—Stand firmly balanced on the right leg, stretching yourself up and contracting the

D

muscles till the whole limb is quite rigid, and there is no bend whatever at the knee-joint. Now swing the left leg to and fro like a pendulum from the hip-joint, keeping it perfectly limp and as it were lifeless. Take care, however, that the knee does not bend appreciably, and that the toe just touches the ground as it passes the supporting foot in the *second position*. Do this several times, first swinging one leg and then the other several times in succession from the *fourth position* in front to the *fourth* behind. Afterwards start from the *second position*, so that the swinging leg crosses the supporting one behind. You will doubtless at first find that it is difficult for you to keep one limb quite firm and the other quite limp; but by practice you will in a little while be able to accomplish this.

EXERCISE : *To give flexibility to the knee-joints.*—Stand firmly balanced on the left leg, with the right extended so that the toe touches the floor in the *second position*. Bring the right foot smartly up to the left knee, so that the sole of the foot is parallel with the leg, and let it fall again on the *second position*. Repeat this several times in succession, making the movement quicker and quicker, and taking care to bend the knee well outward; then balance yourself on the right leg, raise the left foot, and proceed in a similar manner.

CHAPTER VI.

STEPS AND MOVEMENTS

USED IN DANCING.

THE foregoing exercises have been given chiefly with the idea of getting the limbs and muscles into working order, so to speak. One limb has been employed in supporting the body, while the other has been allowed to swing freely, and to a certain extent automatically. If, however, the action of the free leg is more immediately controlled by the volition of the dancer, and is made to assume positions in accordance with conventional rules, the movements are technically called—

BATTEMENTS.

In what are termed *grands battements*, the dancer stands fairly balanced on one leg, while the other is extended out as high and far as possible, either to the side in the *second position*, or in front or behind in the *fourth position*. After the *battement* the leg falls so that the foot is in the *fifth position*, before and behind alternately if the *battement* has been made in the *second position*. In practising for theatrical dancing, the foot is raised as high as the hip, and the pupil at first supports himself by holding a rail. In this position the angle made by one leg with the other would be one of ninety degrees—a right angle; but for ordinary drawing-room dancing it will be sufficient to raise the moving limb, and extend it at an angle of forty-five degrees only.

In what are termed *petits battements*, the toes of the dancer do not leave the floor; but the foot of the flexed limb passes from the *second position* to the *fifth* in front and the *fifth* behind the supporting foot alternately. The *third position* may also be employed; but the *fifth* is better for practice.

Petits battements may also be made with the upper part of the limbs kept open, the flexion being made chiefly at the knee-joint. These are termed *petits battements* on the instep, and they may with practice be performed with amazing rapidity.

The constant practice of these battements will be found useful in all cases; especially to pupils who aspire to the performance of solo dances, as they give brilliancy and freedom to the movements of the limbs. I will endeavour to explain quite clearly how they should be done.

Commence by standing fairly balanced on the left leg with the right foot in the *second position*, the toe just touch-

ing the floor. Cross the right foot before the left, chiefly by bending the knee, so that the heel is quite raised, and without closing the thighs. Extend the right leg again to the second position, and bending the knee as before, cross the right foot this time *behind* the left to the *fifth position*, with the heel quite raised. Open out the leg again to the *second position*, and repeat the movement, crossing before and behind alternately. Continue to do this, gradually increasing the rapidity of the crossings. Practise with both legs, and also resting on the toes only of the supporting foot.

DOWNWARD FLEXIONS.

The flexions already treated of have been those only in which one limb is drawn upward, or the muscles thereof relaxed, while the other limb supports the body at its normal elevation. When, however, the knee and hip joints are bent in such a way that the trunk of the body sinks, such movements may be termed *downward flexions*.

Whenever the lower limbs are bent in dancing, the knees and fore part of the thighs should be turned well outward. It is anatomically impossible to turn out the knee without also turning out the foot—that is, unless a special effort be made to move the joints in opposition; but people who have their knees naturally turned inward, will sometimes turn out their feet readily enough. The teacher of dancing should particularly caution his pupils to turn their knees outward, as this habit gives an appearance of firmness and decision to a dancer's movements, while flexions of the limbs made with the knees bent forward look feeble and undignified. I have known men whose everyday movements appeared firm and vigorous enough, yet whenever they began to dance they would start with their knees bent



Postures with flexion of limbs.

To face page 36.

forward like those of a broken-down cab-horse, and all for the want of a little care and attention on the part of their teacher at the outset.

My own practice, whenever I find that there is a decided tendency on the part of a pupil to bend the knees forward, is to cause him or her to pull with both hands a very strong indiarubber expander, fastened at one end to the floor. Simultaneously the pupil advances the foot, and the extended limb becomes rigid in making, as it were, an automatic effort to oppose the strain of the indiarubber, which is pulled at an angle that causes it to offer the strongest resistance, and bring the *rectus femoris* muscle into vigorous action.

I do not know if other professors of dancing have ever tried this simple expedient ; but I feel sure that any teacher of experience will endorse the statement that if you can only get a pupil to *feel* what kind of action is required, and make the conditions such that he cannot conveniently help doing it correctly when practising, you are likely to obtain a better result in a few minutes than would accrue from hours spent in theoretical explanation.

Downward flexions should be made in commencing, with the balance of the body sustained by both feet in various positions, at first vigorously, with the idea of giving freedom to the action of the joints, and afterwards very slowly, taking care to occupy precisely the same time in rising as in sinking. For instance, you may get some one to play a waltz tune, and count three (one bar) to perform the genuflexion or bending of the knees, and again three to straighten the limbs in rising.

In practising downward flexions, take care that the upper part of the body retains its erect attitude, and that the shoulders are kept perfectly even. If the flexion be made with the feet in a close position, and the body be kept

perpendicular, the heels will rise off the floor in descending, and you may continue to go down till you appear to be sitting exactly over them. The *fifth position* is the most difficult one in which to perform this exercise, in consequence of the narrowing of the base on which you rest. If you make the flexion in the *fourth position*, it will be the heel of the hinder foot that will rise highest from the floor. The practice of these genuflexions gives great facility in performing the courtesy; but above all things be careful about your risings, for nothing looks more undignified than to descend sedately, and then suddenly bob up like a Jack-in-the-box.

After the downward flexions have been practised on both limbs in all positions, you may try them resting on one limb only, extending the opposite leg to the *fourth position* raised. Let the balance be well sustained on the supporting limb, which also makes the flexion, turning the knee well outward, and endeavouring to keep the body perpendicular in descending and rising.

This exercise is very useful for strengthening the limbs. That it brings the muscles into vigorous action you may easily convince yourself by doing it several times in succession, and then noticing how your legs and thighs feel on the following day. In some cases I have spoken of a limb as being flexed when the tension of the muscles is simply relaxed, or in other words, when it hangs limber; but in these exercises it is obvious that the flexor muscles must be strongly contracted in descending, while the extensors are brought vigorously into play as the body rises.

Flexions and extensions of the limbs should now be made in combination with lateral progressive and retrogressive movements. It will be readily understood that these combinations are capable of almost endless variety. I will here suggest a few only that will prove useful

as exercises and serve as a guide to the formation of others.

These exercises may be accompanied by the following music, or something of a similar character having equal notes, so that the movements may be performed evenly:—



EXERCISE.—Commence from the *first position* and make a movement for each note of the music. *One*: Slide the right foot to the *second position*, and sustain the balance thereon. *Two*: Close the left foot to the *first position*, and balance the body equally on both feet. *Three*: Bend the knees outward so that the body, which must be kept perpendicular, sinks directly over the heels, which rise as the body descends. *Four*: Straighten the limbs; but not too suddenly. Repeat this in the opposite direction by sliding the left foot to the *second position* and closing the right to *first*, etc.

The technical term for “bend the knees” is “*plier les genoux*.”

EXERCISE.—Same as the last, only instead of closing the foot to the first position at the second count, close it to the *third position* in front, and thus make the flexion. Then practise the same, closing the feet to the *fifth position*, and also to the *third* and *fifth* behind.

MOVEMENTS IN WHICH BOTH FEET LEAVE THE GROUND.

These may, I think, be broadly divided into five classes thus:—

1. Movements in which the body springs upward from both feet, and also alights on both feet, as, for instance, in what is technically known as *changement de pied*—a very common form of step in solo dancing.

2. Movements in which the body springs upward from both feet and alights on one foot only, as in the *pas de sissone*, etc.—also frequently used in solo dancing.

3. Movements in which the body springs upward from one foot only and alights on both feet, as in the *assemblé*; employed also in solo dancing as a finish after a turn of the body, *en air*, when the foremost foot reaches the ground a trifle sooner than the hinder one.

4. Movements in which the body springs upward from one foot and alights upon the other foot, as, for instance, in the *jetté*, or thrown step. This, of all leaping steps, is perhaps the one most frequently employed in ball-room dancing.

5. Movements in which the body springs upward from one foot only and descends again upon the same foot, as in the common hop, or *pas sauté*, as it is technically called.

The above-mentioned steps will be explained in due course, but I think it will be seen that even in theatrical dancing, however high the upward spring may be, and whatever capers may be cut during the leap, as in the *cabriole*, *entrechat*, *ailes de pigeons*, etc., the movement, no matter how complicated, must necessarily be classed under one of the above five heads.

OBSERVATIONS ON LEAPING STEPS AND MOVEMENTS.

In order to spring upward from the ground, so that the body reaches a higher elevation than could be attained by rising on the toes, it is essential that three angles be formed by the bendings of the limbs. One angle is formed by the forepart of the thigh and trunk, another by the back part of the thigh and calf of the leg, and a third by the upper part of the foot and the fore part of the leg.

If we stand in an upright position, and try to spring upward *without previously bending the knees*, we shall find ourselves utterly powerless to do so; but we may rise on the toes, and then suddenly release the feet from the floor, falling again upon them without any flexion of the knee joints. This might, and probably would, to a careless or unscientific observer, have all the appearance of a little leap; but in reality the body reaches its maximum elevation while the foot presses on the floor, and what is apparently a leap is, strictly speaking, nothing more than a drop from a higher to a lower elevation.

If, however, with our feet kept flat on the ground, we bend the knees, and then suddenly straighten the limbs by a vigorous tension, we shall find that the action tends to raise our feet slightly from the ground. If now, after bending the knees, in addition to the sudden tension of the limbs, we raise ourselves high on the soles of the feet, which we press strongly downward, immediately before they leave the ground, in order to obtain an upward impulse, and at the same time rapidly elevate the shoulders, we shall find that with a little practice we can leap to a considerable height.

It should be remembered that if the leap is to be made in a forward direction, the body is so inclined at the moment of making the spring; but in making an upward leap, in which it is intended that the foot or feet shall alight exactly in the position from which they sprung, the body should not be inclined forward, except it be in some graceful attitude, in which it is counterbalanced by a corresponding rearward extension of limb.

We have, then, to bear in mind that *any leaping step or movement must always be preceded by a flexion of the limb or limbs that support the body at the time the spring is to be made; and that in leaping we must rise on the sole of the*

foot, which should be pressed strongly downward and suddenly released, the toes being the last to leave the ground.

The next thing we have to consider is the manner of alighting after the leap, which must be exactly the inverse of the above. As the toes were the last to leave the ground, so also must they be the first to reach it, and the limb or limbs must be flexed on alighting. If these instructions be not attended to, the movements will not only appear jerky and ungraceful, but they will be productive of an unpleasant and even injurious concussion that will be transmitted along the vertebral column to the head. For this reason, the movement familiarly known as the *splits*—or, more elegantly, as *temps échappé*—in the hornpipe is a somewhat trying one to the dancer, as he alights immediately on his heels when the limbs are stretched apart, and the shock incident on the foot striking the ground is unbroken by the elastic spring of the arch naturally formed by the instep.

The only springing steps to which it will at present be necessary to devote our attention are the *changement de pied*, the *jetté*, and the *pas sauté*. These must all be well practised; more difficult movements will be merely alluded to incidentally. First, then, we will take the

CHANGEMENT DE PIED.

This term implies a change in the relative position of the feet. The movement is performed thus: Suppose you are standing in the *third position*, with the right foot in front. Bend the knees outward in preparation, leap upward, and in doing so, quickly and simultaneously throw the right foot a little back and the left a little forward, but do not separate the feet, so that on coming to the ground they will still be in the *third position*, but with the left in front. Having

practised thus, proceed to change the relative position of the feet in the *fifth position*.

It is possible for an experienced dancer to make several rapid crossings of the legs while executing the leap. Such movements are technically called *entrechats*.¹ They are of various kinds ; in some the dancer leaps from one foot, and in others from both feet, and the crossings or beatings of the limbs may be made in various positions. *Cabriole* is a technical term for the striking of the feet or legs together while in the air. Such movements present a pleasing appearance when well executed, but it is needless to say that their successful accomplishment requires an immense amount of practice and considerable natural agility.

THE JETTÉ.

It is thus called because, in making the step, the weight of the body is *thrown* from one foot on to the other foot. To execute a *pas jetté*, stand with the weight of the body resting on one foot ; bend the knee in preparation for the spring, and throw the body in the required direction, coming down on the other foot. The toe should be the first part of the foot to reach the ground, and the limb should be flexed on alighting, as already explained.

It is usual after making a *jetté* to bring the disengaged foot into a closed position at right angles behind ; but this, in a great measure, depends on the nature of the movement which follows. When in a technical description of a dance you see the words *jetté non rapproché*, it means that the feet are kept apart ; while the term, *pas jetté relevé*, indicates a rising after the *jetté* in a closed position.

¹ This word is not derived from the French *entre*, between, and *chat*, a cat. That would signify nothing at all ; but the Italian word, *intrecciare*, from which it is really derived, means to interweave.

The *jetté* is often described as a leap from one foot to the other, but I doubt if the maximum elevation of the body is attained after the toe of the foot which commences the movement has been released from the floor—unless, of course, the body, as in jumping, is projected upward by a strong muscular tension of the limb and impulse of the foot, as in the *demi capriole*. But this, I think, is seldom the case in ordinary dancing. I should say that unless the nature of the movement be exceptionally violent, the action of the limbs in making *jettés* would be much the same as in running, in which it has been shown by experiment that the legs are not withdrawn from the ground until the body is at its greatest elevation.¹

THE PAS SAUTÉ.

In executing the *pas sauté* or hop, the body is balanced on one leg only, the other leg being raised from the floor. The body is projected upward by the tension of the limb and impulse of the foot on which it rests, and descends again *upon the same foot*.

Care must be taken to bend the knee in commencing the hop, and also on alighting, and it is essential, as in ordinary upright leaping, that the toe be the last to leave the ground and the first to reach it. It should also be remembered that a hop cannot be made from one foot to the other foot. A long series of hops may be made upon either foot, but to change from one foot to the other, necessitates the employment of another description of step, which may be either a *jetté*, a *glissade* (glided step), or a *coupé* (cut step, hereafter to be described).

The duration of time occupied in making a hop, or rather,

¹ See Professor Marey's work on *Animal Mechanism*, pp. 129, 130.

the actual time during which the body remains suspended, is necessarily very short, for no sooner does the foot of the dancer leave the floor than it is brought down again by the action of gravitation. The musical interval, however, is filled up by the preparation for the spring.

For the next exercise, which consists simply of a prolonged sliding step (*pas glissé*) and a *pas sauté*, the following example of music may first be played, as it accords exactly with the movement.



EXERCISE.—Stand with the right foot in the *third position* behind the left, the toe pointed downward, and just raised from the floor. *One:* Slide the right foot slowly and evenly to the *second position*. *Two:* Hop gently upon the right foot, raising the left behind so that the toe, pointing downwards, is just off the floor. Then repeat by sliding to the left and hopping on the left foot.

N.B.—In executing a *pas glissé* in any direction, the weight of the body must not fall upon the foot which makes the slide *until it reaches its destination*, and then the balance must be transferred from one leg to the other so smoothly that it is impossible to discern precisely when the change is accomplished.

EXERCISE.—In this exercise the slides and hops are to be made in a *forward* direction, thus :—

Stand balanced on the left leg, with the right foot just raised in the *fifth position* in front, the toe pointed well down, and the heel just over the left toe. *One:* Slide the right foot forward to the *fourth position*, gradually extending the limb, so that in finishing the glide it is fairly rigid. The *pas glissé* should begin with the toe only, and not until the right foot reaches its destination, and the weight of the body is actually on the leg, may the heel touch the floor. This is the first movement, which occupies the two intervals belonging to the minim or first chord in the music. *Two:* Let the left leg, which is now disengaged, swing *in front* of the right leg, so that the left heel is raised high above the right toe, and the toe of the left foot points downward just off the floor. Precisely at the instant the left foot swings before the right, bend the right knee a little and hop so that you come down again on the right foot at the third count; these last movements being made quickly and almost simultaneously. Now slide forward again, this time with the left foot, which is raised ready in front. In finishing the glide, swing the right foot in front and at the same time hop on the left.¹

The hops in these exercises should be very much modified, the toes only just leaving the floor. When you have practised a little it will scarcely be necessary in sliding forward to place the heel on the ground at all; indeed, the exercises

should sometimes be practised without the pupil allowing his heel ever to rest on the floor.

Simple as the above movements may appear, they require to be practised with great care and attention. The muscular action of the lower limbs in making them is *very similar to the muscular action employed in waltzing*. There is a slight difference, however, resulting from the fact that in waltzing the foot on which the dancer is balanced never actually leaves the floor, but is propelled forward or backward by a flexion and sudden contraction of the muscles akin to that employed in hopping, *without the upward impulse of the foot*. The steps and movements proper to the waltz will be fully explained in another part of this work ; but meanwhile these exercises are particularly beneficial, as they tend to bring the muscles of the limbs immediately under the control of the pupil, and *into the proper condition for executing the movements required in waltzing*.

THE COUPÉ.¹

The next preparatory movement which claims our attention is the *coupé*, or cut step, the word, like many similar ones, being used in its relation to dancing, as a substantive. The movement always commences from an open position, either the *second* (*coupé latéral*), the *fourth* in front (*coupé dessus*), or the *fourth* behind (*coupé dessous*).

To execute the *coupé latéral*, stand on one foot, say the left, with the right foot raised in the *second position*. Bring the right foot quickly down to the place which the left occupies, and as it descends raise the left foot, which has thus been *cut* out of place, and extend it to the *second*

¹ See also definition in the alphabetical list of technical terms at the end of this chapter.

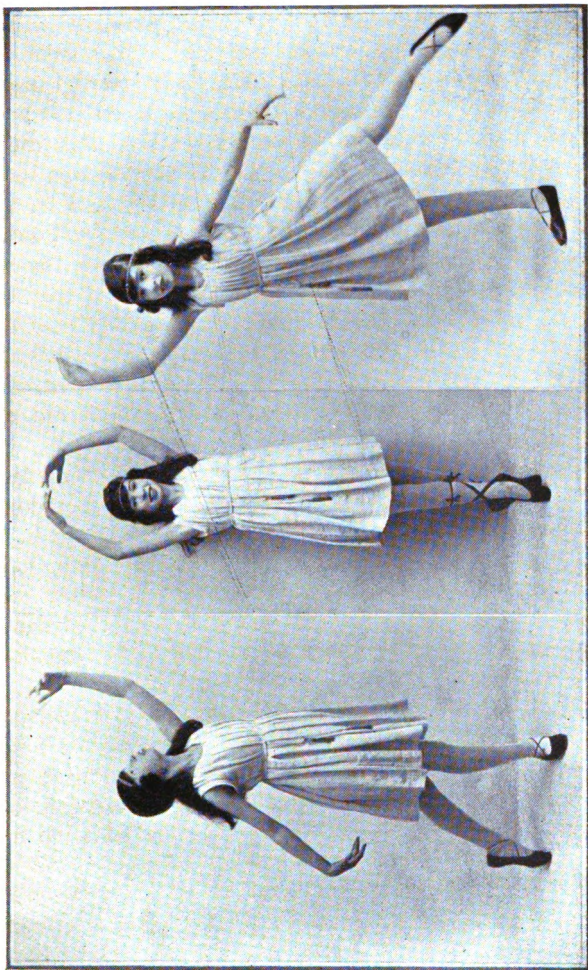
position in the opposite direction, the body being now supported by the right leg.

It will be seen that in performing this movement the position of the centre of gravity of the body is not changed, as it should neither sway to the right nor left.

A *coupé* made from the *fourth position* behind is called *coupé dessous*, or under cut step. To execute this step stand with the body balanced on, say, the left leg, and let the right foot be raised behind in the *fourth position*. Bring the right foot smartly down to the position which the left occupies, simultaneously raising the left foot so that the right in descending passes under the heel. Throw the weight of the body on to the right foot as it touches the ground, and raise the left to the *fourth position* in front, with the toe of course turned very much down, to avoid the appearance of kicking.

The *coupé dessus*, or upper cut step, is made from the last-mentioned position, by bringing the raised left foot down to the place occupied by the right foot, on which the body rests, so that it appears to descend *over* the supporting foot, which is, however, quickly withdrawn as the raised foot descends, and lifted to the *fourth position* behind, the balance of the body being transferred to the left leg as the foot reaches the floor.

N.B.—Mark well the difference in the spelling of the above technical terms. If you cannot speak French it were better that you acquired the correct pronunciation of these and other terms from a Parisian before making use of them. A little girl residing in the North told a friend of mine not long since that she had learnt a “pass de ducks.” “Whatever is that!” exclaimed my friend. “Well,” said the child, “that is what the teacher called it.” A little further examination elicited the fact that the children had been taught a



Fourth Position *en arrière*.

Rising on the Toes.

After Coupé *desissé* or before Coupé *dessous*.
To face page 48.

pas de deux; but I need scarcely say that their instructor did not belong to the foremost ranks of the profession.

Another thing to which I would call your attention is this: There is no need to be afraid of coming down on your own toes in making the above movement. You will instinctively remove one foot from the floor before the other descends by a kind of involuntary muscular action. There is perhaps just a little danger that in your first attempt at making *entrechats* you will sometimes come down unawares with your heel just over your toe; but you will not be likely to practise these movements until you have made considerable progress in the art. Unfortunately it happens that, as a general rule, amateur dancers are far less likely to damage their own than their partner's toes. If men had to incur all the penalties of their own clumsiness, they would, I venture to think, be more inclined to learn how to dance properly than appears to be the case at present.



EXERCISE.—Be standing with the body balanced on the right leg, and the left foot raised behind in the *fourth position*. One: *Coué dessous*. Bring the left foot smartly down to the position occupied by the right foot, which is simultaneously raised and extended to the *fourth position* in front, so that the left foot in descending just passes under the right heel. All this is done almost at the same instant, and occupies only one count of the music. Two: *Coué dessus*. Bring the right foot, which has just been projected to the *fourth position* in front, back again to the place it originally occupied, so that it appears in descending to pass over the left foot, which is removed to make way for it, and again raised in the *fourth position behind*, as it was at start-

E

ing. *Three: Coupé dessous.* The same as just described for the first count. *Four:* Bring the right leg, which was extended in the last *coupé* to the *fourth position* in front, round to the *fourth position* behind, keeping the foot off the ground, and causing it to describe an arc in passing the supporting limb, upon which make a slight springing movement. For the next bar repeat the steps above described, in the opposite direction, or that to which the left toe points, beginning by bringing the right foot, which has just passed behind the left leg, down in the place of the left foot, which is simultaneously extended to the *fourth position* in front. Continue thus with *coupé dessous*, *dessus*, and again *dessous*, followed by the thigh movement, with the balance first on one leg and then on the other, to the end of the exercise.

I may mention that the *coupé dessous* and *dessus* in combination are steps very frequently employed in solo gavottes and other so-called "fancy" dances; but I believe that the "Versa," of which an explanation will be given in due course, is the first drawing-room dance for couples in which the movement has been introduced. The above exercise is an excellent one to practise for acquiring lightness, agility, and evenness of balance.

It is not always necessary in making a *coupé* forward or backward to let the raised foot descend directly over or under the supporting one as it leaves the floor. The steps must in many cases be modified to suit the nature of the dance in which they are used.

THE CHASSÉ.

When a *coupé* is immediately followed by a transfer of balance to the foot that has been cut out of place, the movement is called a *chassé*, because in it—especially if the step be repeated in one direction—the feet have the appearance of chasing one another. Generally speaking, however, *chassé* movements are of a gliding nature, and are executed

with the feet close to or actually on the floor, while a *coupé* is more usually made from a raised position. The difference between a *coupé* and a *chassé* will perhaps be rendered more apparent to the pupil if he considers that in executing the former movement it is only necessary to make a single *degagé*, or passing of the weight from one foot to the other; while in a *chassé* the balance of the body must again be thrown on to the leg which originally sustained it.

A succession of *chassé* movements may be made in a forward, backward, or sideways direction. The following are exercises for the step combined with *pas glissé* and *pas sauté*. Play as below:—



chassé, ch. ch. hop, chassé, ch. ch. hop, etc.

EXERCISE.—Stand in the *third position* with the balance on the left leg, the right foot pointed behind, and just a little raised, ready to begin the movement. *One:* *Glissade* with the right foot to the *second position*, and let the weight of the body pass to the right leg. *Two:* Bring the left foot to *third position* behind the right to carry the weight, while you again quickly slide the right foot to the *second position*, and balance thereon, counting *and two*. *Three:* Do precisely the same as for the last count, viz., *chassé*, and *three*. *Four:* Hop gently on the right foot, raising the left in the *third position* behind ready to recommence the movement in the opposite direction.

EXERCISE.—Stand on the left leg with the right foot just raised in front, the toe pointing well down in the *fifth position*. *One:* *Starting oblique'y* in the direction to which the right toe points, slide the

right foot to the *fourth* intermediate position. *Two*: Close the left foot to the *fifth* position behind the right, to carry the weight, while the right foot is again slid to the *fourth* intermediate position, and the balance is again transferred to the right leg—count *and two*. *Three*: *Chassé* again obliquely as just described, counting *and three*. *Four*: Hop lightly on the right foot, raising the left behind in the *fifth* position ready to make the movement in a backward direction obliquely to original place thus :—Slide backward with the left foot to the *fourth* position, then *chassé*, again *chassé*, and hop on the left foot with the right raised in the *fifth* position in front as at starting. Repeat the movement forward and backward obliquely as explained above ; but at the last note of the music, instead of hopping on the left foot, as before, put the right foot boldly down in the *fifth* position behind, and raise the left with the toe pointed downward, ready to commence the movement obliquely in the opposite direction.

The same movement may also be done forward and backward in a direct line, the feet changing alternately from the *fourth* to the *third* position. The exercise is to be performed first with the right foot continually in front till the last note, when, instead of hopping on the left foot, the right is put boldly down in the *third* position behind, and the left is slid forward as the music repeats.

A *chassé* step may be made alternatively, first with one foot and then with the other. Such a movement is technically called *chassé alternatif*.

THE ROND-DE-JAMBE.

This, as the term implies, is a circular movement of the leg. The *rond-de-jambe* is very frequently employed in theatrical dancing ; but is seldom brought into requisition in the drawing-room except in the execution of ornamental dances, and then always in a somewhat modified form.

There are two kinds of *ronds-de-jambes*—outward and inward, or those in which the foot commences to describe

the circle by moving backwards or by moving forward. The outward circle is perhaps more usually employed. *Ronds-de-jambes* should be first practised with the feet upon the ground, and afterwards, when a certain degree of facility has been obtained in executing the movement, the foot describing the circle should be raised from the floor.

The outward *rond-de-jambe* is begun from the *second position*. Suppose, for instance, you are balanced on your left leg, extend the right to the *second position*, and then commence the *rond* by making it describe a semi-circle in a backward direction till the right heel reaches the heel of the foot on which you are balanced. Then continue the circle in a forward direction, the foot going outward till it again reaches the position whence it started, and then the *rond* is completed.

The inward *rond-de-jambe* is also begun from the *second position*, only the foot commences to describe the circle by coming forward and inward until it reaches the *first position*. It then continues the *rond* backward and outward till it again reaches the *second position*, and completes the circle.

These *ronds-de-jambes* should at first be practised slowly several times successively with one leg, and then with the other leg. Afterwards quicker, and with each leg alternately. In practising the *ronds-de-jambes en air*, the pupil should begin by resting his hand on some object to keep himself in an upright position, because the body ought properly to be balanced only on the toe of the supporting foot.

In addition to the above, there is also a kind of *leg twist* frequently employed in burlesque dancing, in which a half turn is made on the toes of the supporting foot while the raised limb is twisted upward, its position being changed

from a rearward to a forward position by the turn of the body. In executing such a movement, great care must be taken that there is a free action of the thigh. Although it has a somewhat similar effect, this movement cannot properly be described as a *rond-de-jambe*.

THE PAS DE BASQUE.

One of the most beautiful steps used in *terre à terre* dancing is that known by the above name, and so-called because it had its origin in Basque, a province of Southern France. It is a step frequently employed in gavottes and other ornamental and solo dances, and it is also the foundation of that now entirely neglected drawing-room dance called the Redova.

The *pas de basque* is not, like the *jetté*, *pas sauté*, etc., a simple movement; but may be regarded rather as a combination of movements that have been already described. The step is composed of a *demi* (half) *rond-de-jambe par terre*,¹ a *jetté*, *glissé*, and *coupé-dessous latéral*, or *dessus*, according to whether the movement be made forward, sideways, or backwards. The *pas de basque* may be danced to music written in common or in triple time, the accentuation of the movement of the feet being made differently according to the measure and nature of the dance in which the step is employed.

Suppose that the *pas de basque* is to be executed in a forward direction to music in common time, say as

¹ It is usual to describe the first movement of the *pas de basque* as if it were simply a light *jetté*; but this does not, I think, sufficiently explain the nature of the action. Finding that Mr. Gilbert, in his excellent description of the step, has used the term *rond de jambe*, I have ventured to do likewise, adding, however, the words *par terre* to distinguish the movement from the high *rond*.

below, the following is a description of how the movements should be made :—



Be standing upon the left foot, with the right slightly raised from the ground, in the *third* or *fifth position* in front. With the right foot describe a semi-circle (*demi rond-de-jambe*), throwing it out to the *second position*, and then bringing it round to the *third* or *fifth position* behind the left. In finishing the *rond*, spring from the left on to the right foot (*jetté*), and almost simultaneously slide the left forward to the *fourth position*. For this part of the step say *and one*, as the *demi rond-de-jambe*, like the *appoggiatura* introduced in the music, receives no special count. Now bring the right foot up to the place of the left, and at the same time slightly raise the left from the floor, counting *two* (*coupé dessous*). This completes the *pas de basque* forward. Repeat the step *ad libitum*, alternately beginning with the right and left foot.

In practising the *pas de basque* sideways, bring the right foot from the *second position* slightly raised to the *first* or other closed position in front or behind—according to the nature of the movement required—spring from the left foot to the right foot, and almost simultaneously slide the left to the *second position*, counting *and one*. Bring the right foot to the place of the left (*coupé latéral*), and at the same time extend the left leg to the *second position*, ready to re-commence the step to the right, counting *two*.



When the *pas de basque* is to be performed to music written in three-four time, say as above, the *glissé*, instead of being included in the "*and one*," may receive a separate count.¹ Thus the *demi rond-de-jambe* and the *jetté* occupy the first beat, the *glissé* the second beat, and the *coupé dessous* the third beat of the bar. Or sometimes the *glissé* is included in the first beat—and *one*, the second beat is

¹ It is thus accented in Spanish dances,

occupied simply by a pause, and the *coupé* is made at the third beat. Each of these accentuations is correct, and may be employed according to the nature of the dance. The step should therefore be practised both ways.

Sometimes, though more rarely, the *pas de basque* is done backwards. In this case the forward steps are simply reversed. For example, stand upon the left foot, having the right slightly raised in the *fifth position* behind. Let the right foot describe a semi-circle forward until it reaches the *third* or *fifth position* in front. Then spring from the left foot to the right foot, and almost simultaneously slide the left backward to the *fourth position*, counting *and one*. Bring the right foot to the place of the left, at the same time raising the left from the floor, ready to recommence the movement (*coupé dessus*), and count *two* if the time be duple. For music in triple time the *glissé* backward may receive a separate count, or the accentuation may be as heretofore described.

PIROUETTES.

The *pirouette* is an artistic turning or whirling movement of the dancer on one or both feet. There are several ways of making *pirouettes*, of which the most simple and graceful only need claim our immediate attention. Those wonderful gyratory performances occasionally exhibited by accomplished theatrical artists, consisting of several consecutive revolutions of the body, while supported mainly by the toes of one foot, and sometimes including changes of attitude, necessarily require not only an immense amount of practice, but great natural ability on the part of the dancer. A simple *pirouette*, however, consisting of one or two turns does not present any insuperable difficulty, though it is of course requisite that the pupil, in order to perform any movement

of this description satisfactorily, must have already attained a thorough command over the adjustment of his balance.

A very simple half turn, which cannot properly be called a *pirouette*, may be made thus : Suppose you wish to go round from left to right, stand with your body balanced on the left leg, bring the right foot to the fifth position behind the left, the toe touching the heel precisely at right angles. Now raise both heels from the floor, not too much at first, and turn gently on the soles of both feet until their relative position is reversed, and the left toe comes against the right heel, by which time you should be exactly facing the opposite direction. You may now try raising the heels higher, being very careful that you revolve only on the toes, which must not shift from their position on the floor. If the right toe in starting be placed quite to the left heel, and the feet turned well outward, there ought to be no difficulty whatever in facing the opposite direction in a single movement ; but it is necessary that the head and shoulders should turn synchronously with the action of the feet, or the result will be unsuccessful. Make up your mind that you will complete a half turn, and instead of looking downward at your feet, turn your face in the direction you wish to go, and then you will find that you can get round easily enough. A repetition of the movement will naturally bring you to the position whence you started, and so complete the turn ; but the most usual way is to start from the second position, transfer the balance to the leg that passes behind, and continue the turn on that foot.

Perhaps the simplest and easiest method of completing a *pirouette* in one movement is as follows : Suppose you wish to turn to the right, let the left foot in starting be extended in the *second intermediate position*, turn the face towards the direction of rotation, extend the left arm and gracefully bend

the right. The movement must be initiated by the action of the arms, which should wave in the required direction to give the necessary impulse. When this is obtained, rise on the toe of the right foot, and, sustaining the balance well on the right leg, commence to swing round. In turning, let the left leg cross before the right, so that when you are facing the opposite direction the left toe just touches the ground, and gives, as it were, a fresh impetus to the movement. Continue turning until you are again facing the direction whence you started, with your feet in a closed position, which may be the *first*, *third*, or *fifth*, according to the nature of the next movement.

If you wish to make a double *pirouette* you may do so by simply repeating the above movement; or you may spin twice round on the right toe, finishing with a transfer of balance to the left leg, in precisely the opposite attitude to that in which you began. This latter is of course the more effective way, but then it is also the more difficult.

Pirouettes may also be made by turning to the right on the toes of the left foot, and *vice-versâ*. In this case the free limb may be flexed until the palm of the foot is parallel with the supporting leg. Particular care must be taken that the equilibrium of the body is well sustained during the rotatory movement, and there should be no apparent effort to save oneself from falling at the finish. The raised foot may be gently lowered, and the balance sustained thereby as the *pirouette* is completed, or the dancer may remain balanced only upon the revolving foot in some graceful arabesque attitude.

I should mention that it is by no means necessary for the raised limb to be kept near the supporting one when executing a *pirouette*. On the contrary, in theatrical dancing it is frequently extended in the horizontal second or fourth

position, and beyond this, during the *pirouette*, the free limb may execute different movements, *battlements fouettés* or *ronds-de-jambe*, according to the taste of the performer. Such *pirouettes*, however, require more executive ability than is usually possessed by the amateur dancer.

There are many more steps and movements that I would like to describe at length, if space permitted; but for the present I must content myself with merely giving a few very brief explanations, which will suffice to give the pupil some idea of the nature of the steps, and then if he wishes to learn more about them, he may ask his teacher to show him how they should be accomplished. I will for the sake of convenience arrange these short explanations alphabetically.

NAMES OF STEPS AND MOVEMENTS.

Ailes de pigeons. A movement in which the calves of the legs are struck together, causing an appearance as of the flapping of doves' wings.

Assemblé. A bringing of the feet from an open to a closed position. When made from one closed position to another, commence by bending the knees, then raise one foot, spring in the required direction, and alight on both feet with the one that was raised, in the *third* or *fifth* position behind.

Balancé. A rising and falling movement on the sole of one foot while the other is brought to a closed position. See *Quadrilles*.

Ballonné. A step in which the moving foot appears as if it were passing over a ball.

Ballotté, "throwing here and there" step. A movement in which the feet are crossed alternately one before or behind the other. An example is given in the *Siabadh-trasd*, Highland step. It is also used in the hornpipe.

Bourrée. An ancient French dance. There are several *pas de bourrée*. The true one, according to Rameau, being composed of a *demi coupé*, a *pas marché*, and a *demi jetté* (meaning a smoothly executed *jetté*). But there are several others also correct, one composed of a *demi coupé* and two *pas marchés*; then there is the *fleuret* and the *pas*

de bourrée ouverte.¹ But the one most frequently used is perhaps the following:—*One*: Advance the right foot to the *fourth position*. *Two*: Close the left to the *third position* behind the right, receiving the weight of the body. *Three*: Again advance the right foot to the *fourth position*; then recommence the step with the left foot.

N.B.—This step, which Rameau describes as the *pas de bourrée emboîté*, is useful for any figured dance. It may be employed in the gavotte and minuet; but it is not the real *pas de menuet*.

Bourrée, pas de, in triplets. This is a step frequently used in fancy dances. To perform it, as a preparatory movement, raise the right leg in the *second position*. *One*: Bring the raised foot down in the *fifth position* behind the left. *Two*: Move the left foot to the *second position*. *Three*: Close the right again behind the left; after which, raise the left leg, and repeat the step in the opposite direction by passing the left foot to the *fifth position* behind. The feet may be crossed either forward or backward.

Capriole or *Cabriolet*.² The striking of the feet or legs together during a leap. *Demi capriole*. Leap from one foot to the other, and in doing so strike the feet or legs together during the interval of suspension.

Couplé. A step in which the feet pass from one open position, through a closed one to another open position. So far, at least, all authorities are, I think, agreed; but we must not overlook the fact that Feuillet, and many of the older French writers, did not consider that a *couplé* involved a change of balance from one leg to the other. It was, however, necessary to make a decided *plié* as the foot executing the *couplé* passed the supporting limb in the *first position*. Thus P. Rameau, writing in 1725, commences to describe "*le vrai pas de menuet*" thus: "*Scavoir, le premier est un demi-couplé du pied droit et un du gauche*," etc. Now to any one who was only acquainted with the modern definition of a *couplé* as requiring a transfer of balance, this writer's descriptions would be wholly unintelligible. The different kinds of *pas couplé* have already been fully explained.

Ciseaux, pas de. A movement in which the legs of the dancer move in a manner resembling the opening and shutting of a pair of scissors. For description, see *Sissonne*.

Courante, temps de—pas grave. The foot passes from the *fourth rear-*

¹ Wilson, writing in 1816, describes a *pas de bourrée* as being three movements forward in the *fourth position* on the toes, with the knees kept perfectly straight, but this description is very unsatisfactory.

² *Capriolare*, Italian. To cut capers.

ward position to the fourth in front with a very decided *plié de genoux* as it comes into the first position. Directly the moving foot reaches the fourth position, the balance is thrown entirely on it, raising high the heel of the hitherto supporting foot.¹ Some, however, describe a *pas grave* as a bending of both knees in the fifth position, rising high on the toes and descending only on the heel of the rear foot, while the foot which is in front remains pointed on the ground.

Demi. This word used in connection with such terms as *couplé*, *glissé*, *rond-de-jambe*, etc., implies that the step or movement is only half made. A *pas glissé entière* (complete), like a *pas couplé*, would be taken from one open position to another open position. A *demis glissé* would be taken from a closed to an open position.

Echappé, Temps échappé. A jump from a closed position falling lightly upon the feet in an open position.

Ecarté, Temps écarté. A jump from a closed position spreading out the limbs in rising, and falling again in a closed position.

Entrechat. The beating of the legs or feet together as they cross and recross rapidly during a leap. The easiest way to begin to learn this movement is, I think, to stand in a crossed close position, say the third, bend the knees, spring upward, and in doing so change the relative position of the feet, then beat them together, separate them, and descend in the second open position. Thus the limbs open, close, and again open. The simplest *entrechat* is the *entrechat à quatre*, in which the legs open, close, open, and again close, crossing before and behind during the leap; an *entrechat—à cinq*, if begun from a closed, would end in an open position; but in six beatings the feet again close, unless began from an open position. The fifth position is the most effective one in which to make the crossings.

Frappé struck. A *couplé*, in which the foot was put down so that the step could be heard, would be called a *couplé frappé*.

Fouetté. A whipping movement of the raised foot as it passes rapidly before or behind the supporting limb.

Glissade, a slide; *pas glissé*, a gliding step.

Grave. *Pas grave*, see *temps de courante*.

Gavotte, contretemps de. Having the right foot raised behind the left, *plié* on the left, and rise in leaping thereon at the same time that the right passes in front to the fourth position (Rameau).

¹ This description is absolutely correct, according to Feuillet and the old French writers; but certainly the grave nature of the step does not agree with the name *temps de courante*.

Jetté. A thrown step already explained at length.

Levé, Temps levé. A rising movement on the toe of the balancing foot.

Minuet. An ancient and much-admired dance, to be treated of in another section of this work.

Menuet, pas de. A movement consisting of two *pliés* in advancing and three forward steps, occupying two bars of the music, and always beginning with the right foot.¹ There are various steps and movements employed in the minuet, which would require explanation in describing the dance.

Marché, pas. A step which differs from that employed in ordinary walking, inasmuch as the limb in advancing is extended, so that the toe touches the ground simultaneously with the heel. The balancing limb, however, should be somewhat flexed, and the action thereof springy.

Passe-pied. A minuet with leaping and quick steps.

Pas. This term is applied to combinations of movements as well as to single steps. Thus the expression *pas seul* does not mean a single step, but a series of steps, *enchânement*, or even a whole dance executed by a single person. The terms *pas de deux*, *pas de trois*, etc., of course refer to dance movements executed by two performers, three performers, and so on.

Pirouette. An artistic turn of the body in one movement or series of revolutions on the point of one foot. Already explained.

Pistolet. See *Ailes de pigeon*.

Polonaise, pas polonaise, coup de talon. Strike one heel against the other, slide the striking foot to the *second position*, and close the supporting one with a *demi coupé*, ready to recommence the step. This is the characteristic polish step, and is used in the Mazurka. The dance called Polonaise is merely a stately promenade.

Relevé, pas. A raised step.

Ronds-de-jambe. Already fully explained.

Sauté, a leap ; pas sauté, a hop. Already explained.

Sissonne. An ancient and forgotten dance. There are several ways of executing the *pas de sissonne* or *pas de ciseaux*. One of the most usual is as follows : as a preparation for the movement, extend the right leg in the *second position* raised. *One* : Spring slightly on the supporting limb, and bring the right down to the *fifth position* behind, bending both knees. *Two* : Spring upward from both feet, and descend upon the right foot only, while the left is quickly raised and extended in the

¹ "Il faut laisser le corps sus le pied gauche, afin de partir du pied droit pour votre pas de minuet." Rameau, 1727.

second position. The raised foot may be crossed either in front of or behind the supporting one, and there need not be a transfer of balance, as the same leg may be again raised. In this case it is perhaps more correct to say *temps de sissonne*. An example is given among the Highland steps in the *Leum-trasd*.

Temps or *Tems*. A movement in which a transfer of balance is not essential. Thus, a *temps de cuisse* is a movement in which the striking is performed with the upper part of the limb.

Tendu, pas tendu. A step in which the leg is stretched.

Tortillé, twisted. *Pas tortillés.* Steps frequently employed in the national dances of most countries. The foot is turned inward and outward from a false to a true position. The turning may be made on the sole or heel, or on each alternately, according to the nature of the dance, and one foot only may execute the *pas tortillé*, while the other retains its position, or both feet may turn simultaneously.

Zéphir, pas de. A very light and beautiful step, in which the toe lightly touches the ground in passing from one raised extended position to another.

CHAPTER VII.

RULES OF GRACEFULNESS.

To be observed by those who would become good dancers.

OUR attention has hitherto been directed chiefly to the movements of the feet in dancing, and the action of the lower limbs. But the pupil, if he has acquired some facility in the execution of particular steps, and is able to move his legs with a certain degree of freedom—which I hope is the case—has yet to learn what is perhaps more difficult, viz., the correct employment of his arms.¹

¹ It was Telestes, a famous dancing-master of ancient Greece, who first taught the proper action of the arms and hands—vide *Athenæus, lib. i. 39*. Aristotle mentions that Telestes was so great a master of his art, that in managing the chorus in the “Seven against Thebes” of Æschylus, he made all the transactions plain by dancing.

Of course it will be understood that in all cases, unless the contrary be distinctly specified, my remarks apply to lady pupils and girls, as well as to men and boys, and that when I use the masculine pronoun, the feminine is implied also. Indeed, in the present and two following chapters, what I shall have to say applies especially to female pupils, since the art of solo and ornamental dancing, which demands a wider range of arm-movements than are requisite for ordinary ball-room practice, is more particularly cultivated at the present time by young ladies than it is by men.

To begin with, it is obviously clear that unless the arms are hanging down on each side of the body perfectly inactive, they must be either correspondingly or differently employed, and it is the art of employing them in such a manner that their action or position harmonizes with the action or position of the lower limbs and the rest of the body, that presents so great a difficulty to the beginner.

A movement or posture may generally, I think, be considered graceful when the various parts of the body are co-adapted and composed in such a way as to produce a pleasing effect, and cause no encumbrance whatever to each other in their action or position; and we must also take into account fitness, which, as Emerson observes in his *Essay on Art*, "is so inseparable an accompaniment of beauty that it has often been taken for it."

I have elsewhere hinted that much depends upon a nice adjustment of the centre of gravity, and it is essential that the limbs should be so disposed that no sudden or awkward angles are apparent at the joints. Moreover, it is advisable, as a general rule, that the relative positions of the opposite members should be varied rather than uniform.

The natural action of the arms and legs in human beings corresponds with the movements of the fore and hind legs

F

of animals, the right arm moving synchronously with the left leg, and *vice-versâ*. In walking and running our limbs are thus placed in opposition at each recurring step, the movements being made spontaneously, and without consideration on the part of the person who runs or walks. But directly a pupil begins, in learning to dance, to make movements and assume attitudes to which he is unaccustomed, he no longer spontaneously adapts the action and position of his arms to the requirements of gravitation, and his embarrassment at finding them without employment—in the way, so to speak,—causes him to place them in all manner of ridiculous and awkward positions that are entirely out of harmony with the action or posture of the rest of his body.

It is here, then, that the rules of art, which are, or should be, always framed in accordance with natural laws, are brought into requisition; and by diligent study of these rules, combined with regular practice, the pupil may learn so to dispose his several members in making any movement, or assuming any posture, that they shall always present a pleasing and harmonious appearance as a whole, and sustain easily the equilibrium of his body.

No action can be truly graceful that does not at the same time appear perfectly natural, and often the most beautiful movements are the most simple.¹ For my own part I fail to perceive that there is any elegance in such movements as seem to require an abnormal flexibility of the joints, such as kicking the legs very high, as one too frequently sees at the theatre, turning out the toes and bringing the heels forward, till the feet fall in a straight line, spread-eagle fashion, or in the attitudes assumed by professional contortionists. As

¹ I think it is Schiller who observes that "Grace is beauty of form under the influence of freedom."

Herbert Spencer points out in his chapter on "Æsthetic Sentiments"—"An awkward motion is one that implies a sudden change of direction, angularity, destruction of much momentum, excess of muscular effort; whereas a motion called graceful—a motion in curved lines, flowing one into another without break—is a motion in which little momentum is destroyed, no undue exertion thrown on any muscle, no power lost."¹ We know that the Greeks with their refined perceptions set very little value upon steps and actions that were *merely difficult* in dancing. What they appreciated most was the serious and noble style. They thought more highly of simple gracefulness than of complicated dexterity.

I maintain that those movements are the most graceful that are most in conformity with the natural actions of our limbs. We were never intended to walk on the extreme tips of our toes. To do this is clever, of course, in a sense; but it reminds one of what Dr. Johnson said about a dog walking on its hind legs, "It is not done well, but we wonder that it can be done at all." It is just as natural for a dog to walk on its hind legs as it is for a woman to walk on the tips of her toes; both achievements can be acquired by practice, but neither is beautiful.

The same objections, however, do not apply to such movements as the *pas de zéphir*, *entrechat*, *cabriole*, and *pirouette*. However difficult some of these may be, they are strictly in accordance with the natural action of the limbs, intrinsically beautiful, and do not appear to demand undue muscular effort.

But because it happens that every graceful action is in its essence natural, it by no means follows that every natural action is essentially graceful. In this case the converse of the proposition will not hold. It is, for instance, quite as

¹ *Principles of Psychology.*

natural to spread the fingers out as it is to group them together, and perhaps if it were intended to pantomimically indicate the emotions of fear or surprise, the action would, in a sense, not be wanting in gracefulness, because it would be in accordance with propriety or *fitness* of gesture ; but in ordinary dancing, the action of spreading out the fingers is considered most inelegant, and unmistakably betrays the novice.

If then gracefulness is in some measure a relative quality, and many natural actions of the body and limbs are wanting in gracefulness, how are we to decide what movements and postures are and are not graceful ?

It is related that when the painter Zeuxis wished to delineate a perfect beauty, he did not paint the portrait of any one individual, but obtained from the Agrigentines permission to select out of their virgins five of the most beautiful. These he assembled around him that he might gaze upon their several charms. Then in his own mind he pictured a type of female loveliness which embodied the most pleasing characteristics of each. And this ideal, which he forthwith proceeded to portray on the canvas as Helen, the most beautiful of women, was true to nature, inasmuch as it comprised whatever was deemed most perfect in the actual types from which the whole was conceived.

Let us, at a reverential distance, venture to proceed in a manner somewhat similar to that of the great artist of antiquity, and ask, say, three girls, amateurs in dancing, but not wanting in natural gracefulness, to spontaneously assume an attitude in which their bodies and limbs are to be disposed in such a manner that the equilibrium is sustained upon one leg, while the other is a little extended ; one hand to hold the skirt lightly, while the other is raised high above the head.

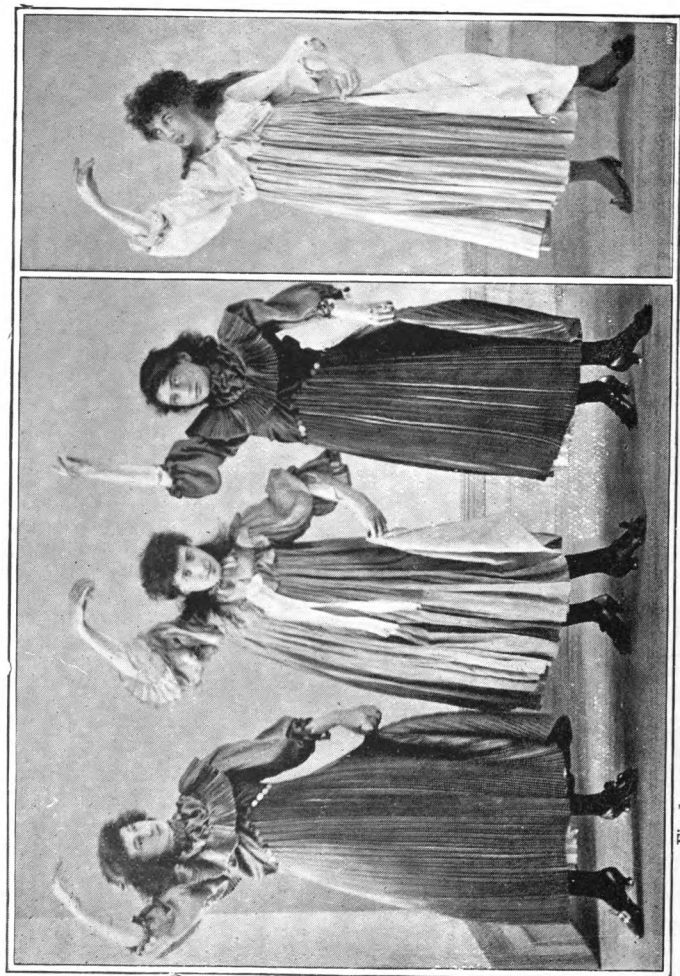


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Inharmonious Postures.

(With one arm raised and one limb extended.)

Accordant Posture.
(Same conditions.)

To face page 69.

Suppose that these three young ladies assume the postures shown on the plate. It will be seen that they all fulfil the required conditions. In each there may be some pleasing quality; yet certainly none is perfect.

What, then, is wrong with each of these attitudes? Let us take them in turn.

In Fig. 1 the position of the arms is not amiss, nor is indeed the position of the feet, if taken by themselves; but the relative position of the limbs is not good. Both the extended limbs are on the same side of the body. The position of the upper part requires that the left instead of the right leg should be extended. To test this, cover the lower part of the figure with your hand, and then suddenly withdraw it. The head of this figure is well poised.

In Fig. 2 the opposition of the arms and legs is good; but the arms are too much rounded like the letter S, forming a line which has been shown by Hogarth in his *Analysis of Beauty*, and by Owen Jones in his *Grammar of Ornament*, to be wanting in symmetry.

In Fig. 3 the position of the left arm requires that the right—which according to the conditions must be raised—should be almost perpendicular, and the wrist ought to be bent to correspond with the bend of the elbow. Hide the right arm and the head, which is badly poised, entirely, and the rest of the figure does not look ungraceful.

Thus we see that these positions, although manifestly imperfect, are not devoid of pleasing characteristics; and if we proceed to pick out whatever appears best in each of them, we may be able to combine our selection so as to produce a posture that shall fulfil the conditions imposed, and yet satisfy all the requirements of gracefulness (see Fig. 4).

It is not my intention in the present chapter to enter into

any elaborate disquisition on the abstract principles of gracefulness. What I here propose doing is simply to formulate a few practical rules, which I will put in axiomatic form, and endeavour to make as concise and clear as possible, so that they may be easily understood and remembered by the reader. Some it may be necessary to illustrate by example; the application of others will become apparent as we proceed. Pupils who wish to become really graceful dancers cannot do better than give these rules their most earnest attention.

•

AXIOMS RELATING TO GRACEFULNESS.

I. The trunk of the figure being the most important part,—when the body is in motion, it should appear as if the movements of the several members were controlled by the action of the trunk, and not as if its action were controlled by the movements of the limbs.

There are doubtless readers who will experience a little difficulty in comprehending the above. *Primâ facie*, it may seem more proper that the limbs should appear to control the movements of the trunk, since obviously it could not stir without them.¹ But in reality the trunk exerts a very great influence over the action of the limbs. At every step we take in ordinary walking the body, by inclining forward, materially assists the action of the advancing limb, and renders its movements to a great extent automatic.² The centre of gravity is always situated within the trunk, which by inclining in any given direction *compels* a certain

¹ Students of Roman history will call to mind the fable of Menenius Agrippa.

² *Vide* Dr. Pettigrew's *Animal Mechanism*, Professor Marey's *Animal Locomotion*, and other authorities.

corresponding action of limb in order that equilibrium may be sustained. The same applies to all movements connected with dancing. To use a familiar expression, every one will know what we mean if we say, "He looks as if his legs were running away with him." And this is precisely the unhappy state of things that I wish the pupil to avoid.

II. The actions of all parts of the body should be in accord one with the other, and consistent with the nature of the movement to be executed.

EXAMPLES.—In making any kind of rotatory movement, be particular that the face looks towards the direction in which you are about to turn, and that the arms, shoulders, and trunk of the body initiate the movement of the legs and feet (Ax. 1). If, for instance, you are standing balanced on the right foot and wish to pivot thereon in turning to the right, you may easily do so by turning the face in that direction, and swinging the right arm behind you and the left in front, to give the body an impetus; but if you attempt to turn to the right, and initiate the movement by a contrary action of the arms and head, you will find it impossible to get round, howsoever you may struggle to do so, with the lower part of your body.

III. For a movement or posture to be graceful, it is not only necessary that the body should be perfectly balanced, but it is also essential that it should appear so to the beholder.

It is sometimes possible in dancing to sustain the equilibrium of the body in positions that would cause an observer to imagine it would be lost; but such positions are better avoided. Certain qualities of gracefulness are analogous in all things. A building to be graceful needs not to be of regular construction; but certainly it must always appear well-balanced. The inclination of the Campanile of Pisa detracts much from its beauty, and gives a most uncomfort-

able impression. Yet it is in reality perfectly balanced, and has stood thus for upwards of seven hundred years.

IV. The body should generally be held erect and perpendicular upon the lower limbs ; but when the body is in motion, the vertebral column must never be kept perfectly rigid, as if it were composed of a single unarticulated bone. In progressive movement the chest should be thrown slightly forward, while in retrogressive movement the back should be curved slightly outward. In circular movement, when the dancer turns on his own axis, the body should generally be kept erect and even ; but in circular movements for couples, the backs of the dancers should be curved slightly outward from the centre of rotation.

The last clause in the above sentence will be more particularly explained and exemplified when we come to treat of the position of partners in the waltz and other round dances. The position of the body in attitudes technically termed *arabesques* of course varies with the nature of the posture or movement.

V. In dancing, it is generally more proper and graceful for the head to incline a little to the right or left, than to rest perpendicularly on the shoulders. The muscles of the neck should never be contracted so as to cause any appearance of stiffness, and the head should not be kept in one fixed position, but should move and turn from time to time to suit the action of the rest of the body.¹

Instances of this may be noticed in the plates.

VI. In the solo and other dances that require the employment of the arms and hands, the latter should move generally in a circular direction upward and downward, and in changing the position of the hand from supination to pronation or vice-versâ, the wrist should always be bent so that the palm

of the hand inclines a little towards the forearm. As soon, however, as the position is changed, the hand may, if necessary, be again extended; but the action of bending or straightening the wrist must never be performed suddenly or violently.

What is termed *pronation*, is that position of the hand which brings about the crossing of the *radius* over the *ulna* (bones of the forearm). For instance, when the thumb is turned inwards towards the body, or if the arm be extended, with the palm of the hand turned downward. *Supination* is the opposite or upward position, in which the bones of the arm are placed side by side.

VII. Whenever the elbows are bent, in making an upward or downward movement of the arms, or in any stationary position thereof, the wrists should be slightly bent also.

The double bending of the joints, above-mentioned, imparts to the arm a graceful and rounded appearance that could not possibly be obtained if the wrist were kept perfectly rigid. Many of these rules apply equally to painting as to dancing. I have already hinted that much may be learnt by visiting the art galleries of Italy; but the Louvre is nearer, or nearer still our own National Gallery, South Kensington Museum, and Burlington House. You will find these rules, generally speaking, admirably exemplified in the figures of Sir Frederick Leighton, wherein if angles formed by the limbs appear inevitable, they are either concealed or softened by a corresponding flexion of other parts; and sometimes by delicate drapery, as, for instance, in his well-known picture of the 'Bath of Psyche.' Owing perhaps to the prejudices of the 'British Matron' the 'human form divine' is not so frequently represented as it might be; but who with any artistic perception could fail to admire the lovely, classic picture of *Syrinx* which Mr. Hacker ex-

hibited in the Royal Academy of 1892. I here allude to it simply because the position of the girl's limbs is perfect, and in the strictest accord with every rule of gracefulness. In this case it is quite correct that the face should be pressed against, and even a little concealed by, the upraised arm. Syrinx was a nymph, who, apprehensive of violence from the god of shepherds, is represented standing thus in shyness and terror, about to be metamorphosed at her own request, and become as one of the reeds by which she is surrounded. The picture is pregnant with poetry and beauty, and would, I venture to think, suffer little by comparison even with those of Titian in the Tribune Chamber at Florence.

VIII. The fingers should always be well grouped, and slightly curved inward. The first finger may be somewhat extended, the second and third fingers together, bent a little forward—the second more so than the third. The fourth finger may be kept a little away from the third, and the thumb should be rounded and not too far removed from the fingers. It is not, however, necessary that the fingers always be in the same position. So long as they are kept flexed and rounded, they may to a certain extent be allowed free play; but on no account should they ever be widely separated or rigidly extended.

IX. The arms in repose may be extended fully in almost any direction; but should their position be reversed or changed, the arms must on no account remain in a state of extension during their passage upward, downward, or outward, from one position to another.

See, for example, the positions shown in the plate, all of which are good; but should it be the wish of the young lady (Fig. 1) to change the position of her arms to that shown in Fig. 3, she must begin by bending both the

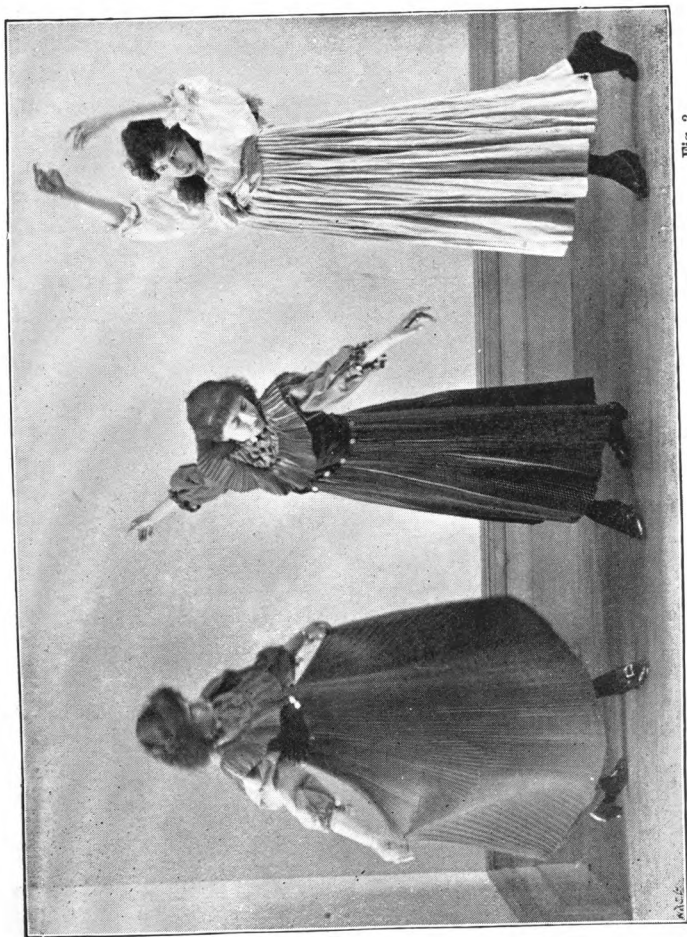


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.
Extended Arm Positions.

Fig. 3.

To face page 74.

elbows and wrists, and her arms must remain flexed and rounded while she is raising them. Again, if Fig. 2 wished to reverse the position of her arms by raising the left and lowering the right, she must, while doing so, bring them a little forward, with the elbows and wrists flexed, in conjunction, and not until the arms reach the required position, may they again be fully extended. If this invariable rule be not strictly observed in dancing, the action of the arms will resemble that of a railway semaphore. Only the veriest tyro would ever dream of raising or lowering his arms from one position to another in a state of extension.

X. The legs of the dancer may also be extended in almost any position ; but it is necessary with these, as with the arms, that the joints be flexed, and the limbs rounded during their passage upward, downward, or outward, from one extended position to another. It is necessary, moreover, that on all occasions when the knees are bent, the ankle and instep should be bent also, to complete the movement.

This is likewise an invariable rule. The pupil must always be particularly careful in raising his foot from a *terre à terre* position to one of elevation, that the movement has not the appearance of kicking, which will assuredly be the case if, in raising his foot, he neglects to bend the knee and turn his toes down. This is one of the most frequent mistakes made by amateur dancers, and whether committed in ball-room or fancy dancing, it looks equally ungraceful and ridiculous.

XI. In terre à terre steps, or those performed on or near the ground, the feet of the dancer should generally, and always in initiating a movement, be bent downward.

This is an almost invariable rule. In all dance movements, with the exception of a few heel steps, which occur in the national dances of most countries, the angle formed

by the upper part of the foot and the fore part of the leg, should be so obtuse as to appear to form an almost continuous line. Generally speaking, the more downward the inclination of the feet, the better will be the effect.

If the foot of a dancer be slid forward or sideways to a position in which he intends that it shall rest flat on the floor, it should always be the toe that initiates the movement—I do not, of course, mean in an anatomical sense—and the heel should not be allowed to touch the ground, or the limb to become rigid, until the foot has reached its destination. The few exceptions to which I have alluded, in which the angle formed by the instep and shin become more acute, are those in which the heel only touches the ground or the toe and heel alternately; but these movements, although correct and certainly not displeasing when characteristic, have generally an effect that would more properly be described as grotesque than graceful.

XII. The elbows of the dancers should be turned outward from the body, and never directly downward when flexed in raising the arms to an extended position. The elbows should be raised as the arms are raised, and turned so that the points are not visible to the spectator.

It will be observed by any one who raises his arm in front of a looking-glass with the elbow bent and turned directly downward, that an unsightly angle is formed by the juncture of the *humerus* and *radius* (bones of the upper and fore arm); but if he turns the *humerus* in its socket until the point of the elbow is directly behind, and in raising his hand to an elevated position, is careful to raise the elbow also, he will discover that the awkward angle above-mentioned is no longer perceptible. Special attention must be paid to this rule when presenting hands to advance in the minuet and dances of a similar nature. Any position

of the arms resembling the letter W has a very bad effect.

XIII. The shoulders should be kept low and generally level.

In raising one arm it is incorrect to raise the corresponding shoulder until after the arm has reached the horizontal position; and it is not necessary to lower the opposite shoulder, even if the hand be raised high above the head. The lowering of the opposite shoulder would cause the body to curve outward on the side of the raised arm, and there are, of course, instances in which such a curve is desirable and elegant, as may be seen by the plates; consequently I do not say that it is at all incorrect to lower the opposite shoulder, but merely that the action is not essential. If, however, the corresponding shoulder be raised before the arm reaches the horizontal position, it produces a most unpleasing effect, causing one to appear as if trying to counterbalance some heavy weight.

XIV. Generally speaking, every part of the body except the supporting limb should be kept pliant. If muscular tension be exerted in any part of the body when it is not required, it not only involves a waste of energy, but imparts an appearance of stiffness and awkwardness to all movements.

This is specially noticeable in cases where undue tension is exerted in the muscles of the neck, and the head kept rigidly fixed in one position. It is absolutely impossible to dance well when any part of the body is in a constrained position, or when the natural spinal movement, so essential to gracefulness, is prevented by a violent contraction of the dorsal muscles, or the constriction imposed by a tight-fitting and unbendable corset. One of the bad results of undue stiffness in any part of the body is that it causes the movement to appear jerky and spasmodic; and if the

vertebral column be kept too rigid, the shoulders are apt to rise and fall with every movement of the feet.

XV. In all cases where drapery is used as an accessory, either in the shape of a full-pleated skirt or flowing scarf, it should be held very lightly between the finger and thumb. The action of the arms must be in strict accordance with the rules already given, and the movement of the wrists as nearly as possible the same as if they were perfectly free.

CHAPTER VIII.

ORNAMENTAL AND SOLO DANCES.

THE reader, who has conscientiously studied and profited by the rules and advice already given, and who has carefully been through, and learnt to execute correctly, the various steps and movements described, may, if his or her taste incline thereto, at once proceed to take lessons in artistic dances, or those wherein the agility or grace displayed by the performers is calculated to gratify the eyes of beholders.

Whatever personal pleasure may be derived from solo dancing, it must necessarily be of a nature to which no moral objection can consistently be raised—of course, provided the movements belonging to the dance be decorous. With the moral objections of those good people who are pleased to regard all earthly enjoyment as sinful, I have neither space nor inclination to concern myself; but I could not help remarking when reading a pleasant little tirade, recently written against dancing, entitled *A Time to Dance*, how the reverend author admits that:—"The simple exercise of dancing, where people move by them-



A Graceful Arabesque.
May be extended to horizontal Position.

To face page 79.

selves, faster or slower, according to music, cannot be wrong nor hurtful to the spiritual life, any more than skipping with a rope, taking a walk, or playing a game with our children." And then he goes on to say:—"But people do not dance by themselves. There is no ball or dance given in which there is not contact with one another, and that not always of the most seemly kind."¹

Now in solo dancing the nature of the pleasure may be complex, an exuberance of vitality may find an agreeable outlet in the execution of rapid or vigorous movements adjusted on a definite plan, while the æsthetic sense may be gratified in the execution of graceful figures to the measured cadence of delightful sounds; but clearly it can have nothing whatever to do with proximity to a companion of the opposite sex, which, as I am not prepared to deny, may be an element of attraction in the practice of round dances.

Concerning the removal of those objections which do most undoubtedly, and not always irrationally, still cling to the waltz as it too often *is*, but not as it *ought to be* danced, I shall have occasion to speak when I come to treat of ball-room dancing. At present I only wish to point out that whatever prejudice may exist in the minds of parents

¹ In one part the author says, "I remember once, when I was a very young man, helping to decorate a room for a ball, and being asked to climb up and remove a picture of our Lord which hung on the wall; and I consented to do so, but could not help asking, Surely if the picture is to your mind incongruous with the scene, can He be in your heart while you are there?" Would it be possible to conceive a weaker argument against dancing than this? If the picture represented our Lord suffering, it would naturally appear out of keeping with joyful surroundings; but if He were merely represented blessing little children, or at the marriage-feast, or on the sea, surely *it should not have been removed at all*. Christ Himself certainly did not disapprove of dancing as an amusement. He does not speak disparagingly of it in Luke vii. 32. Again, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, we find that when the young man returned to his *Father's House*, he was made welcome, and there was *music and dancing*.

against that form of entertainment, there can be no valid reason why they should object to their children being taught the real Art of Dancing, which by no means depends for existence on the craze for waltzing that at present obtains in society. It is impossible that anything but physical good can result from the practice of hornpipe, jig and reel steps, either by a boy or girl; and if a young lady should also learn to perform a solo waltz, gavotte, cachucha, fan or skirt dance, surely the only results would be some additional personal gracefulness and ability to please her friends by introducing an agreeable feature of entertainment at dull "at homes."

"Still unaccomplished may the maid be thought,
Who gracefully to dance was never taught."¹

Most of the so-called "fancy dances" may, by a skilled teacher, be modified to the ability of the performer, some naturally admitting of modification better than others. I do not of course mean that the *enchaînements* or sequences of steps proper to a dance may be altered to any appreciable extent, or that any of an extraneous character may be introduced. What I mean is that very difficult steps may be sometimes omitted, and simpler movements of a similar nature substituted. For instance, an *entrechat* of many beatings might give place to a simple *entrechat à quatre capriole* in third position without crossings, or even *changement de pieds*; a double *pirouette*, if found too difficult, to a single turn and *arabesque*, steps of elevation may be reduced, and all gestures that appear too *lente* can easily be modified to taste.

This is more especially the case with regard to Spanish dances, to which I may again have occasion to refer.

¹ Congreve's translation of Ovid's *Art of Love*.

Italian dances, although developing from the same origin, seem less open to objection in this respect. I have myself seen tarantellas danced in Naples and Venice by boys and girls that might with the most perfect propriety be introduced in any drawing-room; but the fandango, as it is danced in Spain, would scarcely be a performance suitable for English young ladies.

I have not space in the present section to give detailed descriptions of any particular fancy dances, but I will broadly touch upon a few, and give a little advice *en passant*.

We will consider first the *Hornpipe*, giving it due precedence as the national dance of our own country. Moreover, it is a grand dance in its way, and so eminently characteristic. Consider, for instance, the folding of the arms in an attitude, not of laziness—remember that—but of conscious strength. The upper part of the body is kept in a state of calm repose, while the lower limbs are executing the most complicated, rapid, and difficult movements. Is not all this typical of an ideally English trait? To appear calm and collected amid circumstances calculated to induce a condition of physical and mental agitation.

And this “conservation of energy” form is kept up until there is an actual demand for a display of muscular action in the arms and body. Then all is changed, and the whole frame becomes active, as, for example, in the rowing movement, hauling of the ropes, etc. The pupil who would perform the hornpipe well must understand and enter into the spirit of the dance. I do not remember to have heard or seen these ideas expressed before; but I cannot help thinking but that all good dancers of the hornpipe must have conceived them. I should imagine that the Rev. Benjamin Smith, Rector of Linton, who lived in the last century, must have thought very highly of this dance; for

G

we are told that "when riding on a journey or to visit a friend in fine weather, he would sometimes alight, tie his horse to a gate, and dance a hornpipe or two on the road, to the astonishment of any who happened to pass by."¹ I think, reader, that you or I would be a little surprised if we were taking a quiet country stroll and suddenly came across a clergyman dancing a hornpipe in the middle of the road. There would, of course, be nothing at all wrong in such a proceeding; it would simply be something unexpected. The reverend gentleman alluded to a few pages back concludes his little book with the words, in big type :—"I have no taste, I have no time to dance," but the Rev. B. Smith was evidently of a very different opinion; he had a decided taste for dancing, and was determined to find time to exercise it. Southey describes him as "a mighty dancer before the Lord."

But to return to the *Hornpipe*. Whatever of sentiment there may be about the dance, it is distinctly *vigorous* and *manly*. There are no voluptuous langours, no tender emotions expressed by gesture or action, as in many of the Spanish dances. The Hornpipe is essentially a solo dance, and in it animation, strength, and defiance alone are represented.

In the Irish jig, the arms of the dancers are placed akimbo, the backs of both hands resting lightly against the hips a little in front, the elbows being turned outward, and also brought a little forward.

This position of the arms is not nearly so graceful as is that adopted by the Scotch in dancing their *reels* and *strathspeys*, wherein one hand only is placed on the hip, and the other raised above the head. In the position, as shown

¹ Southey's *Original Memoranda*.



Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

To face page 82.

in the Plate, the wrist should be a little more curved, as I have already pointed out.

Scotch dances are sometimes executed as solos and sometimes with partners. The characteristic feature is a very light and springy upward action of the feet. The figure of the reel may be performed by three or four dancers, and it corresponds with the "hey" of old country dances. The step used in the chain, if I may so term it, is the *Ceumsiubhail* or *Kemshóole*. It is thus executed:—*One*: Advance the right foot to the *fourth position*. *Two*: Close the left foot to *third position* behind, falling thereon. *Three*: Again advance the right foot with transfer of balance. *Four*: Hop on the right foot, at the same time passing the left in front, ready to begin the next step, which is a repetition of the above with the contrary foot. Technically, this step is composed of a *demi glissé*, *coupé dessous*, *jetté en avant*, and *pas sauté* with *jambe tendue*.¹

Great care must be taken to observe, when dancing a reel, that a raising of the right arm should accompany an extension of the left leg, and *vice-versâ*. Inattention to this rule among carelessly-instructed pupils causes them, when dancing, to present a very awkward appearance.

The movements of the *Irish jig* are certainly not wanting in spirit and picturesqueness, and the steps are full of animation. Gracefulness may not appear to be a particularly prominent characteristic of the dance; but still it possesses many good qualities. Unlike the Hornpipe, the jig may be danced together by partners of opposite sexes, who appear anxious to delight each other by the vivacity of their movements; but there is no personal contact between the

¹ Other steps used in the performance of reels and strathspeys will be found under the head of "Highland Steps," in the chapter on Round Dances.

dancers, and if their actions can be said to express anything whatever of passion, it can only be passion of a particularly unexceptional nature.

In learning the steps of the above and similar dances, I cannot give better advice to the reader than this: Always be careful to assure yourself upon *which foot the weight of the body should be resting at a given juncture*. You will find this rule of incalculable assistance in acquiring difficult steps, and for this reason: Instinctively we want to move the foot upon which we are not resting, since we find that it is impossible to move the one that supports the weight of the body otherwise than by making a preparatory spring. This, however, costs an effort, and *naturally we incline to do the thing that is easiest*, which is in this case to move the unoccupied foot. I think, then, it will be evident that so long as you retain your balance upon the proper foot, your natural inclination, in making the next movement, will be to use the foot that ought to be used, which you could not do if you happened to be supporting your body thereon.

Another very important rule is never to allow the weight of the body to fall on the foot while it is in motion. If the step be of a gliding nature, do not transfer the balance to the foot with which it is taken *until that foot has reached its destination, or until its action has ceased*.¹ If these rules are remembered by the pupil, and are constantly impressed upon him by the teacher, the learning of complicated steps will become comparatively easy.

For instance, in executing the hornpipe step, familiarly known as the double-shuffle, the weight of the body is suddenly thrown upon one foot with a slight flexion of the knee, while the opposite foot is simultaneously extended to the *fourth intermediate position*, after which it is rapidly drawn

¹ These rules apply equally to waltzing and ball-room dancing.

backward, again extended, and again drawn back, all in *two counts* of very quick music. At the third count the balance is changed with a sudden flexion of the knee to the foot which has just been in motion, and simultaneously the limb that previously supported the body is extended in front, and the foot drawn rapidly backward, forward, and backward again.

The reason the above very simple step causes so much trouble to beginners is because they forget that in executing the shuffling movement it is absolutely necessary that the balance be sustained *entirely upon the rear leg*, for if it be thrown at all forward upon the moving limb, the friction thereby involved in the passage of the foot to and fro upon the floor retards its motion, and, in consequence, the action cannot be performed in the required time.

The distinguishing characteristic of Spanish dances is the undulating movement of the body and arms, by which they are accompanied. The steps are usually light, the actions graceful, sometimes majestic, frequently languishing, and occasionally petulant. It would be absurd to deny that the sexual element enters largely into these dances, nay, is indeed their very foundation. An attempt was made a few years since, I believe, to introduce a kind of Bowdlerized *fandango* into the salons of Paris. But a fandango from which all objectionable features were eliminated would be much the same as a performance of *Hamlet* in which the Prince of Denmark did not appear.

There is, however, no occasion in this section of the book to enter into details concerning dances which it would be impossible to teach our pupils. The *Bolero* is a dance for couples of a far more innocent nature.¹ It is composed of

¹ Yet even this is intended to represent the course of love from extreme shyness to extreme passion.

five parts ; an introductory promenade, crossing over in changing places, a movement consisting of solo steps by each dancer, a finale, and a concluding attitude or arabesque grouping of the couple. *Terre à terre* steps are employed, *glissades pas frappés*, and retreating movements.

The *cachucha*, like the *guaracha*—now rarely seen—is a dance better adapted for a single performer than for couples, and in a somewhat modified form is exceedingly graceful and suitable for the drawing-room. Pretty fan and tambourine dances may be arranged in the Spanish style, of which illustrations are given, with such steps as the *pas de basque*, *pas frappés* with *glissés en reculant*, *pas de zéphir croisé* and intermediate, *pas tortillé*, *bourrées* in the *fifth position*, etc.

The dances most suitable for performance in long full pleated skirts are ornamental waltzes and solo gavottes ; or movements arranged especially, combining some pleasing characteristics of the Spanish style. Great care must be taken to hold the skirt very lightly between the finger and thumb, and do not forget that you must at all times move your arms according to the rules of gracefulness already given. If you have thoroughly practised the exercises with your arms free, you will experience *no difficulty whatever in managing your skirt*. If your object be to raise it evenly on each side, be particularly careful that in doing so you do not bend your elbows downward and your wrists upward, or let your arms take any shape resembling the letter W. You will often see this done by imperfect dancers, and not unfrequently on the stage ; but it always indicates a very bad school of instruction. Remember that it is always easier to move the arms gracefully, when accessories are employed, such as fans, scarves, and flowing drapery ; but you will observe that the best dancers on the stage do not continually

have hold of their skirts. Frequently they let them go for a long time together, and move their arms freely, with an undulating wavy motion. This free action of the arms, if perfect, requires far greater ability on the part of a dancer than does the successful management of an accordion-pleated skirt, and should be carefully cultivated by the pupil.

Remember, in performing a *gavotte*, that the French *pas de basque* is employed, in which the first two movements are made to one count of the music. In connection with this, the *pas de bourrée* in triplets is frequently introduced, as in the *Gavotte* of Vestris. Other steps used are the *pas de zéphir*, *ballonné*, *entrechat*, *capriole*, *contretemps de gavotte*, *jetté*, *assemblé*, *coupé dessous et dessus*, *sissonne*, and *ailes de pigeons*. The latter, however, would be less effective in long skirts. In any case it is clear that the steps of a *gavotte* must depend greatly on the nature of the music, since some of the old *gavotte* music is very lively, and some quite solemn in character.

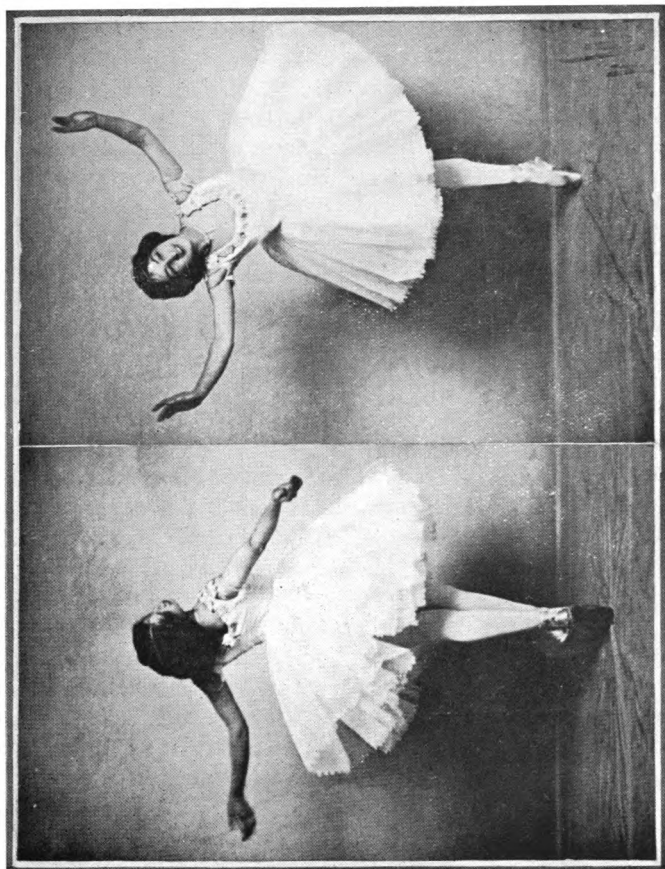
Strictly speaking, a *gavotte* is a dance for two performers, derived from the original *Branle* of the *Gavots*, or inhabitants of a province in Southern France. In describing this dance in his book published at Langres in 1588, Thoinot Arbeau¹ says to his pupil, *Capriole*, "*Il ne fault point enlever en l'air les Damoiselles, seulement il les fault baiser.*" "You need not lift the young ladies off their feet, only you must kiss them." Here we have a reverend gentleman of the olden time, who not only found it consistent with his dignity to study the art of dancing, but also to write a book on the subject, and impart particularly gratifying instructions to his pupils.

It is not at all a difficult matter for those who are thoroughly acquainted with the various steps used in danc-

¹ Jean Tabouret, canon of Langres.

ing to combine them to form fancy dances. But of course one must possess the inventive faculty, and some knowledge of the principles of artistic construction. There are other matters besides *enchainements* to be considered. There is the coincidence of music and movement, and also the figure of the dance. This figure, which forms as it were the track of the dancer or dancers, may be of regular or irregular construction. Some dances are so formed that each movement made in one direction is repeated in the opposite direction. But a dance may take a serpentine or zig-zag direction ; broadly it may be formed on the lines of a parallelogram, a triangle, or a volute, or indeed any geometrical figure whatsoever. The principal figure of the minuet was originally formed on the letter S, till Pecour, who added, says Rameau, much to the beauty and grace of the dance, changed it to that of the letter Z.

The legitimate practice of dancing has of late been too much neglected, especially by private pupils, and some have prophesied its decadence as a social pursuit. Such Cassandra-like warnings we should not entirely disregard. Sooner or later people will inevitably weary of perpetual waltzing, as they appear to have already wearied of quadrilles ; but fortunately dancing does not depend for existence on the continued popularity of a single movement. The art has survived many periods of depression during the three thousand known years of its cultivation, and will, in some form or other, probably continue to flourish till the end of time.



Advanced work on the *pointe*.

To face page 88.

CHAPTER IX.

DANCING AS A PASTIME.

In the preceding chapters, dancing has been regarded more especially as an art—an art worthy to be carefully studied in detail the same as drawing or music. And I have treated it thus before considering it as a diversion, because I hold that even if the object of the pupil be merely to derive personal enjoyment from his dancing, he will be far more likely to obtain the desired result if his steps and movements are made correctly and with precision. If his desire, however, be merely to work off a superabundance of vitality, as is evidently sometimes the case, doubtless the end can be compassed equally well, perhaps better, by trying to dance without learning at all, or better still by digging up the garden.¹ Saint Augustine said, "*Melius est fodere quam saltare ;*" and there are cases in which his observation is much to the point. For instance, while employed in digging, a man is reaping all the advantages of hard work at the expense only of the wear and tear of a spade, instead of wearing out some poor creature who happens to be so unfortunate as to be used by him as the implement of his ball-room exertions. I appeal, however, not so much to those who delight in mere bodily labour, as to those whose object it is to obtain

¹ I observe that Harris in his *Theory of the Arts*, while admitting gardening, says that "Dancing cannot properly be considered as an independent art by itself." Voltaire, on the contrary, says "*La danse peut se compter parmi les arts, parce qu'elle est asservie à des règles.*" Dancing may be reckoned among the arts because it is subject to rules,

real enjoyment from dancing, and I say that whether or no they may be disposed to regard themselves as ministers of art, they will certainly derive more *pleasure* from these movements, if in the first instance they learn to dance properly.

I feel sure that Mr. Allanson-Winn would endorse my statement that far more pleasure is derivable from even the comparatively rough pastime of boxing, when it has been studied and practised scientifically than when blows are administered and received haphazard. How much more, then, must this be the case in a pastime that appeals more directly than all others to the æsthetic sentiments.

The cultivation of graceful dancing has been so much neglected of late years that there is perhaps no art concerning which people are at the present time so generally ignorant. In all other arts the public mind has been steadily trained to perceive and appreciate whatever is admirable and lovely. Everywhere there are schools where young people can learn to draw—and to draw well if they have taste; music is universally studied and appreciated by men and women of culture; mediocre instrumental performances are not tolerated, even among amateurs; but people seem to have lost all perception of what is good or bad in dancing, either regarded as an art or a pastime, and the most wretched performances frequently pass muster both on the stage and in the ball-room. It is, however, with dancing as a diversion only that we are at present concerned; and the great wonder is that its popularity has not decreased in proportion as its cultivation has been neglected, because there can be no real comparison between the pleasure to be derived from good dancing, and that which is experienced by people who jump and shuffle around anyhow to dance music. It shows how strongly the

passion for dancing must be inherent in human nature, and that it will always find expression in some form, be it good or bad.

To what is the present slovenly style of drawing-room dancing attributable?

This is a question that may well be asked, and the reason is not, I think, far to seek.

In olden times, when minuets and gavottes were fashionable dances, it was deemed necessary that those who aspired to take part in them should first *learn to dance*, and not "pick up" their steps anyhow by watching other people's bad performances and then doing worse. And the Art of Dancing was taught by men who had conscientiously studied their profession; such men, for instance, as Marcel, Rameau, Vestris, and Sir John Gallini. In the genuine minuet, as described by Rameau, there was nothing ridiculously affected or "stagey"; in fact, his own words are "*Mais sur-tout sans affectation.*" But the dance, though simple, was supremely graceful, and its real elegance could not be imparted by other than qualified teachers.

To shuffle around, however, with a slide of the foot and a twist of the body, first on one leg and then on the other, is a feat by no means difficult to accomplish, and requires no special training; yet this wretched substitute for a dance that should really be the most graceful of round dances, is what many men are contented to do throughout a whole evening, under the mistaken impression that they are waltzing. What they are actually doing is simply turning round to waltz music; and small wonder it is if when they have succeeded in mastering this miserable apology for the waltz, and have learnt to regard it as the acme of all things Terpsichorean—the *ne plus ultra* of ball-room pleasures—

they should soon come to the conclusion that dancing as a pastime is not worth cultivating.

Can we wonder, moreover, that censorious observers, when they see this kind of thing going on hour after hour, without intermission or change, should sometimes feel persuaded that the pleasure derivable from round dancing is more intimately connected with the contiguity of the partners, than it is with the performance of graceful figures—that æsthetic emotions are not the only emotions evoked by the dance?

Although there may not be among society ladies of the present day many Sempronias who could reasonably be twitted with the superlative excellence of their dancing,¹ yet it is an undoubted fact that young women, as a rule, dance far better than men. I have actually heard it asserted that it is considered fashionable rather than otherwise for men to dance badly. This absurd notion, however, has no real foundation. That there are fashionable people who do dance badly, *va sans dire*; but that is their misfortune. No man would dance badly if he could help it, *without trouble*—that is, unless he were a thorough fool—any more than a man would remain ignorant if he could become wise *without trouble*. There are doubtless many fashionable people who are foolish; but that fact would not justify one in asserting that it is considered fashionable to be so. The true reason why so many men remain bad dancers is simply because they will not take the trouble to learn how to become good ones. It is laziness, sheer laziness, that is at the bottom of it all. They think that so long as their wretched performances are countenanced, there is no call for them to exert themselves to take proper lessons. Yet I will warrant that

¹ “*Sempronia docta fuit saltare elegantius quam necesse est probæ.*”—Sallust.

if some exalted personage were to take example from what the German Emperor is reported to have done some time since, and intimate that those who did not know how to dance would do well to remain away from certain State functions, we should soon perceive a rapid improvement in the general style of dancing. What is wanted most is a *coup de fouet*, as it were, from head-quarters.

Failing this, I would advise the ladies, who, as I have already said, generally dance better than men, to be firm and consistent in refusing to accept as partners men who do not know how to dance properly; but at the same time they should make sure that they have learnt to dance perfectly themselves. No girl who had cultivated music, would consent to sing a duet in public with a man who had neither voice nor ear, and habitually sang out of tune. Why then should a girl who has cultivated dancing, consent to be dragged around a public room by a man who has never learnt a single step, and habitually dances out of time? If men have the privilege of selection, surely women should have the right of refusal. It may be urged that they have that right; but only partially, because a refusal to become the partner of one man, however clumsy, involves a refusal of any good dancer who may afterwards present himself, and a consequent loss of the dance. This is conventional etiquette, but hardly, I think, perfect justice.

It is a great pity that social regulations do not usually permit of ladies dancing together. If this course were generally adopted in cases where there are fewer male partners, or where the men were hopelessly bad dancers, it would perhaps do more than anything to refine and elevate the practice of social dancing; and it would at once disarm its enemies of their most potent weapon of assault, since they would be constrained to admit that the pleasure

of the pastime is not necessarily connected with that element which they declare to be the most considerable factor in the sum total of Terpsichorean enjoyment.

It is hardly necessary for me—at least in the present section of this treatise—to say much concerning the prejudice which still exists in the minds of many good people against dancing, since I do not suppose that any one who wholly disapproves of the practice is likely to peruse these pages. I feel certain, in my own mind, that most of what appears objectionable in round dancing arises rather from incompetent instruction, and ignorance of dynamical laws, than from any intentional impropriety on the part of dancers. Positions in which the partners appear to be almost embracing might not unreasonably be open to objection on other than scientific grounds. Unfortunately they are by no means so uncommon as one could wish; but if parents only took the precaution to have their children properly taught to dance when they were young, by teachers who understood the art they profess, it would be absolutely impossible that they could ever fall into such errors of position when they became men and women, since they are not only wanting in elegance, but are utterly at variance with all true principles of dancing, whether scientific or artistic.

Of the advantages which the legitimate practice of dancing possesses, it is impossible to speak too highly. I say legitimate practice, because mothers of daughters should remember "*c'est le bal, et non la danse qui tue les jeunes filles.*"¹ The *pastime* of dancing indulged in at reasonable hours, and the practice of those beautiful and beneficial exercises which are inseparable from the *art*, will do more towards making growing girls graceful and healthy than any

¹ Ratier.

amount of aimless expander stretching. As Mr. Herbert Spencer remarks in his splendid treatise on education : "The common assumption, that so long as the amount of bodily action is the same, it matters not whether pleasurable or otherwise, is a grave mistake." If parents wish to make their daughters really attractive, they cannot do better than have them properly instructed in the art of ornamental dancing. When thus employed, a graceful and beautiful girl is seen at her very best, and appears infinitely more charming than she would if making a display of erudition. Listen once more to what the greatest philosopher of modern times has to say concerning the elements of feminine attraction : "Mammas anxious to make their daughters attractive could scarcely choose a course more fatal than that which sacrifices the body to the mind. Either they disregard the tastes of the opposite sex, or else their conception of those tastes is erroneous. Men care little for erudition in women, but very much for physical beauty, good-nature, and sound sense. How many conquests does the blue-stocking make through her extensive knowledge of history? What man ever fell in love with a woman because she understood Italian? Where is the Edwin who was brought to Angelina's feet by her German? But rosy cheeks and laughing eyes are a great attraction. A finely-rounded figure draws admiring glances. The loveliness and good-humour that overflowing health produces go a great way towards establishing attachments."¹ I would that these words were engraven on the heart of every mother ; she would perhaps feel less disposed to submit her children to that hateful cramming system which Professor Huxley stigmatizes as "the educational abomination of the present day."²

¹ *Education.* Herbert Spencer. ² *Essay on Technical Education.*

And for boys. What does good old John Lock say? "Dancing being that which gives graceful motions to all our lives, and above all things manliness, and a becoming confidence to young children, I think it cannot be learnt too early." Dancing properly taught does really impart *manliness*. What movements would it be possible to conceive more manly than those of the hornpipe, to which I have drawn attention elsewhere in the present work? Why were the Spartan boys taught so early the art of dancing, and why was the practice kept up with so much vigour as they advanced towards manhood? In order that they might become *manly*; for Lycurgus knew well enough that muscular exercise is ever best when combined with pleasurable sensations, such as may be produced by rhythmic motion and the sound of music. Sometimes girls were admitted to these dances, and joined in them with the boys. That also was considered good. Leaving the ancients, however, I may mention that Captain Cook was of opinion that dancing was indispensable for sailors, and made his men dance whenever the weather was calm to the sound of a violin. I mention this fact, because his unprecedented success in preserving the health of his crews was always a subject of comment. The French Government followed his wise example, and between the years 1788 and 1818 ordinances were passed with the sole view of encouraging dancing.

My object in reverting, in this part of the book, to such matters as those which have just been claiming our passing attention, is simply to show that among people of good sense, dancing—that is, genuine dancing—is not, and never has been, regarded as a *frivolous or effeminate amusement*. On the contrary, the practice has been considered highly desirable for people of both sexes; as Voltaire expresses it,

"La danse est très agréable ; elle est utile au corps." A man may not at the present time hope to rise to the dignity of Chancellor and Knight of the Garter through the excellence of his dancing, or to become the favourite of a monarch;¹ our gentlemen of the Inns of Court may lack somewhat of that "sweet and airy activity"² with which they were credited in the days of Charles II.; but I trust the time is not far distant when young men will once more learn to regard dancing as a noble art, worthy of cultivation, and as a healthful manly pastime—not merely as a means of working up excitement by gyrating in a continuous whirl. When that desirable state of things comes about, the waltz will take its proper place, as a beautiful dance—it will always be that—but only as one beautiful dance among many others.

CHAPTER X.

STYLE IN DANCING.

REFINEMENT AND VULGARITY.

To slightly alter a well-known phrase, the varieties of style exhibited in social dancing may be briefly classified under three heads—high style, low style, and no style. The words good, bad, and indifferent would not so well express my meaning. Dancing may be good in a sense, without being exactly refined or high class, and on the other hand

¹ Sir Christopher Hatton. M. de Lauzun, favourite of Louis XIV.

² *Dancing Master*, ed. 1665. Preface.

it may be execrably bad, without at all deserving to be classified as low.

By a high class style of dancing I mean such a style as one might reasonably expect to find adopted by people of culture, and those occupying a high social position—a style distinguished by ease and natural dignity of bearing, but without undue stiffness or affectation; by no means incompatible with sprightliness or vivacity in the performance of round dances, but always quiet and subdued in the execution of figures. It should be possible for a person of refined taste, who has been properly instructed in the art of dancing, to change from the stateliest to the liveliest movements without losing dignity or grace. The quickest possible dances may be made to appear elegant when executed by men and women of genteel bearing, and the most solemn ones may seem vulgar if performed by people who lack refinement.

By a low style of dancing I mean that particular style affected by 'Arry, and imitated by his admirers in all grades of society. Such movements, for instance, as jigging around with both arms extended and hands clasped by the opposite dancer, turning backwards in the third figure of the Lancers, twisting partners round by the waist like so many whirligigs, and waltzing in the figures of set dances, were all initiated by the typical young gentleman above alluded to; but once having captivated the fancy of other dancers of kindred tastes, though moving in a higher social sphere, these objectionable practices are sometimes introduced in places where one would certainly not expect to find them countenanced.

I am at least happy to say that the peculiar manner of holding his partner which 'Arry affects has not as yet found much favour in society; but in case any particularly

enterprising young man may be ambitious to acquire it, teach it to his sisters, and eventually introduce it into his mother's drawing-room, it will be sufficient to explain very briefly that he—I mean 'Arry—generally spreads his fingers well out, covering as much of 'Arriet's back as possible; sometimes he places his hand right up in her neck, whilst she leans forward tenderly hanging on to his shoulder, and sometimes they rub their cheeks caressingly together. It is quite touching to observe them; and they do seem to enjoy it so much.

A gentleman generally holds his partner in a somewhat less familiar manner: see plate marked "Rotary Position." That is the modern and correct style, and I venture to predict that most mothers—I am not so sure about men—will consider it a great improvement on the old close contact style of dancing, which, by the way, although neither in strict accordance with propriety nor with dynamical requirements, is by no means extinct even at the present day. A girl who has been properly and scientifically taught to dance, can easily render it impossible for a man to hold her too closely, but she must be careful not to fall into the error of making her partner's arm ache by offering too much resistance at the waist. The push-at-arm's-length position is much more frequently observable now, and a short time since obtained quite a vogue. It is perfectly unexceptionable on the score of propriety, as all will admit; but it possesses the disadvantage of being exceedingly inelegant and inartistic. To begin with, the partners are further separated than they need to be, the man sometimes driving the girl backward like a wheelbarrow, and she pulling away from him with all her force. This is apparent from the leverage she is obtaining with her left arm against her partner's elbow. Of course it is decidedly incorrect for

the lady's arm and hand to be placed thus at all. I have heard people aver that it is fashionable for the lady to place her hand beneath the gentleman's arm. It is nothing of the kind. A practice may become common without being fashionable. The lady's hand should rest lightly above her partner's arm somewhere immediately beneath or just touching the shoulder, its exact position being regulated according to their relative heights. Thus, if the man be about her own height, the lady should place her fingers just on his shoulder, as shown in "Boston" plate; while if he be much taller, her hand will come considerably lower down his arm. The things most necessary to be observed in holding partners are the avoidance of angles formed by the elbows, and the necessity of keeping the body in a perfectly unconstrained position. If the girl stiffens her left arm and nips her partner's right arm with her elbow, all freedom and real grace of action is prevented.

It is my endeavour in this work to present and advocate as far as possible the style of dancing that is considered the best,¹ and I earnestly appeal to all readers of good taste to help, as far as lays in their power, by protesting against any innovations that appear vulgar, no matter how or by whom they may be introduced.

But there is a style of dancing that is not sufficiently defined to be spoken of as a high-class style, and yet not so degraded as to merit the designation of low. And there is also a manner of dancing that is simply awkward, to which I have applied the term "no style." The awkwardness observable in this kind of dancing is often confined to the upper part of the body. It may happen that the feet are correctly placed, but their movements do not synchronise with those of the arms, back, and shoulders.

¹ See second note after the Lancers.

Awkwardness may always to a great extent be remedied by taking lessons of a competent teacher; but if once a vulgar style of dancing be contracted, it is most difficult to overcome. A man occupying a very good social position came to me a short time since for a lesson in waltzing. He had already, he stated, taken several lessons of a London teacher, who shall of course be nameless here. He said, "I was advised by a friend to go to Mr. —, who had, he informed me, an excellent reputation, and of whom he had himself received instruction." "And have you not profited by the lessons?" I inquired. "Well," replied my visitor, "I do not doubt that Mr. — understands dancing and teaching dancing well enough; but somehow I am under the impression that he is not accustomed to teaching *gentlemen*, and I thought I would like to know if the style in which he taught me to waltz was a correct style." With that I proceeded to give him the desired instruction, and when I discovered in what manner he had been taught to hold his partner, to bend his knees, to rise and fall on his toes, and to accentuate the rhythm with the movements of his body, I at once perceived the justice of his observation. There was positively nothing wrong with the steps, even the action of the body was not in a sense incorrect; but there was something about the *tout ensemble*—a general air of affectation and staginess, a style that would have appeared altogether out of place in a drawing-room; and it was fortunate for him that I was able to get him out of that style before it became confirmed, and before he exhibited it at a very high-class gathering which he was about to attend. As it happened, this man's innate sense of refinement convinced him that he had acquired a style of waltzing not strictly in accordance with the principles of good taste; but his friend had evidently been unable to perceive this.

A few more observations, particularly addressed to men, and I will bring this chapter to a close.

It is related that when St. Augustine felt uncertain in his mind whether he ought to fast on Saturday as they did in Rome, or to eat as he had been accustomed to do, he consulted St. Ambrose, who was then staying in Milan, as to what would be the best course to adopt. The reply he received was this: "When I am here I do not fast on Saturday; but when at Rome I do fast on Saturday."

The circumstance of fasting has nothing whatever to do with the present subject, but the advice implied in the answer of St. Ambrose is precisely that which I would give to certain adventurous young gentlemen who, like the good caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, are in the habit of making explorations around the city after nightfall.

If in their nocturnal rambles they should chance to find their way into some well-lit but not rigidly exclusive dancing assembly, where the gentlemen are unaccustomed to gloves, and evening dress is not *de rigueur*; or they should wander to some sylvan-looking scene, softly illumined with hanging lamps of various shades, where upon a central platform Corydon delights to press his manly chest against the gentle bosom of Phyllis;—if, I say, they should chance to visit such places, and discover that it is there the custom to waltz about in square dances instead of performing the proper figures; that the young ladies cheerfully submit to being vehemently twisted round, and appear rather to enjoy being lifted off their feet; that the gentlemen in the Lancers take each other by the shoulders, and turn in the wrong direction, dragging their partners along with them—to say nothing of some wonderful military evolutions at the finish;—if, once more I say, they go where these things are done, and it gives them pleasure to watch, or take part in the

performance, well and good. Figuratively speaking, they are in Rome, and for the time being may act as the Romans do. But what I would impress upon them is this: When they go back to Milan—figuratively, of course—let them remember that the customs there are somewhat different. Let them not hasten to impart their newly-acquired accomplishments to their sisters, lest people might think that they too had graduated in some questionable school of dancing.

Somehow the practices to which I have just drawn hasty, and I trust only passing attention, do not appear so vulgar in the places where they originate, because there everything else is in keeping. Scientifically, what we call dirt is simply matter out of place, and it may be somewhat the same with regard to vulgarity of style. Servants, for instance, as servants, rarely appear vulgar; but once dress them up in their mistresses' garments and they appear so directly. Their style is then out of place. And so with dancing, a style that does not ill-assimilate with the surroundings of a riverside pleasure garden will, if introduced, as it too often is, into a Belgravian drawing-room, immediately shock one's sense of propriety.

It has been said of virtue that it can "know both itself and vice; but vice can never know itself and virtue." It is the same with refinement. It can know both itself and vulgarity; but truly vulgarity can never know both itself and refinement. And herein lies the immense advantage that a person of refined taste has over a person whose tastes are low. The former may be able to discern what is vulgar, and yet be all the while perfectly refined himself; but the latter cannot perceive refinement even when it is actually brought before him. There are people doubtless to whom the dance that accompanied *Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay* would appear finer than the most classic composition of Pécour.

CHAPTER XI.

QUADRILLES, OR SET DANCES.

FOR many years it has now been the custom in the higher grades of society to simply walk through the figures of quadrilles; but in former times more or less difficult steps were employed by the dancers in performing them. These included not only the simple *jetté*, *chassé*, *assemblé*, *balancé*, and *changement de jambe*; but originally, expert dancers would frequently introduce such movements as the *sissonne*, *coupé dessus et dessous*, and *entrechat à quatre*. Later on, however, when ball-room dancing began to degenerate into a mere amusement, these steps were discarded, and the *chassé*, *assemblé*, and *balancé* only were used. Finally, the *chassé* also shared the fate of the rest, and then the *pas marché*, or walking step, was pressed into service, and made to do duty for all quadrille evolutions.

It is doubtless owing to the elimination of all steps of a lively nature that the practice of square dances has come to be regarded as an intolerable bore by the frequenters of fashionable ball-rooms; and indeed, when we come to consider the fact that most of the modern votaries of Terpsichore, if such they may fairly be called, especially the males, are entirely innocent of any true conception of gracefulness,¹ it is not a matter of wonder that they find

¹ Plato in his *Laws* (Book II. 2) makes the Athenian (probably himself) suggest that a man "properly educated would be able to dance well." To this proposition Clinias assents, and they afterwards add that he would also dance "what is beautiful." If the education of young men at the present time were to be estimated from their choric qualifications and tastes, it would, I am afraid, often appear sadly deficient.

little pleasure or profit in going through what must appear to them uncommonly like unsystematic drill evolutions.

But among those who have really studied the art of dancing, not with the feet only, but from the waist upwards, a set of quadrilles or Lancers, with the orthodox *pas marché* step, may be made exceedingly pretty to onlookers and even enjoyable to the performers, in an æsthetic sense, for, of course, the exhilaration produced by rapid movement will not be present.

This fact, however, need not be regarded as a drawback, because the waltz, with its rotary and rapid motion, affords a stimulus of excitement that would render an alternation of dances productive of milder pleasurable emotions, a positive boon, if people would only learn to regard dancing from a rational point of view.

For this reason, if for no other, the introduction of waltzing into the figures of quadrilles is a practice very much to be deprecated. Surely, in all conscience, we have quite sufficient of the waltz in its legitimate place to justify us in rigorously excluding the movement from square dances. At the same time, we must allow a little for the temptation which good waltzers evidently feel to parade their pet step on every available occasion, especially when it happens to be the only one they know; and perhaps in those circles where it is customary for the men to take their partners by the waist, and swing them round, the waltz step is, if anything, an improvement on the old style of pivoting. The more correct and refined way of turning is to present both hands to the lady, as will be hereafter explained.

In the present work I shall only have space to give the figures of the quadrilles in an abbreviated form, in some cases merely using the technical terms that express the various movements. The same actions of the body and

movements of the limbs being proper, however, to all modern square dances, if the pupil once thoroughly learns to execute these, and apply the proper names to them, he will have no difficulty afterwards in making out the descriptions given in this or any other book, provided of course that they are clearly and correctly worded.

In the first place, before attempting to combine the different movements into figures, the pupil must practise each of them singly until he or she can execute them with some degree of gracefulness and precision.

In classes where there are several pupils, most of the movements can be practised by them in rows. In many cases, if their hands are crossed and joined alternately before the chest, it will greatly add to the effect and interest of the exercises, and if a few of the more advanced pupils are occasionally interspersed with beginners, the arrangement will help the latter to execute their steps with greater precision than if they work independently. The hands of the pupils may sometimes also be joined behind the waist.

I have been frequently asked by my pupils to explain how it happened that such queer names as "*le Pantalon*" and "*la Poule*" came to be given to the figures of the quadrille.

The former term has not, as some suppose, any connection whatever with the long-suffering old gentleman of the Christmas show. It has reference simply to an indispensable article of wearing apparel. The first figure of the quadrille was originally known simply as *chaîne Anglaise*, as it had long been used in the English country dances, and it was not until the year 1830 that it received the name of "*Pantalon*." It then came to be so-called because at that time the new king, Louis Philippe, by permitting breeches to

be worn at official balls, in place of the short *calotte* that had formerly been *de rigueur*, created some amusement among the more aristocratic attendants ; and Vincent, leader of the orchestra, and son of the original composer of the figure, thought to please the dancers by renaming it *le Pantalon*.

The term *l'Été*, meaning literally summer, was applied to the second figure, because it was composed of *chassés* and *assemblés* forward and backward, such combination of steps being technically termed *Pas d'Été*.

The name *la Poule*, the fowl, was given to the third figure by the above-mentioned composer, because in the original music he had introduced an imitation of the cackle of that bird. There is no particular reason why all composers should have written the music for this figure in six-eight time that I am aware of, except, as suggested by M. Desrats (to whom I am indebted for some of the above facts), that they have invariably continued to follow the traditional form. I dare say few modern composers could give a more satisfactory explanation of their motive in choosing this measure, than that others have done so before them ; since, clearly, the steps and movements of the figure could, as they are now executed, be equally well adapted to music in dupal time.

La Pastourelle, meaning the shepherd-girl, and by far the prettiest name, was given to the fourth figure, because Colinet the composer took his melodies from a romance entitled *Gentille-Pastourelle*, and the alternative fourth figure, *la Trénise*, was so called after M. Trcnitz, by whom, or at whose desire, it was introduced. The figure formed originally, I believe, part of a gavotte that was danced in the then famous ballet of *Nina*.

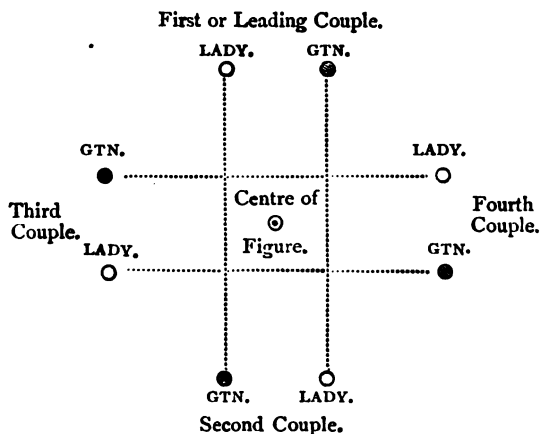
La Finale, or fifth figure, is danced in many ways and

known by many names. Originally it was called simply *chassé-croisé*, because the movement thus termed was introduced, the lady crossing before her partner. On the Continent the figures known as *la Boulangère*, *la Corbeille*, and *la Saint-Simonienne*, are frequently used to terminate a quadrille, one or the other being substituted for the orthodox *finale*. In *la Boulangère* the dancers form a round, advance twice, and then each gentleman turns the lady standing on his left, and finishes by placing her on his right. Then he turns the next lady on his left, and so on till all the dancers regain their original partners. *La Corbeille* is a figure in which the ladies join hands back to back in the centre and turn facing the gentlemen, who form a larger ring, joining hands around the ladies. *La Saint Simonienne* is another figure involving a change of partners, and is so called, I believe, in reference to the peculiar conjugal views of St. Simon. Among us the orthodox fifth figure is a repetition of *l'Étè*, preceded by a *rond*; and Ladies' Chain is substituted for setting to partners. But by far the most frequently danced *finale* is an arrangement called the "*Flirtation*" figure, in which, as in the French *Boulangère*, the gentlemen dance with each lady in turn. If by any chance there should happen to be a young reader of this work who does not know the precise meaning of the English term above used, I venture to think that he or she—especially she—would indeed be a *rara avis*.

CHAPTER XII.

A DESCRIPTION OF MOVEMENTS AND EXPLANATION OF TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN QUADRILLE DANCING.

POSITION OF THE DANCERS.—Four ladies and four gentlemen place themselves opposite each other (*vis-à-vis*), so that they form a rectangular figure, thus :—



The distance between the couples as they stand *vis-à-vis* in their places should be from ten to twelve feet, according to the space allowed by the size of the room and number of sets to be formed. Certainly the dancers should not be separated by more than four yards, or they will not be able

to conveniently perform the various evolutions in time with the music. The relative positions of the couples is generally decided by the position of the orchestra, the couple standing nearest to it being usually regarded as the leading couple. This, however, is not an invariable rule, for sometimes it may happen that the musicians are placed out of sight. But when it has been decided which shall be the first couple, the other couples always stand in the following order: The second couple is that opposite the first; the third couple is that to the right of the first; and the fourth couple is that to the left of the first.

Sometimes the leading and opposite couples are alluded to as "top and bottom couples," and not unfrequently among the vulgar as "tops" and "bottoms"; but these terms should be carefully avoided, as they are neither euphonious nor correct. "Leading couples" sounds far better. The expression, "side couples," is literally accurate; and even the single word "sides" is not objectionable.

The gentleman, when in his own place, invariably stands so that the lady is on his right hand; indeed this is the relative position of the partners almost entirely through the quadrille.

THE STEPS.—The steps at present employed chiefly in the square dances are the *pas marché*, of which a description has already been given, the *balancé*, and the *assemblé*, or bringing the feet from an open to a closed position. In ordinary quadrille dancing, the action of the feet need not be so fantastic, if I may so term it, as in the minuet; but still the toes must invariably be turned downward and outward.

We will concede that there may be a few occasions when, if the partners join right and left hands in setting forth, it would look better for the gentleman to begin with

his left, and the lady with her right foot ; but on the other hand, there are occasions when it would look exceedingly awkward for the gentleman to put forward his left foot first, as for instance, when he advances between two ladies, or when lines of four, consisting of two of each sex, advance. Therefore, as it is clearly out of the question that we should expect the average drawing-room male dancer to tax his mental powers so far as to consider in which movements he shall put his right, and in which his left foot forward ; and since, if he endeavoured to do so, he would be almost certain to get into a muddle, it is given as a generally accepted rule that in all circumstances and in all figures both the lady and gentleman, when advancing together, commence with the right foot.¹ In cases, however, when the left hands are crossed, or when the gentleman walks round to the left, the left foot may be advanced first.

THE MUSIC.—All melodies used in quadrille music are simple in form, and invariably consist of groupings of eight or sixteen bars. There are never extended sections, as is sometimes the case in gavotte and minuet music, and which render the accurate keeping of time in such arrangements a somewhat difficult matter. In quadrille dancing there are no difficulties, so far as the music is concerned, each section contains an even number of measures, and two steps are taken in each bar.

TO ADVANCE AND RETIRE.—*En avant et en arrière.* Be standing in, say, the *third position*, with the right foot pointed in front. *One:* Step with the right foot to the *fourth position*, and place the weight of

¹ This is strictly correct, and in accordance with the most time-honoured usage. In the ancient *Branle*, the lady and gentleman each began with the same foot, *vide* Tabouret. In the original *Minuet* the lady and gentleman both began with the right foot. In fact, the real *pas de menuet*, occupying two bars, always begins with the right foot and finishes with the left, *vide* Rameau and contemporary writers.

the body on the right leg. *Two*: Step again to the *fourth position* with the left foot, and transfer the balance to the left leg. *Three*: Step once more forward with the right foot to the *fourth position*, and place the weight on the right leg. *Four*: Instead of stepping again forward with the left foot, as you will naturally incline to do, bring it up to the *third position point* behind the right foot, still keeping the balance entirely on the right leg. This completes the movement *en avant*. Now take three steps backward, beginning with the left foot, which, if the balance be properly sustained on the right leg, is free to move. At the fourth count, do not again step backward, but close the right foot to the *third position* in front, as at starting. This movement forward and backward occupies four measures of the music.

SETTING TO PARTNERS AND TURNING WITH HANDS.—*Balance et tour de deux mains*. The gentleman and his partner turn to face each other. *One*: Make a sliding step to the right with your right foot; your partner, who also starts with the right foot, going in the opposite direction. *Two*: Close the left foot to the *third position* in front, changing the balance to the left leg. *Three*: Still looking towards your partner, make again a sliding step to the right. *Four*: Close the left foot again to the *third position*, the toe being pointed this time, without change of balance, and in closing the feet turn the body a little so as to still be facing your partner. Now retrace your movements in precisely the same manner, stepping to the left with the left foot, and closing the right to the *third position* in front, stepping again to the left and once more closing the right to the *third position* without changing the balance; which brings you to the position whence you started.

The gentleman now presents both hands, with the palms upward, to the lady, who places her hands in his lightly, with the palms downward. The gentleman raises his right arm somewhat higher than the left, and in this position, each starting with the right foot, which is left free, they turn once round with seven *pas marchés* and an *assemblé* to the *third position* in their original places.

TURNING PARTNERS BY THE WAIST.—Where it is customary to turn partners by placing the hand to the waist—a *practice be it understood which I do not recommend*—the easiest way to execute the movement is to keep the weight of the body entirely sustained by the right leg, to use the left toe as a means of propulsion, and in turning to revolve simply on the ball of the right foot, drawing

it a very little towards the left foot by a slight relaxation and sudden contraction of the muscles after each fresh impetus has been obtained. Two complete revolutions should be made in eight of these combined movements, occupying four bars of the music. The pivot on the sole of the right foot and flexion and tension of the leg, should immediately follow the propulsive action of the left toe, which should be slid round lightly from point to point of adhesion in describing, as it were, the circumference of a circle, the exact centre of revolution being situated between the right feet of the partners. For each of the eight movements count, *and one, and two, and three, etc.*, the *and* corresponding to the propulsive action of the left toe, and the numbers to the action of the right foot and limb.

There are other ways of executing these *tours de corps*. Instead of an open position the feet may be kept in a closed one. I have pointed out in a previous chapter that if the toe of one foot be placed to the heel of the other foot, or *vice-versa*, and the relative position of the feet be changed by turning the shoulders, a half turn will be completed. If, however, the changes be made in the *third* instead of *fifth position*, exactly a quarter turn will be the result. Therefore, if the weight of the body be kept entirely on the right foot, the left at each count placed in the *third position* in front and carried by the rotary movement of the right limb to the *third* behind, eight such movements will complete two revolutions. In executing either of these pivots the partners, by drawing away from each other, take advantage of the centrifugal force which facilitates their movements and increases the pleasurable sensation of turning.

I have given instructions in turning by the waist because the practice is very general, and if done really well and quietly, is not so objectionable from an artistic point of view as are some of the other practices to which allusion has been made. I must warn the reader, however, that to turn with the arm to the waist is *not considered* "correct" in the most select circles, and that apart from all social considerations, the *tour de main* is *decidedly preferable in point of elegance*.

SET AND TURN AT CORNERS.—*Balance et tour à coin*. This means simply that the gentleman sets to and turns with the lady on his left

hand, and that the lady sets to and turns with the gentleman on her right. The steps and actions are precisely the same as those already described. The action of setting to partners or corners and turning always occupies eight measures of quadrille music.

CROSSING OVER TO OPPOSITE PLACE, or, simply, CROSS OVER.—*Traverse*. This movement occupies four bars of the music, and is performed in eight steps. Make six *pas marchés* in a forward direction, at the seventh count turn the body so as to face the centre of the figure, and at the eighth close the feet to the *third position*.

CROSSING OVER IN COUPLES.—*Traverse quartre*. When opposite couples change places, unless “leading through the centre” is specified, the gentlemen invariably pass the advancing ladies on the outside, describing an arc in crossing, while the ladies’ course is rectilinear. On reaching the opposite place the partners in turning face inwards, so that they look towards each other, the gentleman turning to his right, and the lady to her left.

“LEAD THROUGH THE CENTRE.”—*Les tiroirs*. One lady and gentleman join hands and walk straight across to the opposite place. The opposite couple meanwhile separate, and, taking a curvilinear course, pass them midway on the outside. The couples turn, as heretofore described, to face the centre of the figure, and the lady and gentleman who separated, now join hands, and walk back to places between the couple who previously had their hands joined, and who now in their turn separate and pass on the outside to regain their original places. This movement is performed in sixteen steps, and occupies eight measures of the music.

RIGHT AND LEFT.—*Chaine Anglaise*. As this figure was formerly executed, the dancers in crossing to opposite places gave their right hand to the opposite lady or gentleman in passing, and then the left hand to their partner, releasing it on turning to face the centre. In returning to places they again gave their right hand to the advancing lady or gentleman, and again the left to their partner. Hence the term *chaine Anglaise*. Now, however, it is customary for each gentleman simply to cross to the right of the advancing lady without actually presenting the hand. Immediately he has passed the opposite lady, he crosses his partner with his face towards her, he inclining to the right and she a little to the left. The partners turn, when they arrive at the

opposite place, so that the gentleman's right shoulder comes towards the lady's left shoulder. The couples then return to their own places in a similar manner. When the dancers in this figure cross only to opposite places, the movement is termed *half right* and *left*, or *demi chaîne Anglaise*, and occupies only four bars of the music. When done completely, as at the commencement of the ordinary quadrille, it occupies eight measures and is accomplished in sixteen steps.

LADIES' CHAIN.—*Chaîne des dames.* The two opposite ladies change places, and in doing so present the right hand to each other, which they take and release in passing. On arriving at the opposite places the ladies place their left hand in the left hand of the gentlemen who are their *vis-à-vis*, and with them turn once round—*tour de main*. The ladies again give right hands to each other in returning, and then join left hands with their own partners, and turn once round in places.

All the gentleman has to do in this figure is to step a little forward as the opposite lady approaches him, presenting his left hand to take hers. He then turns once completely round with her, and, releasing her hand, steps again a little forward to meet his own partner, with whom he also makes a *tour de main*.

This movement occupies eight measures of the music, and is completed in sixteen steps, both by the ladies and gentlemen. The latter, it will be remarked, do not apparently cover so much ground, but at each *tour de main* they make a complete revolution of eight steps, whereas the ladies describe a semi-circle only in turning with the hand, the remaining four steps being taken in crossing the figure.

HANDS ACROSS.—*Le moulinet.* The gentleman gives his right hand to the opposite gentleman, and the lady gives hers to the opposite lady across the arms of the gentlemen. They then move half round to the left, and when arrived at the opposite place, they join their left hands across, and move half round to the right to regain the position whence they started.

I am not aware that there is any precise rule as to whether the ladies' hands should be crossed above or below those of the gentlemen; but as they are generally smaller and prettier, it were well that they should be placed in a position where they can be seen to the best advantage. Accordingly, if the arms are not raised high, the ladies' hands should, I think,

be crossed above those of the gentlemen. Bear in mind that in this figure the arms should not be rigidly extended.

GRAND CHAIN.—All the dancers turn to face their partners, to whom they give the right hand. They then make a complete tour of the figure, starting in opposite directions, the lady to the left and the gentleman to the right, giving the right and left hands alternately to the different dancers as they approach in turn, until the partners meet in the opposite place. Whereupon they stop, making a slight salutation, and then proceed again, giving the left hand to the next lady or gentleman, the right to the next, and so on, till they meet once more in their own place. Thus, the first gentleman, for example, will give his right hand to his partner, immediately releasing it, and presenting his left hand to the lady who was standing on his right, whom he meets midway between his own place and that of the third couple. He then gives his right hand to the lady who was his *vis-à-vis*, who meets him in the place of the third couple. His left hand he now gives to the lady who stood originally on his left, and whom he meets midway between the places of the second and third couples. He now meets his own partner in the place that was occupied by their *vis-à-vis*, and giving her his right hand, he pauses and makes a slight salutation. Then he proceeds in the same manner, meeting and presenting his hand to each lady in turn, till he is again with his partner in his own place.

The following is an alphabetical arrangement of a few French and other technical terms frequently used in descriptions of set dances:—

Assemblé. In quadrille dancing this term is employed simply to express the action of bringing the feet from an open to a closed position. The step so called, requiring two distinct movements, is explained elsewhere.

A droite—à gauche. To the right—left.

Allemande. A movement in which the gentleman turns the lady under his arm, or in which the arms of the dancers are otherwise interlaced.

Avant deux—trois—quatre. Advance two—three—four.

Avant général. All advance together.

Balançé (à votre dame). In quadrille dancing the term *balancé* is

frequently used for setting to partners, as the movement was formerly done with a *balancé* step.

Balancé (quatre en ligne)—(four in a line). In this sense the term *balancé* means simply to balance the body on the sole of one foot and rise and fall thereon, in bringing the other foot to a closed pointed position. Afterwards to do the same in the opposite direction. The *balancé* may be done sideways, opening the feet to the *second position*, and closing to *third* or *fifth*, or it may be done forward and backward. In the latter case slide one foot to the *fourth position*, rise on the toe, and sink again on the sole of that foot, in bringing the rear one up to the *third* or *fifth position* behind; then slide the rear foot backward, close the advanced one to the *third* or *fifth position*, with the toe lightly pointed in front, and rise and fall on the sole of the rear foot.

Chaîne Anglaise—Right and left. Already explained.

Chaîne des dames—Ladies' chain. Already explained.

Chassé de côté. The partners cross each other sideways, the gentleman passing behind the lady.

Chassé croisé. Same as above.

Chassé huit. All the dancers cross partners.

N.B.—The above terms are frequently now used to signify crossing partners, without any reference to the nature of the step employed.

Demi chaîne Anglaise. Half right and left—already explained.

Demi queue du chat. Lead round or promenade. Opposite couples present hands and walk round to the place vacated by their *vis-à-vis*, whom they pass on the left. That is, the couples in crossing to opposite places describe an arc, inclining a little to the right in starting, so that the advancing couple pass them on the left. This technical term is seldom now used in England, but is frequently found in modern French descriptions of square dances.

Demi tour à quatre. Four dancers join hands and turn half round.

Dos-à-dos. Back to back.

En avant quatre et en arrière. Four opposite dancers advance and retire.

Grand Promenade. All the couples walk or galop completely round the figure.

Le Grand Rond. All the ladies and gentlemen dancing join right and left hands to form a circle, and thus advance and retire in four movements, as already described, each beginning with his or her right foot.

Les Grâces. A beautiful figure founded on the *pas d'allemande*, in

which a gentleman advances between two ladies, giving his right hand to one and his left to the other, and taking their corresponding hands, or those on the further side. The ladies meanwhile give their disengaged hands to each other behind the gentleman's waist. After advancing and retiring together thus during eight bars, the gentleman stoops to pass under the ladies' arms that are joined behind him, and then, as he rises, he turns both ladies under his arms, saluting them as they courtesy in finishing the movement. This occupies four bars. After this the dancers join hands in a ring and move round and back again during four bars, returning to the position whence they started.

Moulinet—a turnstile. Four or eight dancers give hands across and move round as already explained. Any turning movement in which the hands of opposite dancers are crossed in the form of a turnstile is technically called a *moulinet*. When danced by all the couples together, it is called *le grand moulinet*.

Promenade. To lead round, taking partner by the hand.

Fromenade across. See *demi queue du chat*.

Rond. A circle.

Traverse. To cross over.

Vis-à-vis. Face to face. In quadrilles this term is used in reference to the dancer or dancers who stand immediately opposite and facing.

CHAPTER XIII.

MODERN SQUARE DANCES.

Described in an Abbreviated Form according to the Explanations of Movements already given.

NOTE 1.—As all quadrille music is arranged on a simple plan, and two steps are taken to every bar (see music), in order to simplify matters, and avoid repetition, I will place a hyphen between each section of eight bars or measures.

NOTE 2.—In turning partners after the *balance*, except in special cases, it is considered the best style to present *both* hands, as already explained.

THE QUADRILLE.

*(Generally known as the First Set.)*First Figure.—*Le Pantalon.*

First and second couples right and left (*chaîne Anglaise*)—Set to partners and turn—Ladies' chain—Half promenade, returning with half right and left to places. *Side couples repeat.*

Second Figure.—*L'Été.*

First and Second couples advance and retire, then cross over to opposite places—Again advance and retire, and recross to places—Set to partners and turn. *This movement is repeated by the leading couples, and then by the side couples.*

Third Figure.—*La Poule.*

First lady and opposite gentleman cross over, touching right hands in passing, then they return joining left hands, and present right hands to their partners—*Balancé*, four in a line, change places with the opposite couple (*demi queue du chat*)—The first lady and opposite gentleman advance and retire, readvance and bow—Leading couples advance and retire, then half right and left to places. *This is done four times, each lady and opposite gentleman commencing in turn.*

Fourth Figure.—*La Pastourelle.*

First couple advance and retire; advance again, the gentleman leaving his partner with the opposite gentleman—Second gentleman presents his hands to both ladies and with them advances, retires, and readvances, leaving them with the first gentleman who retires as they advance—First gentleman gives his hands to both ladies, and with them advances, retires, and again advances; then all four join hands to form a circle—All move round to the left, disengaging hands as they reach the opposite position; then they return half right and left to places—*This figure is performed four times, each couple leading in turn.*

Fifth Figure.—*Finale.*

All join hands to form a circle, advance and retire, then turn partners, or advance again to the centre (*Le grand rond*)—First and second couples advance and retire, then cross over—Again advance, retire, and recross to places—Ladies' chain. *All join hands as before, after which the figure is repeated by the side and leading couples alternately.*

There are several ways of dancing the final figure of the quadrille, but the above is the most orthodox and courtly, so to speak ; the most usual and merriest way of dancing it, however, is as follows :—

The "Flirtation" Figure.

All the dancers join hands, advance and retire in a circle, and then turn partners—The four ladies advance to the centre with a slight salutation, and retire ; then the four gentlemen advance, turn to the corner ladies and bow—All set to corners and turn—Gentlemen promenade round the figure with the corner ladies, and stop in their own places. *This is done four times, which brings all the dancers to their original partners, and the ladies to their own places. The figure finishes with circle and turn partners.*

NOTE.—Eight bars of the music are played as a prelude to each figure.

The Quadrille is frequently danced without side couples, the dancers standing in two rows facing. In this form the dance takes only half the time, and the music is played accordingly. When thus danced it is called *Le Quadrille Parisien*, or Parisian Quadrille.

THE LANCERS.

First Figure.—*La Rose.*

First lady and opposite gentleman advance to the centre, step backward, closing the right foot to the *third position* in front, step again forward, closing the left foot to *third* behind ; then turn with both hands commencing with the left foot, and retire to places (see note)—First couple lead through the centre, the second couple passing them on the outside ; then the second couple, in returning, lead through the centre, while the first couple pass on the outside—All set to corners and turn. *This figure is done four times, each lady and opposite gentleman leading in turn.*

Second Figure.—*La Ladoiska.*

First couple advance and retire with hands joined, and again advance, the gentleman leaving the lady in the centre facing him—They set

and turn to places—Side couples separate and join hands with leading couples; they thus advance and retire in two straight lines and then turn with partners to places. *Each couple leads forward in turn.*

Third Figure.—*La Dorset.*

Ladies all advance and retire, then the gentlemen advance and join hands in a ring, the ladies placing their hands lightly on the gentlemen's arms—All move round thus to the left, the dancers breaking off as they reach their own places—The four gentlemen advance and retire; advance again to the centre, and, bowing to the ladies, give their left hands across to each other—The gentlemen give their disengaged hands to their partners, and thus all move round to places. *This figure is performed twice.* (See also note.)

Fourth Figure.—*L'Etoile.*

Leading couples, with hands joined, advance turning to face the couple on the right, bow, and cross over to visit the opposite couple passing *vis-à-vis* couple on the left—All *chassé croisé*, *balancé*, and turn partners to places—Leading couples right and left.

This figure is repeated by the same couples, who now visit first the couple on their left. Afterwards the whole figure is repeated by the side couples.

Sometimes in the above figure the couples, instead of turning to places again, *chassé croisé* and lead back.

N.B.—The fourth figure of the Lancers is now more frequently performed as follows:—

Leading couples advance to visit the couple on the right, then cross over to visit the opposite couple, passing *vis-à-vis* couple on the left—Leading couples then perform *demi moulinet*, with side couples giving across first their right and then their left hands—Form two circles of four, and move round thus, breaking off in places.¹

This figure is repeated by the same couples, who the second time visit first the couple on their left, and pass vis-à-vis couple on the right. The whole figure is then repeated by the side couples.

Fifth Figure.—*Les Lanciers.*

Grand chain; give right and left hands alternately, and pause with slight salutation on meeting partner in opposite place—Continue grand

¹ Or half round in one direction and then half round in the contrary direction, breaking off in places (see note).

chain to places—Leading couple promenade round inside the figure, and then stand in their own places with their backs turned towards the centre, the third and fourth couples falling in behind them to form two lines—All *chassé croisé* and *balancé* forward, again *chassé croisé* and *balancé*—Ladies lead round to the right, gentlemen to the left, and the partners meeting, join hands and lead up the centre—All form two lines, each gentleman facing his partner, advance and retire thus with hands joined, and then turn partners to places—Grand chain.

This figure is performed four times, each couple leading round in turn. Finish with grand chain.

NOTES ON THE LANCERS.

To those dancers who are fond of imitating the inartistic and vulgar innovations that are sometimes introduced in the various figures of the Lancers, I would particularly commend the words of the wise Bacon, who says: "As the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all innovations, which are the births of time; yet notwithstanding, as those that first bring honour into their family are commonly more worthy than most that succeed, so the first precedent (if it be good) is seldom attained by imitation; for ill to man's nature, as it stands perverted, hath a natural motion strongest in continuance, but good as a forced motion strongest at first."¹ I do not for a moment suppose that the author of the above passage had any idea of dancing in his head when he wrote it; although even in his time objectionable innovations were frequently introduced into the *Branles* and *Gaillardes*. But the passage contains a statement which, although directly opposed to the principles of evolution, does certainly appear to hold good in most circumstances. Thus the modern fourth figure, as it was danced originally, and as it is always taught by the best teachers, was perhaps an improvement on the *chassé*

¹ *Of Innovations: Bacon's Essays.*

croisé figure, but the *further innovation* of putting both hands across in place of the graceful *rond*, *spoilt it altogether*. It is not so much to the fact of joining both arms across that exception may be taken, as to the way in which they are put across.

I need scarcely, I trust, advise my readers not to fall into that exceedingly vulgar practice of turning backwards in the third figure. It is neither agreeable nor artistic; it is simply idiotic, as no possible advantage can be gained by going round the wrong way. I wish we possessed a little of that common-sense conservatism that characterized the manners of the Dorians, who uniformly set their faces against all novelties that were not shown to be decided improvements.¹ Innovations were not introduced into the Spartan dancing and music, which were inseparable arts, by any Tom, Dick, or Harry (or their Hellenic equivalents) who happened to have a taste for the *outré*. It was not until Terpander had four times carried off the prize in the Pythian games, and had tranquillized the tumult and disorder of the city by the power of his music, that he succeeded in obtaining permission to introduce his new invention of the seven-stringed lyre; and it could only have been some dancer of acknowledged reputation and skill who would have been able to introduce a new figure in the *Gymnopaedica*. Plato was of opinion that a young man who moved in any dance contrary to the rules, deserved to be not only dismissed from the choir, but chastised into the bargain.²

Before finally quitting the subject of square dances, I am tempted to relate that I once came across a statement to the effect that the figures of the Lancers were originally

¹ Müller's *History of the Doric Race*.

² *Vide Laws*, Book VII. 9.

founded on a dance said to have been performed ages ago by the primeval Britons, at festivals held in honour of their leaders. The dance must have been of a Pyrrhic nature, for those taking part in it were armed with lances, and with them made various movements to the four cardinal points. I am unable to give the name of the writer who originated this ingenious hypothesis, as the article in which it appeared was not signed. There *may* be something in it, but to me it seems a matter of the merest conjecture.

CHAPTER XIV.

MODERN SOCIAL DANCING.

CORRECT POSITION OF PARTNERS.

BEFORE describing the few round dances that are at present in vogue, it may be as well to explain briefly the correct position in which the partners should place themselves. Allusion has already been made to various errors of style that should be avoided, but I will now be a little more explicit.

The gentleman should offer his right arm to his partner and lead her to that part of the room where he intends to begin. As he stops he presents his left hand to the lady gracefully, but without the least affectation *palm upwards*, the wrist bent slightly inwards—see Axiom VII. The lady meanwhile raises her hand and places it lightly in the man's with the *palm turned downward*, and her wrist also must be slightly bent. This is the only true position of the hands in which unsightly angles can be avoided, and teachers who instruct their pupils differently must be ignorant of the first principles of their art.

As the gentleman takes the right hand of the lady she removes her left from his arm, and places it lightly just beneath his shoulder, while

he places his right hand against her waist *firmly* but without undue pressure. The fingers must on no account be spread out, such a position of the hand being considered vulgar.

The position of the lady's left hand beneath her partner's right shoulder should be regulated by their relative height; but it should never be placed lower than midway between his shoulder and elbow, and the fingers should always be curved a little inwards.

The heads of the partners should on no account be kept rigidly fixed in any given position—Axiom V. Generally, however, each should look over the other's right shoulder.

In rapid rotatory movements the partners' backs should curve a little outward so that their figures become slightly *convex*. They should also *draw away from each other* in turning, and thus take advantage of the centrifugal force. The opposite false position in which the backs of the dancers become *concave* must never be adopted. It is one of the most hideous, and is opposed to all true principles, whether of science or art.

All affectations, such as taking the lady's wrist instead of her hand, or merely placing the palms against one another, should be avoided. It is only by holding your partner firmly, supporting her *in a manly way*, and drawing her round, that you will ever acquire the true feeling of the waltz.

- The effect of the various positions adopted will be best observed by reference to the accompanying plates.

STANDARD AND EPHEMERAL DANCES.

Social dancing being as it were in a transition state, it is, I think, better to consider the various movements to be described, according to their intrinsic merits, rather than according to the actual vogue they at present enjoy.

In the decade immediately preceding the great war, a somewhat degenerate style of ball-room dancing began to manifest itself—a style to which I shall more particularly refer later on. During the war there was comparatively little social dancing of the better order, but regrettable efforts were made in certain quarters to perpetuate *under altered names* some of those exotic movements which

should at the outset have been rigorously excluded from our ball-rooms.

Since the war, notwithstanding the wholly irrational but transient craze for "jazzing," there has certainly been considerable improvement in the general manner of dancing. Decadent practices are less observable, and there is abundant evidence that the ever youthful Queen of Dances is resuming her temporarily disputed sway.

Some people have an idea that all so-called "new dances" that they read about, hear of, or see advertised in the daily papers, are actually new in fact. But this is a quite fallacious idea. It is very doubtful if any dance at present in favour is, strictly speaking, "newer" than the polka or schottische. "Oh, indeed!" the ultra modern reader may be tempted to exclaim, "how, then, about the 'Fox Trot' and the 'Jazz'?" Are not these dances newer than the ones you mention?" No, they are not. The *names* are different, it is true, but the steps and movements in either case are the same as have done duty for centuries of social dancing. *Plus ça change plus c'est la même chose!*

The difference between standard and ephemeral dances is, generally speaking, this: The former have a special and more or less unique musical rhythm by which they may easily be distinguished from all other dances; while the latter are either combinations of two or more already existing dances or, as it were, parasitic growths. For instance, the so-called "Boston" and "Hesitation" took their nourishment from the Waltz as the ivy does from the oak.

Surely there can be no mistake about the individual and distinctive rhythms of the minuet, the waltz, the polka, the schottische and the mazurka. Each dance can be detected in a moment by any one with an ear for music.

But what is the distinctive rhythm of the "Fox Trot"? Very little if indeed any is to be detected in the music generally written for the dance. As to the "Jazz," every one knows, or ought to know by this time, that it was originally a slang *name* for a kind of distorted music exploited by nigger bands in the States, and had no actual reference to any special dance. In short, to "jazz" was merely to do whatever steps and movements one pleased to a discordant, perverted, unrhymic accompaniment.

Before considering some later dances of the go-as-you-please kind, we will turn our attention to a few standard movements that have stood the test of time. Some of these at first, like the so-called Fox Trot, included a variety of steps, figures, and movements. It was so with the waltz, according to Washington Irving's description of the dance when he was quite a young man;¹ also the Polka, as we shall presently see. But these varied movements were eventually trimmed down to a single figure and set of characteristic steps danced uniformly by all the company, if not in precisely the same manner, at least in the same order.

THE POLKA.

I do not purpose, in this chapter, to enter into minute particulars of the origin and progress of the various dances to be described. It matters little whether the polka was, as some say, the invention of a Bohemian nobleman, or as others aver, of a Polish peasant girl. Most probably neither statement is correct.² Cellarius, writing shortly after its introduction, refers to the polka as "one of the most ancient

¹ *Salmagundi*, 1806.

² Explanations concerning the originals of modern dances may generally be taken *cum grano salis*.

and yet the most popular of dances"; and doubtless it was known to and danced by the people of Hungary and Poland in some form ages before it reached the salons of Paris. One thing is certain, and that is that the polka, as we now perform it, is a very different kind of dance from that which "*fit tourner toutes les têtes et lever tous les pieds*" about the year 1844. Figures were then executed by the couples. After leading out the lady by the hand, the gentleman turned alternately towards and away from her. Sometimes, after so many steps made in turning, the partners separated and again approached, with their hands on their hips, and sometimes they passed beneath each other's arms.¹ They also not unfrequently performed characteristic Bohemian heel-steps; but it was not long before people came to regard all these accessories as superfluous, and finally they were discarded.

The music of the polka is written in dupal time of four beats to a bar—supposing a beat to a quaver. The rhythm of the dance appears to be the most simple and natural of all rhythms. Of this fact you may easily convince yourself by listening to the pedal accompaniment which theatrical deities make to their cat-calls, whenever there happens to be any unwonted delay in raising the curtain. The time of this accompaniment is always as regularly marked as if it were directed by the conductor's bâton. It is one, two, *three*, and a one, two, *three* continually until the curtain goes up, and then all is quiet.

Now when people are sitting comfortably—or perhaps in this case it would be more accurate to say uncomfortably—on their seats, the impulse which causes the feet to move comes directly and solely from the brain, and consequently they experience no difficulty in sustaining the rhythm, and

¹ As in some of the so-called "new" dances.

making the requisite pause at the fourth count. But in actual dancing the movements of the feet are, as I have pointed out in explaining Axiom I., greatly influenced by the position and action of the trunk, and it frequently happens that the effects of *inertia* experienced in the sudden pull up, as it were, at the third step, causes the centre of gravity of the body to fall without the area of the supporting foot, and so the pupil feels constrained to put the raised foot down before the proper time, in order to retain his balance.

We see, then, how very important it is in this, as indeed in all dances, that the pupil's attention should be directed to the true position and action of the upper part of his body. The teaching of dancing that is confined to the position and action of the lower limbs is indeed teaching of a most perfunctory kind.

Lightness in dancing the polka is acquired by proper flexion of the joints in rising from and falling again on to the toes, whenever the foot leaves the floor. For further information on this point the reader should refer back to the observations on leaping movements.

The music of a well-written polka frequently begins with a short note on the fourth beat of the bar. But even if this note be not present, the interval is occupied by the movement technically known as *temps levé*, or a rising on the foot preparatory to making a step.

Commence by rising on the toe of the left foot and draw up the right just behind it. For this movement simply count *and*

One: Slide the right foot to the second position, transferring the balance of the body to the right leg in finishing the slide.

Two: Bring the left foot with a slight spring to the place occupied by the right, simultaneously raising the right foot, not necessarily high.

Three: Put the right foot down, throwing the weight and balance of

K

the body boldly on to it, and as you fall on the right foot, raise the left from the ground.

- *Four*: Pause an instant, while you mentally count four, with the balance fairly sustained on the right leg, then, counting *and*, as before, rise with a springing movement on the right toe, bringing the left behind, preparatory to recommencing the steps with the left foot in the opposite direction.

N.B.—In the polka, as in all round dances, the gentleman begins with his left and the lady with her right foot. This must be remembered in actual dancing; but it matters little in which direction the steps are learnt.

Technically the steps of the polka are as follows:—The initial rise is a *temps levé*, the first step a *pas glissé*, the second a *coupé-jetté* (since it combines in a measure the characteristics of both movements), the third step is unmistakably a *jetté non rapproché*, and the fourth movement is, like the first, a *temps levé*, which properly belongs to the next series of steps.

These movements may be made in a forward or backward direction, in a similar manner. In going forward the second step becomes a *coupé dessous*, and in going backward it is a *coupé dessus*.

When the steps are taken in a rotary direction, the body should turn more particularly during each *temps levé* or rising movement.

THE SCHOTTISCHE.

The Schottische is no longer danced in its original form, but the movements, steps and figure of the old dance are so often used in combination with others, in "new dances" to be presently explained, that it may be as well to give it a little consideration.

The dance consists of two distinct parts, one being rectilinear and the other rotary. The first part may appear

to bear a certain resemblance to the polka; but there is a considerable difference in the nature of the movements when they are properly executed.

To begin with, there is no initial *temps levé*, since the music generally commences on the first note of the bar. The measure of the dance is distinctly trochaic, that is, it consists of an accented and unaccented note or syllable alternately, as if, in reading, one said—

“ Art is long and Time is fleeting.”

The third step should not be staccato—to borrow a musical term—as in the polka, nor is the third count generally so strongly marked in the melody. Again, the fourth step of the Schottische, or *pas sauté*, is not connected with the movements of the following bar, but belongs solely to the bar in which it is included. The difference between the rhythm of a Polka and a Schottische will become apparent when I point out that in the former the movements may be thus divided: 4, 1, 2, 3—4, 1, 2, 3, as if one said, “A farm-yard here, a farm-yard there,” while in the latter they begin and end with the bar thus: 1, 2, 3, 4—1, 2, 3, 4.

Technically the first step of the Schottische is a *pas glissé*, the second a *coupé*, the third a *jetté* (done very quietly), and the fourth a *pas sauté*. The turning steps are composed of alternate *jettés* and *pas sautés*.

THE BARN DANCE.

This dance, which was about twenty years since so popular in England, and is still occasionally danced, is of American origin. It was at first frequently, but very incorrectly, spoken of as the Society *Pas de Quatre*, since it was found to go well to the music written for the dance called *Pas de Quatre* in the burlesque of “Faust Up to Date.” For

a similar reason it is known as the Barn Dance, because it was, across the Atlantic, performed to a tune called "Dancing in the Barn."

Position of Partners.—The gentleman and his partner stand side by side, the gentleman with his left foot in front, ready to begin, and the lady with her right foot in front, say each in the *third position*. The gentleman in this part may either take the lady's left hand in his right, or he may keep his hand throughout lightly against the lady's waist. The latter is the original and consequently more correct method, and it has the advantage of being easier; since, unless the dancers are very expert, some difficulty is generally experienced in getting into the proper position in time for executing the rotary part, and this causes a scuffling appearance not altogether dignified. Those dancers, however, who care for effect, and like to display their ability, may advance with their right and left hands joined, or they may join their hands low, as when advancing in a quadrille.

The steps for the gentleman are as follows:—

One: Slide the left foot to *fourth position*, or a little in front, and transfer the balance to the left leg.

Two: Bring the right foot up to the place of the left, throwing the balance of the body on the right leg, and simultaneously raising the left foot a little in front.

Three: Spring forward on to the sole of the left foot, raising the right foot behind, and bend the knee in preparation for the next movement.

Four: Make a little hop on the sole of the left foot, and in doing so extend the right limb in front, pointing the toe downward *towards your partner's toe* in the *fourth position*, raised.

The following are the second four steps for the gentleman, and first four for the lady:—

One: Slide the right foot a little forward to the *fourth position*, balancing thereon in finishing the step.

Two: Bring the left foot up behind the right, throwing the weight of the body on to the left leg, and in doing so, raise the right foot a little in front.

Three: Spring forward on to the sole of the right foot, raising the left behind, and make a slight flexion of the limb in preparation for the next movement.

Four: Hop softly on the sole of the right foot, and in doing so extend the left leg in front, being careful that the toe points *downward* in the *fourth raised position*.

The first four steps for the gentleman form the second four for the lady. In other words, each repeats the movement with the opposite foot; but this time—that is, the second time—the toes of the extended limbs instead of pointing towards each other, will be pointed in the opposite or *outward direction*.

Rotary movement: The turning movement in the Barn Dance is precisely the same as in the ordinary schottische, and consists of four steps and four hops, taken alternately, making a half turn in executing each of the hops. In the circular part of the dance, the gentleman takes his partner by the waist as in ordinary round dancing, and each looks over the other's right shoulder. The rotary movement is frequently waltzed.

Technically, the forward movement of the Barn Dance may, I think, be said to consist of a *demi glissé, pas coupé, jetté non rapproché*, and *pas tendu* or *pas de zéphir*. These steps, however, must not be taken in nearly so pronounced or showy a manner as if executed in solo or theatrical dancing.

THE HIGHLAND SCHOTTISCHE.

This dance, which was originally known by the name of Balmoral Schottische, is one which, although not nearly so fashionable as it was some years since, will always be liked by people who may be said to have the true spirit of dancing in them, because it is perhaps the only dance for couples which admits of genuine display of Terpsichorean dexterity, and in which such display is considered perfectly good form in the ball-room.

Scotch music is naturally the music most suitable for the Highland Schottische. The tunes used for reels and strathspeys are divided into two parts, each consisting of four bars.

The dance in its simplest form, adapted to the drawing-room, may be described as follows :—

Position of the Partners.—The lady and gentleman in commencing stand opposite each other with their left arms raised high above the head, and their right arms akimbo, the back of the hand resting lightly on the hip. Each begins with his or her right foot.

One : Starting from say the *third position*, spring upward a little and alight with the right foot pointed downward in the *second* or *open position* to the side, the toe barely touching the floor. For this count *and one*.

Two : Bring the right foot back to the *third position*, the movement being accompanied by a little hop on the supporting leg. Count *and two*.

Three : Again point the right foot in the *second position*, exactly as before. Count *and three*.

Four : Again bring the right foot back to the *third position*, with a little hop on the left leg. Count, *and four*.

Five : Slide the right foot to the *second position*, and in finishing the slide, let the balance of the body fall thereon.

Six : Bring the left foot to the place of the right, falling upon it with a springing movement, and in doing so raise the right foot with the toe pointed downward in the *second position*.

Seven : Fall lightly on the right foot, bending the knee, and in doing so bring the left foot to the *third position* behind, the toe being just raised from the ground.

Eight : Hop on the right leg, falling lightly on the toe.

It will be observed that these last four steps are precisely the same as the first four of the original schottische.

Meanwhile the partners, each starting with the right foot, have gone in opposite directions away from one another. In making the last hop on the sole of the right foot they begin to change the relative position of their arms, raising the right hand high, and placing the left lightly on the hip, then for the

Next two bars : Repeat the whole of the above movement in the opposite direction, beginning by springing on the right leg and pointing the left toe downward in the *second position*.

In the last of these bars the partners again approach each other, and finish facing, as they were at starting, with the balance of the body sustained on the left leg.

Rotary movement : Linking your right arm with that of your partner, and each raising the left arm, put the right foot down, throwing the weight of the body thereon and bending the knee, then at the *second*

count, hop lightly on it. Do this in beginning to turn in a forward direction to the right, the centre of rotation being that point where the arms are joined. This *jetté* and hop on alternate feet is done four times, making a more or less complete turn, and finishing on the left foot. During the last hop, release your partner's right arm, and joining left arms, make a corresponding turn in the reverse direction in a similar manner.

After this second turn, which completes the figure of the dance, separate from your partner and recommence the lateral movement by pointing the right foot in the *second position*, as before.

This constitutes the simplest possible form of the Highland Schottische. A little variety in the steps may be made by bringing back the foot that is pointed in the first and third steps to the *fifth position* before and behind alternately in the second and fourth steps. Also, in the rotary movement, the disengaged foot may be crossed quickly before the hopping leg.

Space will not permit of my giving a detailed description of the various reel steps that may be introduced into this schottische. In any case it is more satisfactory to acquire them from a competent teacher.

THE POLKA-MAZURKA.

This simple, elegant, but at present neglected dance must not be in any way confounded with the Polish Mazurka, which is a dance of a very different character, consisting of several figures in which difficult steps are introduced, as in the Scotch Reel. The principal of these are the *pas Polonais*, a characteristic step in which the heels are struck together; the Polish *pas de basque*, in which the closing movement is a *coupé frappé*; and the *assemblé sissonne*, used in the *holubiec* or *tour sur place*. It would, however, be quite out of place to attempt to give a description of the real Mazurka, as it is never danced in this country; but the Polka Mazurka, a simple drawing-room dance for couples executed to the same measure, is still occasionally seen at private parties. Besides,

who knows but that it may again become popular? As I pointed out a few pages back, the Barn Dance or Military Schottische was considered quite a "chestnut" by the Yankees, when all of a sudden it sprang up here as a brand new dance.

The music of the Polka-Mazurka, like that of the waltz, is written in triple time, but there is a decided difference in the rhythm, that of the waltz being dactylic, or with the strong accent entirely on the first; while that of the Mazurka is more like the amphibrach, there being a very decided accent on the second count. The steps in this dance are all of equal duration, and should be taken as follows:—

One: Slide the left foot to the second position, and transfer the weight to the left leg.

Two: Bring the right foot to the place of the left, falling on it in a very decided manner.

Three: Pass the left foot quickly across the right leg just behind the heel, and in doing so hop softly on the right toe, keeping the left foot raised.

These three movements are made laterally, without turning. In the next three turn half round to face the opposite direction.

Four: Slide the left foot again to the side in turning, so that it comes a little round.

Five: Bring the right foot to the place of the left, falling boldly on it, as before.

Six: Spring from the right to the left foot still turning, so that you face the opposite side of the room.

Now repeat the whole of this movement, commencing with the right foot, and the next six steps will bring you to the same position as that in which you started;¹ or in other words, you will have made a complete revolution. The lady's step is the same as above described, only in dancing she begins with her right foot.

Technically, the first three steps of the Polka-Mazurka are *demi glissé, coupé*, and *pas sauté* with *fouetté*. The last three are *demi glissé, coupé*, and *jetté*.

¹ I do not mean that you will be in the same *place*, only that the relative position of yourself and partner will be as it was at starting.

THE "TWO STEP."

What used in this country to be called the galop has for many years been better known in America as the "Two Step." But there is, or rather was, a difference in the manner of dancing it. The step in either case consisted simply of the *chassé* either consecutive or *alternatif*, as already explained in the chapter on "Steps and Movements used in Dancing." Here, however, the movement was done to galop or two-four-time; while in the States it was more often done to six-eight measure. Here it was done in a go-as-you-please not to say "rompish" manner, generally as a final dance; there it was done slower, in a more dignified way, and in regulated sequences, the changes of figure being made at the half cadences of the music.

Unfortunately few ordinary ball-room dancers pay, or ever did pay, much attention to the music. The terms cadence and half cadence convey no definite idea to many, and even if told that in dance music they fall at the fourth and eighth bars—or at least should do so—unmusical dancers still do not feel at all sure when they reach them.

When, however, the tunes happen to be syncopated and distorted out of all recognition, especially when odd bars are interpolated by way of modulation into fresh keys, it becomes impossible even for experienced dancers who understand music to dance in strict accord with the band, unless they have recourse to expedients which are at the best undesirable.

Assuming that the music is really rhythmic, adapted to the dance, and not of the "One Step or Two Step"—whatever-you-like order, you should proceed as follows:—

Having your partner in front of you so that she is looking

over your right shoulder, do a *chassé à trois pas*, or *chassé alternatif* four times forward, beginning with the left foot for the first bar, with the right for the second, and so on.

If danced, as it should be, to *six-eight time*, the first slide with the left foot occupies two counts, the bringing up of the right foot one count, the second slide of the left two more counts, and a slight pause on the sixth to bring the right foot forward. The whole movement, however, is done so that one is hardly conscious of the six beats, and it is easier to count the bars as "left & left" and "right & right," the &'s representing the bringing up of the rear foot, which should be done entirely without stress. The lady of course does the *chassé* backward when her partner does it forward, and *vice versa*.

At the beginning of the fifth measure after the half cadence, the *chassé* movement is done during the next four bars in turning instead of forward, the steps being taken in a similar manner only sideways, as it were, while moving the shoulders round to the right. Proficient "two-steppers" can easily arrange matters so that in beginning the next eight bars the man moves backward and the lady forward.

The above is the simplest form of a "Two Step," but many variations are possible both as regards figure and movement. The *chassé* in the second part may be continuous instead of *alternatif*, and changed with a pause and turn at the half cadence to resume with the opposite foot. The position of the partners may be altered, as in the "Boston," or hands only given. But the *pas chassé* is always the foundation of the dance.

THE "ONE STEP."

The so-called "One Step" is *par excellence* a specimen of the modern go-as-you-please style of dancing. I think it had its origin in the atrocious rag-time music that was latterly written for the "Two Step"—music to which it was impossible for the ordinary ball-room dancer to do any orderly sequence of steps. According to the definition of dancing which I ventured to give in *Dancing in All Ages*,

a movement consisting of a single step, however frequently repeated, cannot properly be called a dance; otherwise walking and running could also be included among the dances. If in the "One Step" so many movements were made beginning with the left foot, then so many beginning with the right, that would make it a *dance*, however simple; because in order to make the change, one would have to do on the left foot, a turn, a hop, a rise, or some action of a *different nature from the step*, to enable one to begin next time with the right foot. That, I say, would make it a dance, no matter how primitive. But then it would no longer be literally a "One Step."

You cannot have it both ways. Either you can have a dance that is not a "One Step," or a "One Step" that is not a dance.

But whether a dance or not, the so-called "One Step" is usually done with something between a walk and a running movement in which, of course, the toes should be turned outward and downward. The relative position of the partners is chosen according to their individual tastes. Some prefer the hip-to-hip position, as in the "Boston," others dance face to face. The movement is continuous, left, right, left, right, in any direction with a step to each count. When the hip-to-hip position is chosen, the man treads, as it were, four times forward inclining to the right, and turning his shoulders. He continues the treading movement backwards without break or pause, still turning the shoulders and thus making a zigzag track. As the man moves forward the lady moves backward, and *vice versa*.

In the side movement familiarly called "crabbing," the man moves along to his left, drawing his right foot alternately before and behind his left. If this step were done properly, with the knees and feet turned completely out as in what is technically termed the *pas de bourrée*, it would not have a bad effect, but as one generally sees it in the ball-room, the movement looks merely grotesque.

ALIEN DANCES.

THE TANGO AND MAXIXE.

The real Tango is admittedly a dance of negroid origin, defined as such in Appleton's Spanish dictionary. Also the Spanish Academy defined it as a dance of "*negros o gente de pueblo en America.*" The Andalusian Tango dates probably from the time of the Moorish domination in Spain. It is described as "*une danse lascive dont le signe distinctif est un harmonieux et moelleux mouvement des hanches.*"

Now, I have seen the real Tango, and also various mock Tangoes adapted to suit British and other European tastes. The former was frankly indecent, while the latter were for the most part comparatively innocuous. But the proper Tango is undoubtedly the improper Tango. This is a paradox; but a dance from which all objectionable features are eliminated, whatever else it may be, is not the genuine Tango.

Even in its bowdlerized form the dance, despite the determined efforts of those interested in pushing it, was found to be quite unsuited to our national temperament. My personal opinion I ventured to express in the *Daily Chronicle* in a parody on Blake's "Tiger," one verse being—

"And what strange ideas of art
Must be theirs who take a part
In thy music's halting beat,
Writhing with entangled feet."¹

The association of dancing with dressmaking at the "Tango Teas" and "Corset Parades," as they were termed, that used to be held immediately before the war, was, at

¹ January 7th, 1914.

least to my way of thinking, an unmistakable symptom of decadence.

I mention the Tango and Maxixe (a somewhat sprightlier dance of similar character) here, because, although they have ceased to figure as such in the ball-rooms of to-day, many of the steps and movements used in these dances are still practised *under different names*, and their influence has doubtless been great, if not desirable, on the general tone of modern dancing.

THE FOX TROT.

This was originally a dance of very simple form, but it soon gathered steps and movements from all sources and of all kinds, until "Fox Trot" became merely *a name* to which dancers could fit whatever movements happened to take their passing fancy.

Whether the Fox Trot was initiated by a person named Fox, whether the step suggested the action of the animal, or the creature's movement suggested the step, and if so, which step, are questions into which we need not here inquire. A dance of such indefinite construction and so little distinctive rhythm is not likely to become historic. As for the dance itself, whether it is good or bad, graceful or disgraceful, virile or decadent, depends entirely on the tastes and inclinations of those taking part in it.

The main distinguishing feature of the Fox Trot in its original form was the alternation of slow with rapid movements in common time, generally two bars of each.

The man should proceed as follows :—

Hold the lady before you so that each looks over the other's right shoulder, and take four rather long gliding steps, rising and falling on the sole of the foot in finishing the action so that *each step*

occupies two counts; that is two bars for the four steps, the lady moving backwards.

Now make eight rather quick walking steps—*pas marches*—each of only one count, to occupy the next two bars, making four in all to the half cadence.

Or you may vary the movement by making the *chassé à trois pas*, as explained in the "Two Step," for the second two bars, either forward, at angles, or in turning.

Another variation is the side step. This should really be a *pas de bourrée*, but it is generally done after the manner of the old Schottische, with a rise and fall instead of a hop at the fourth count, to mark the measure and enable one to repeat the step in the opposite direction. Four of these side steps, which should be taken at an angle of forty-five degrees from the line of direction, occupy four bars of the music. The remaining four may be waltzed, or the *chassé* may be introduced.

A more artistic way of doing the side step, but also more difficult, is for the man to cross his left foot before or even a little over his right—remembering that in *crossed positions his toes should point towards each other*. Thus he moves to his right—left, right, left—crossed, apart, crossed—and rises on the left to repeat the step the opposite way. In this figure the lady begins by crossing her right foot *behind* the left, moving to her left, as in the Scotch reel.

This movement should not, of course, be attempted in a ball-room except by good dancers.

As many crossed steps were done in the Tango (generally very badly), some dancers are apt to confuse the above described figure with *El Ocho Argentino*, but it is not the same, as the latter consisted of a *long single crossing*, as it were, with much body squirming, and also another movement. The step familiarly known as the "twinkle," was often done after the manner of the Tango *El Corte*, but its practice became such a nuisance to other dancers, that it was voted "bad form" in the ball-room.

If you wish to be considered a person of good taste, let me urge you very strongly to avoid what is known as "dipping" in any of these dances, also the "pump handle"

arm action, shaking the shoulders, and, above all, swaying the hips from side to side. They are all vulgar practices that tend to bring dancing into discredit. It is, however, quite permissible and "good style" to introduce *bona fide* waltz steps at any juncture; indeed, if you do not like the ordinary Fox Trot, there is no reason why you should not substitute one of the "waltz variations" that I shall presently describe. If you acquire the true rhythmic feeling of the waltz, to dance it in four time measure will not trouble you.

THE "BOSTON" AND THE "HESITATION WALTZ."

Just now I described the Tango and the Maxixe Brésilienne as alien dances, not on account of their foreign origin—for the Waltz is also of foreign origin, evolved from the Italian Volta—but because their insinuating, voluptuous movements are altogether alien to the spirit and traditions of a people whose national dances include such virile specimens as the Hornpipe, the Reel, and Sir Roger de Coverley. The Tango is not, of course, alien to the traditions of a people whose national dances include the Fandango and its still more suggestive prototype the Chica, but the British Mock Tango, if I may be permitted to borrow a phrase of Burke's, merely exhibited "all the contortions of the Sibyl without the inspiration." It had, in fact, no *raison d'être* in our lists of dances.

The so-called "Boston" and "Hesitation," although by no means of British origin, are not characteristically alien. But, as already stated, they are parasitic. This I say not necessarily by way of disparagement, but simply because they have no independent existence. They grow out of the waltz, so to speak, and depend for sustenance on the traditional beauty and popularity of that dance. Clearly, if there

were no waltz there could be no "Boston" and no "Hesitation" waltzes.

The aspects of the so-called "Boston" are truly Protean. It is a *name* by which almost every possible variation and in many cases distortion of the genuine waltz has been known. Thirty years since it was a long slide and a turn on each foot. About ten years later it took the form of an elongated running movement—at least so it was danced in Paris. The term has been used for a dipping action of the knee, and also for reversing. Then, during the decade preceding the war its phases were more varied than ever. It was by turns a smooth zigzag movement, a long rectilinear movement, a slow not ungraceful gliding movement, and also a quick running movement. All these and many more variations have been called the "Boston." Now the *name* at least appears to be having a well-earned rest.

The most usual manner of holding one's partner in the "Boston" is, or was, the hip-to-hip position, each facing the opposite direction.

The man begins with his left foot and makes two forward waltz steps, the second with his right in slightly turning, so that he does the third and fourth steps at angles in a rearward direction, thus making a zigzag track, turning a little to right and left alternately. Each of these waltz steps, which I will explain in my next chapter, may occupy one or two bars at pleasure in the "Boston." If two bars are chosen, the second or unaccented action of the foot will fall on the first beat of the second bar, which, unless the dancer be an expert waltzer, gives the impression of dancing against the rhythm of the music.

Of course in dancing the "Boston," at any juncture, a return to the rotary waltz might be made; but doubtless the difficulty which many men, for want of proper instruction, experience in bringing their partners round, accounts for the popularity of expedients in which they are only required to make a half turn, as it were, in each direction.



Position at Starting.

Turn Partner to resume.
Waltz Variations, Third Figure.

Rotary Position.

To face page 144.

The name "Hesitation" was, as it appears to me, a somewhat unfortunate one by which to describe a mode of waltzing. It is so very suggestive of incompetence. All beginners and all bad waltzers "hesitate" more or less in their manner of procedure. The term, however, as regards the original American form of the dance, simply implied that there was a slight pause in taking the step from which the dance derived its name—that the movement was made in what appeared to be a faltering manner. Unfortunately here, as in the case of the "Boston," the versions of the so-called "Hesitation Waltz" that have been imparted and practised are so many, so various, and in some cases so utterly preposterous (as, for instance, when the man is taught to begin with his *right foot*, and stop dead at each alternate bar always on his left), that I think it will be better for our purpose to ignore the word "Hesitation" and describe some really graceful figures merely as:—

WALTZ VARIATIONS.

First Figure. Take the lady by the waist as shown in the plate, holding her not too closely, and together face the direction in which you intend dancing, but look a little towards each other. Your left and the lady's right arm should be extended and slightly rounded to avoid any appearance of stiffness.

Starting thus, each dancer slides the *outside* foot forward at the first count, dwells on the second count, meanwhile bringing the *inside* foot round, and at the third count points it downward in front, *toe towards partner's toe*, whilst rising and falling on the heel of the outside or supporting foot to mark the triple measure of the music.

Without pause, at the first count of the next bar, continue sliding the inside or pointed foot forward, and rest thereon while the outside foot is carried round beyond it, and *pointed outwards* at the third count when you rise and fall on the heel of the *inside* or supporting foot to mark the rhythm.

These steps may be continued *ad lib.*, but if the rhythm of the waltz

L

be regular and well accented, you will find it better to change the movement at each half or full cadence, and turn as in the ordinary waltz during the next corresponding number of bars.

Second Figure. Hold your partner in the hip-to-hip position as shown by the middle group on the plate, and take two forward steps each of three counts as already described, the lady meanwhile moving backward. At the sixth count twist completely round on your *right foot*, simultaneously turning the lady, who twists on her *left foot* as you draw her round with your right arm, and also impel her a little with your left arm, till your relative positions are exactly reversed, and your left hip is against her right.

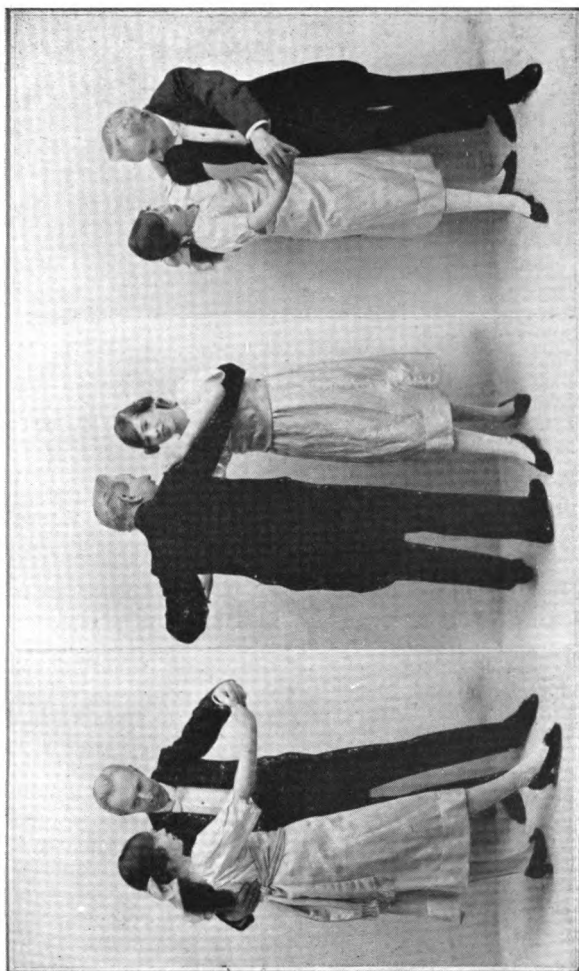
In this position step back with your left foot for the third bar, marking the rhythm by rising and falling on the heel as before. Again step backward for the fourth bar, this time with the right foot, and at the sixth count again turn completely round on your right foot (lady's left) to resume your former positions.

This movement you may continue as many times as you like, changing the relative positions at *each alternate or every fourth* bar, according to your fancy; after which you can resume the ordinary waltz movement at pleasure. Of course a great deal depends on the man's skill in using his arms. There should be no hiatus in the turning movement or the effect of the figure will be utterly destroyed. If done smoothly and well the simultaneous turn has a very neat appearance.

Third Figure. The initial position of the partners in this figure is similar to one used in the Brazilian Maxixe. It was also used in the original waltz, in the Allemande more than two hundred years since, and by the Dancers of Pompeii at least two thousand years ago. Some people may consider this figure more suitable for theatrical than ball-room dancing. Perhaps it is, but I am writing for professional as well as for private pupils. In any case the figure is quite refined, if done properly, and a good one to practise.

Starting from the position shown in the plate, with the lady a little before you so that both face the way you are moving, make three of the simple waltz movements already described—*left*, two, three, *right*, two, three, *left*, two, three. Then, for the fourth bar, while balancing on your *right foot*, turn the lady *inwards* under your right arm, as shown by the central group—she being on her *left foot*. Release her hands, taking her right in your left, whilst her left falls lightly on your shoulder ready to resume the rotary waltz during the next four bars.

By way of variety, instead of turning the lady inwards towards your-



Position at Starting.

"Boston" or Hip-to-Hip Position.
Waltz Variations, First and Second Figures.

Correct Position for Feet and Arm

To face page 146.

self, you may turn her *outwards*, in which case the turning will be made principally while you are on your left foot and the lady on her right. But in all these movements the rhythmic action and alternation of the feet must *never for an instant cease*, or you will find yourself out of step with your partner and out of time with the music.

The above figures are all comparatively easy when done with the simple step described, but it is possible to employ the proper triple waltz step throughout. In this case the movements become more exhilarating and the effect is more brilliant. The figures, however, can only be satisfactorily accomplished thus by expert waltzers skilled in the management of their arms. Readers who desire to shine as ornamental waltzers should study carefully the "Axioms of Gracefulness" in the earlier portion of the book.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WALTZ.

WE now come to the consideration of a dance that will probably possess greater attraction for the majority of readers than any other described in these pages. For this reason I have decided to devote to it a separate chapter; but should the impatient pupil on opening the book be tempted to turn at once to the present description, without previously studying the matter contained in the earlier pages, he will certainly not be acting wisely; for therein, when explaining the nature of the various steps and movements, I have given special exercises, by the practice of which a pupil's progress in waltzing will be greatly facilitated. Moreover, it is a physical impossibility that any one can

become a good waltzer until the muscles of his limbs have been brought into the requisite condition for performing the movements of the dance. It not unfrequently happens that a man may know the steps of the waltz, and be able to perform them accurately in their proper sequence, and yet not be able to waltz at all with a partner, or with any degree of freedom by himself; for the simple reason that he has not acquired the correct muscular action of the limbs, and the necessary synchronous movements of the various parts of the body.

It is not absolutely essential that the pupil should have acquired the other drawing-room dances before attempting the waltz, though it is better in many respects to begin with the easiest. But it is a *sine quâ non* that whoever would profit by the present description should first have made himself acquainted with the five positions, and have practised all the simple steps and exercises, especially the flexions, balancings, and turnings, on one and both feet.

The history of the waltz, its evolution from the volta, its introduction and development from its primitive to its present perfected form, are matters that do not properly belong to the present section, and are more appropriately treated of in my historical treatise on the subject. The immediate aim of the writer is simply to give practical instruction by the only means here available—his pen and the accompanying illustrations.

It has been already hinted that pupils, as a rule, learn to dance much more readily by the employment of the imitative faculties than they do by attending to theoretical explanations of movements, and it follows that the reader will do well in the first place to carefully observe the positions of the young ladies who are here represented performing the six steps of the waltz. I may mention that each girl is

accounted an excellent waltzer, and that the positions have been taken naturally and progressively as in ordinary dancing.

Should the pupil feel inclined to ask what particular waltz is here represented, I would reply that it is the waltz all people dance who waltz perfectly, whether consciously or unconsciously. Whatever sequence of steps they may have been taught, their feet must necessarily fall into positions more or less closely resembling these before they can waltz really well. The reader may at once disembarass his mind of the still somewhat prevalent notion that there is a variety of waltzes. Let us admit that there may be, and indeed are, various ways in which the steps of the waltz can be described on paper, or explained by word of mouth; but in the nature of things there can only be one way in which the limbs will act consistently with all the requirements of perfection in waltzing.

Space does not permit of my entering into details concerning the evolution of the modern waltz; but very briefly I may point out that in it the more pleasing qualities of various former movements have been blended. These movements were imperfect in themselves, but whatever was worthless in them has been discarded, while whatever was found to be best has been retained. Thus the old *trois temps*, in which three steps, each of equal duration, were taken to a bar, was found to be exceedingly monotonous, although not wanting in a certain degree of stateliness; while the *deux temps*—very erroneously so-called—in which two movements only were taken to a bar, was more lively and exhilarating, but altogether wanting in dignity. This, however, was owing to the fact that the glide and *chassé* constituting the step were taken sideways, a proceeding which rendered impossible the graceful twinkling, playing

in and out movement of the feet, which properly belongs to the waltz. The great improvement in the general style of waltzing which the introduction of the two-step waltz eventually effected, was the substitution of the pleasing dactylic rhythm for the old molossus, in which the partners appeared to be continually running around one another, without any reciprocal action whatever.

If to the six steps of the *trois temps* we add a slight rearward sliding action of the left foot in the turning, accompanied by the proper muscular action of the limb, and prolong the first step, as regards duration of time, to occupy half the second interval of the bar, we shall have a waltz movement which combines the sprightliness of the *deux temps chassé* with the more correct action of the feet in the original waltz. And if we dance this improved and indeed perfect waltz with due regard to those unalterable dynamical laws which regulate the motions of all bodies, sentient as well as inert, we shall reach the perfection of *terre à terre*, rotary movement. But before the pupil can arrive at this stage, there is much for him to learn besides the mere sequence of steps, which in reality are to waltzing just what the notes are to a musical composition. These, like the waltz steps, must of course be correct; but you may play them in a variety of ways. You may put the stress on one or the other of them, or the time and accent may be correct, and yet the right feeling and expression may be wanting. But in waltzing there is more than step, time, accent, and expression to consider. It is not only necessary that every part of the individual body should move in the most perfect accord one with the other, but in waltzing with a partner it is essential that the movements of one dancer should be in perfect harmony and coincidence with the corresponding movements of the other dancer; that they should become

as one body for the time being, and as such be affected by the action of gravitation and other physical forces.

If facility of movement be not spontaneously acquired, as it often is, due consideration must be given to all these matters before the pupil can attain perfection in waltzing. I am now pointing them out for the benefit of those readers—and I dare say they are many—who having perhaps already taken a number of lessons in waltzing of some teacher who directs their attention only to the position and movement of the feet, are surprised to find that they do not make progress.

However, we will now begin our lesson in earnest; and as I will suppose that you have been through the former part of the book, and have attained some freedom in the use of your limbs, and understand the positions employed in dancing, we will at once proceed to learn the steps and figure of the waltz.

The waltz is a dance consisting of six distinct steps or movements of the feet, three of which steps are taken to one bar of the music.

Three of these steps are taken in a direction to the rear of one's own body in turning, and three are taken in a direction in advance of one's own body in turning.

The figure of the waltz, or track taken by the individual dancer, is similar to that which would be traced by a point on the circumference of a moving circle, and it is principally during the three steps taken in advance of one's body that progressive movement is made. The feet in their passage over the floor describe the curve geometrically known as the cycloid. The action of the body during the three steps taken rearward is more particularly rotary.

Owing to the nature of the movement when danced by couples, the centre of rotation is not fixed, as it were, exactly midway between the partners, but shifts alternately a little

nearer, first to one dancer and then to the other, approaching always him or her who is taking the rearward and rotary steps. Thus the revolutions become eccentric. This, however, only in the slightest possible degree; and if anything the man should generally appear to be turning his partner round him rather than have the undignified appearance of running around her.

Clearly, if there were no progressive motion in waltzing, and if the centre of rotation were situated exactly midway between the partners, they would simply revolve without moving from the spot where they started.

The progressive movement is brought about by a slight muscular effort generally, and especially by the action of the lower limbs. The rotary movement in perfect waltzing should result rather from the action of the upper part of the body, and the influence exerted by the centrifugal force and inertia, after the necessary impetus have been obtained, than from conscious muscular effort on the part of the dancers.

But in learning to take the steps of the waltz slowly and alone, we must, for the time being, appear to lose sight of those natural influences which are brought to bear upon a couple of waltzers moving rapidly; for the simple reason that such influences will not be present.

In order to make my instructions as concise as possible, I will divide the steps of the waltz into two groupings, each of three, as shown in the plates; calling one group the forward, and one the rearward turn. In actual dancing the lady begins with the forward movement and the gentleman with the rearward or rotary movement, and if they waltz well, the feet of the one dancer will appear to be continually playing in and out of and between the feet of the other dancer.



Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.
Steps of the Waltz.

Fig. 3.

Back to face page 152.

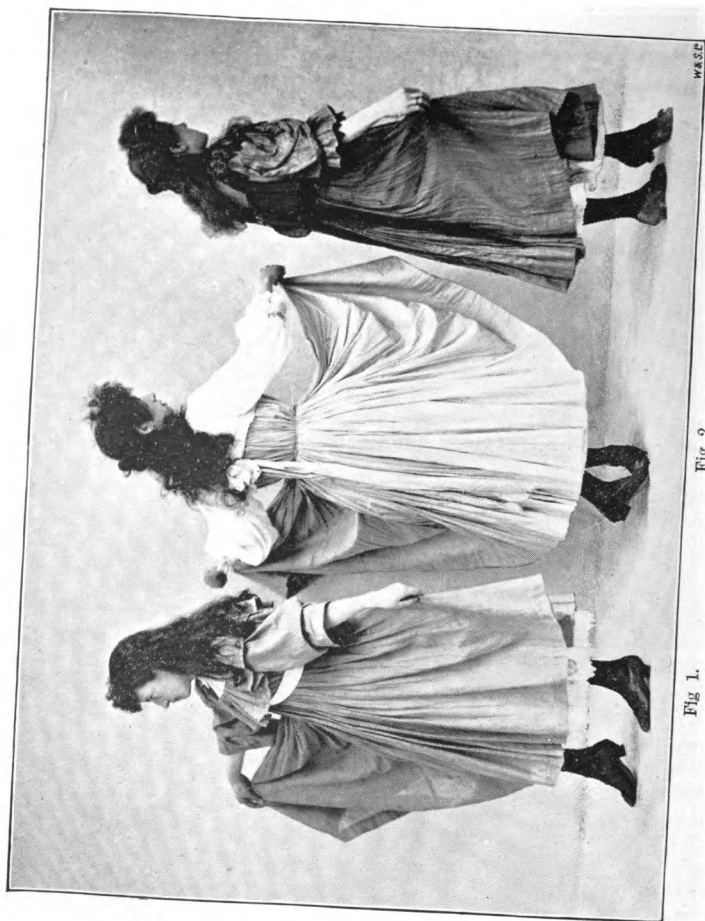


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Steps of the Waltz.

Fig. 3.

Back to face page 153.

FORWARD STEPS.—Starting from the position shown in Fig. 3, the last on the lower plate :—

One : Slide the right foot to the fourth position directly in front of the left, and in completing the slide, transfer the balance of the body entirely to the right leg (see upper plate, Fig. 1). Dwell on this step.

Two : Let the toe of the left foot skim *very lightly* over the floor till it reaches the position shown in Fig. 2.

Three : Without perceptibly transferring the balance to the left leg, move the right foot by a muscular flexion and contraction of the limb (as employed in leaping, but without the upward impulse of the foot), and in doing so twist the foot round till it points as shown in Fig. 3.

This completes the forward movement, in which it will be seen that the foot in making each step is *always placed in advance* of the one with which the preceding step was taken.

In the next three steps, the action of the limbs is changed, as the foot in taking each successive step is *always placed behind* the one with which the preceding step was taken.

REARWARD STEPS.—Starting from the position shown in Fig. 3 of the upper plate :—

- *One* : Continuing to turn on the sole of the right foot, let the left foot slide over the floor describing an arc till it reaches the *intermediate rearward position*, or midway between the *second* and *fourth*. Then transfer the balance to the left leg, as shown in Fig. 1, lower plate.

Two : Bring the right foot lightly behind the left at right angles to it, in the *third* or *fifth position*, the toe only resting on the floor, as shown in Fig. 2.

Three : Without moving the right toe from its position on the floor, turn on the sole of the left foot, and in doing so draw it a little backward behind the right heel, which is simultaneously turned forward to the left, as the knee turns outward. This will bring the feet to the position shown in Fig. 3. The little backward slide of the left foot, which is of the greatest assistance in waltzing, may be accomplished by a slight flexion and sudden tension of the limb, together with an impulse obtainable by pressing the right toe against the ground. This, however, must be done without any transfer of balance, and the foot need not move more than about an inch.

Now you can learn whichever group of steps you like first; but if you are a male dancer you must, in waltzing with a partner, always begin with those last described, forming the rearward turn. If you remember the simple fact that three steps are taken forward, as it were, and three backward, all in turning, it will go a long way to prevent your getting into a muddle when practising them.

Note well that the reason I have recommended the little backward slide in the last of the rearward steps is because in dancing with a partner one does not turn on one's own axis, as when dancing alone. Inattention to, or ignorance of this sufficiently obvious fact, is often the cause of a pupil's non-success. Some teachers very unwisely try to induce their pupils to waltz in precisely the same manner when dancing with a partner as they do when waltzing by themselves. But clearly this is a mistake. The absurd old-fashioned conventional notion that each partner should move independently of the other, so that at any given moment they could be suddenly separated, without experiencing any tendency to fall in opposite directions, has long since happily given place to the more natural and scientific principle that the partners should move as if, for the time being, they actually formed one body, of which the centres of gravity and revolution were situated somewhere *between them*. This I have already pointed out; but it is evident that in waltzing alone the centre of gravity of a dancer, though its position may shift slightly with each movement of his body, must always remain somewhere within the area of the base formed by his own feet. This fact alone will necessarily tend to make a considerable difference in his manner of holding himself. Moreover, as I have explained, a person waltzing by himself turns in certain steps directly

on his own axis, which of course he should not do in dancing with a partner.

Subject to the modifications above alluded to, which would apply equally to any conceivable system of taking the steps, that sequence of movements which I have endeavoured to describe, is the one most perfectly compatible with grace of action and physical requirements. Moreover, it is the one now imparted by all the principal teachers of dancing. Professional circumstances have given me the opportunity of trying the waltz with most of the leading lady teachers—mind, I do not mean teachers who come for technical instruction, but those who are already thoroughly acquainted with the art—and my experience has been that they all dance the waltz personally in much the same manner. Some teachers, I know, impart the steps differently; but that is because they do not understand the principles of human mechanism, and the nature of those physical forces which operate on the dancers. I have found that some who had an altogether incorrect notion of imparting the waltz to others, nevertheless waltzed exceedingly well themselves. This may seem strange, but the reason is that the constant practice in dancing had brought about considerable freedom of action in their limbs, and when in rapid waltzing, as is always the case, the movements of their feet were no longer immediately controlled by conscious volition, they would automatically fall into the true positions. Yet all the while the dancers imagined they were taking the steps precisely as they taught others to take them.

Now the reason why so many bad waltzers, however much they may try, are unable to become good ones, is because, having at the outset received imperfect instruction, they continue to make conscious efforts to place their feet in

positions which are altogether incompatible with the true principles of waltzing.

Remember that although it is absolutely essential that a good teacher of the waltz should be personally a good waltzer, it does not by any means follow that a teacher who is personally a good waltzer must necessarily be also a good teacher. There is a vast difference between being able to do a thing oneself, and being able to explain to others how it should be done. I have said that a great deal may be accomplished through the faculty of imitation; but it requires very careful analysis on the part of the teacher to make the movements sufficiently slowly and emphasize their peculiarities so that the pupil may see clearly what he or she is required to imitate.

In commencing to waltz with a partner, the gentleman begins by moving his shoulder round, so that in taking his first step, his back is turned toward the direction in which he is dancing, and in doing this he must draw slightly away from the lady, as already advised. If he neglects to do this, and throws his chest forward, he will be acting in direct opposition to physical requirements (see Axiom IV.), and not only will his own movements appear ungraceful, but the lady will feel that she is not being well supported. When properly executed, this movement on the man's part gives the initial momentum, and requires no perceptible muscular effort, because the necessary power to draw his partner round him may easily be obtained by his throwing his own centre of gravity a little outside the base on which he stands, and so utilizing the weight of his body.

This does not cause him to fall over, because meanwhile he is balanced by the resistance of his partner in the opposite direction; and in this way a kind of unification is

brought about, the man's right arm forming the connecting link ; and the centre of gravity of the combined body is situated between the dancers above the base formed by the two feet, one belonging to each, upon which they are balancing at any given juncture.

The lady should not advance her right foot in commencing, until her partner draws her forward, as he takes his first rearward step. She should always offer a slight resistance at the waist, drawing away from her partner in turning, especially in taking the rearward steps ; but of course not sufficiently to make the gentleman's arm ache. Thus the waltzers make a kind of reciprocal movement, alternately drawing slightly away as they turn during the rearward steps.

To remember this will be of invaluable assistance to a man who has the misfortune to find himself dancing with a particularly bulky or heavy partner. Instead of struggling to bring the lady round by a muscular effort of his right arm, he should simply throw his balance a little further over his left foot, so that he would actually fall in that direction if he had not a partner. In this way he conserves his own muscular energy, and simply uses his bodily weight in bringing the fair one round. As soon as he finds she is directly in front of him, he should suddenly—but not *too* suddenly—release the tension of his arm. This causes his partner to make an involuntary reactionary movement, which will bring him round to his former position without any effort whatever on his own part.

Do not, my male reader, imagine that in making these suggestions I am urging you to act ungallantly towards the lady. Quite on the contrary ; such little manoeuvres on the part of the man will prove of quite as much assistance to his heavy partner as to himself. But he must be particularly cautious in commencing his dynamical experiments that he

does not lose control over his own movements, because the influence which his partner will exert will be proportionate to the velocity with which she is waltzing, multiplied by her weight ; and if he does not offer the requisite resistance, or releases the tension of his arm too suddenly, he may chance to find himself beside her on the floor.

The fact has, I dare say, frequently come under the reader's notice, that a person weighing a good many stones will often appear to dance more lightly than a slim person who would weigh considerably less if balanced in a scale. The reason is this : Stout people have generally an elastic flexible action of the limbs, perhaps partly induced by consciousness that they weigh a good deal, and the intuitive notion that in order to become, or at least to appear light, they must rise as much as possible on their toes in dancing. Now, as I have already insisted, in those dances where the foot actually leaves the ground, lightness is acquired by rising from and again falling on to the toes, and depends greatly on the elasticity of the instep. But in waltzing, seeing that the feet never leave the floor, lightness of action does not depend upon rising on the toes. I am not advocating flat-footed waltzing, which is very ugly ; I am merely stating a fact. *Lightness in waltzing depends solely upon the proper adjustment of balance and the avoidance of friction when the foot slides over the floor.* Nevertheless, the upward springy tendency of movement which stout people usually acquire, as it were intuitively, is invaluable in waltzing, because in combination with the greater facility of balance, which they also generally possess, it enables them to move their feet over the floor with less friction than is frequently noticeable in the gliding movements of slimmer dancers.

If you are anxious to become a light waltzer, broadly speaking, you should let the balance of the body remain

entirely on the right leg during the forward movement, after the foot has reached its destination in the first step, and entirely on the left leg after the foot has been slid round and backward in the rearward turn ; for just in proportion as your foot sticks to the floor, or makes friction in its passage across it, so will you appear heavy to your partner. All this, however, you should have already learnt in studying the earlier chapters.

As regards the rhythm, remember that the third step immediately follows the second, but the second does not so quickly follow the first, which should always be strongly accented and dwelt upon. In musical terms the first step occupies exactly the duration of a dotted crotchet, the second of a quaver, and the third of a crotchet ; but if you say the word *Won-der-ful* emphatically, the relation of the syllables will exactly coincide with that of the three steps of the waltz, both as regards accent and duration of time.

To waltz forward in a direct line.

One : Slide the right foot to the *fourth position* immediately in front of the left, and, in finishing the slide, transfer the balance entirely to the right leg.

Two : Let the left leg swing by its natural pendulum action from the hip joint, describing a slight curve till the toe comes into the *fourth position* before the right foot.

Three : Bring the right foot up behind the left, chiefly by a muscular flexion and tension of the limb. Remember that this third movement instantly follows the second, and that the balance must be retained solely on the right leg.

Repeat this with the left foot, *which is already in front*. Slide it forward to the *fourth position*, then let the right swing beyond it, and lastly bring up the left behind, *keeping the balance entirely on it*, so that you have the right limb free and ready to recommence the forward step.

Technically, the forward step in waltzing is composed of a

demi glissé, a pas glissé entière, sans changement de point, and a bourrée, or closing up step.

Some teachers impart a forward step founded on the *pas de bourrée emboîté*, in which the right foot is advanced, the left closed behind, and the right again advanced; the rear foot being brought forward in recommencing the step. In this way each bar ends with an open position of the feet, and the next bar begins with a *pas glissé entière*, or slide from one open position to another open position. I am wholly at a loss to understand how any teacher, pretending to possess a technical knowledge of dancing, can advocate the employment of a step so particularly ill-adapted to the waltz rhythm. There is no objection whatever to the introduction of such a step in a dance like the minuet, although of course it is not the real minuet step; but it is adapted to the minuet, because the music of that dance has an accent on the second beat, and the feet do not slide over the ground as in the waltz. But if employed in waltzing the step degenerates into an undignified shuffle, and is wholly out of keeping with the character of the dance. The only people who adopt it are those who are unacquainted with, or find themselves unable to accomplish, the real forward waltz step, as here explained, which, although more difficult to learn, is much easier to dance when once acquired, and is infinitely more *graceful and correct*. Candidly speaking, the "masher crawl," ridiculous as it appeared, would be less open to objection in some respects than is the closing of the rear foot in the *second count*.

Remember, then, if you wish your forward movement in waltzing to appear graceful and dignified, it is the second or light step that must be taken in advance, while the foot in the *third step* is closed to the *third rearward position*. Once having satisfactorily accomplished this method of waltzing

in a line, you are not likely to ever adopt any other. I am pleased to find that this step is now adopted by all the principal teachers of the United Kingdom and America.

The rearward step in a direct line.

One: Slide the left foot backward to the *fourth position*, and in finishing the step transfer the balance to the left leg.

Two: Let the right leg swing by its natural pendulum action till it reaches the *fourth position* behind, the toe only very lightly touching the floor.

Three: Close the left foot, by muscular flexion and tension of the limb, to the *third position* before the right, without transfer of balance, so that the right foot is left free to slide further backward to the *fourth position* in commencing the next bar. After this, the left limb swings behind, and the right foot is closed in front, the left being kept free to repeat the movement.

If these rectilineal steps are taken accurately, the feet of the dancers are continually forming parallelograms, the one partner's foot advancing as the other's recedes. The direction of the figure changes with each alternate bar and when well executed, it has a very artistic effect.

REVERSING.

With the question as to whether turning in the contrary direction is or is not considered good form in certain coteries of society at the present time, I do not here purpose to concern myself. It is simply a matter of custom. A couple certainly would not evince good taste who persisted in reversing if such a proceeding were considered out of order among those with whom they were dancing; but as a matter of art, and even of taste *per se*, no reasonable objection can be made to the practice, provided it be accomplished without causing annoyance or inconvenience to other

M

dancers. I would particularly caution the pupil not to attempt reversing in public until he has thoroughly mastered the art in private, and to remember always that the ball-room is not a place in which to learn to dance, but only a place in which to practise what has already been perfectly acquired.

I will now proceed to give a few hints that will be found useful to those who wish to make themselves proficient in this accomplishment.

First, it is comparatively easy for a lady to reverse if she will but remember to put her left foot forward instead of backward at the right juncture, and not break the sequence of steps and successive alternations of balance. Thus, if she commences to dance with her right foot, the first step of the next bar will be taken with her left foot, and so on alternately to the end of the waltz, even if the course of direction were changed fifty times.

The same applies to the man. He begins with his left foot; the first step in the next bar is taken with his right foot, the first of the succeeding bar with his left again, and so on to the end of the waltz, no matter how many times he may change the course of direction.

But it is necessary in commencing to reverse, that his left foot should go forward, and it is proper that he should put it *between the feet of his partner*, whom he meanwhile impels to the left by a change in the muscular action of his right arm.

I say that it is proper to slide the left foot between the partner's feet in reversing, because although it may be freely admitted that it is possible to reverse while the relative position of the partners shall remain the same as in waltzing the ordinary way, such a mode of procedure is extremely inartistic and ill-adapted to the natural action of

the limbs. In this case the gentleman's forward step would be taken on the outer side of the lady's right foot, while in the second or swinging step his foot would pass between hers. Also in the rearward step his right foot would again come between hers. As these movements cannot possibly be accomplished without holding the partner somewhat closely, it will be seen that other than artistic objections might be made against this manner of reversing. But waiving the question of propriety as irrelevant to the present chapter, and confining ourselves to the æsthetic and scientific aspects of the movement, I will endeavour to show that a change in the action of the feet involves a change in the relative position of the limbs; otherwise the action must in a measure be imperfect. Now, if when turning in the opposite direction it were customary to place the left arm to the lady's waist, and take her right hand in yours, then the action of the body and limbs in reversing would be the exact counterpart of their action in the ordinary method of rotation, and as such it would be consistent and perfect. But this would involve passing the lady over to the left side before taking the first forward step.¹

Clearly then, the nearer our actions correspond inversely with those employed in the ordinary method of turning, the more perfect will our system of reversing be; therefore, as the right foot goes between the feet of the partner in the first ordinary progressive step, so the left foot ought to go between in the first progressive reversing step. This of course involves a slight alteration in the relative position of the partners; but this alteration of position can, as I have already pointed out, be easily effected by a movement of the gentleman's right arm, which I will now try to explain.

¹ The various positions of the feet in reversing alone, may be seen by holding the illustrations already given before a mirror.

Hitherto, in waltzing the ordinary way, he has been drawing his partner around him, and in so doing has employed what are termed the flexor muscles of his arm; but now, when he wishes to reverse, he should make an effort to impel the lady a little to the left, and keep her in that position so long as he continues reversing.¹ And this he effects by bringing into play the extensor muscles, and keeping the angle which his now rigid arm makes with his chest as acute as possible. This change in the muscular action of the man's right arm is the means by which his partner is made aware of his intention to change the course of direction.

Now, if we consider how muscular action results from an impulse of the will conveyed through the agency of the nerves, we shall discover how it is that any indecision on the man's part is inimical to success in reversing. He thinks, "Now I will try the reverse;" then, dubious about a successful issue, he wavers in his resolution. An erratic action of his arm results, and the lady's movements, instead of being duly controlled, as they should be, are only partially influenced, sufficiently perhaps to cause her to deviate from the track that has already been followed, but not sufficiently to indicate a new direction.

Those of my readers who ride on horseback, or who are fond of driving, are aware how very little muscular effort is necessary to turn the animal's head in the required direction, and keep him in the right track, *provided the will of the driver be resolute*; but once let any uncertainty arise in

¹ N.B.—It must be distinctly understood that this slight change of position *only affects the lower part of the body*. The lady continues to look in the same direction as when waltzing the ordinary way, and the faces of the partners must not cross. The gentleman's left foot, however, should be advanced in the *fourth crossed position*, which enables him to get it easily between the feet of his partner.

your own mind about the direction you wish to take, and you will notice that the effect of your indecision upon the horse is far from satisfactory—especially if there be much vehicular traffic.

Now, without wishing to appear discourteous, I am constrained to observe that there is a certain analogy between the act of driving a horse through a crowded thoroughfare and of leading a lady through a thronged ball-room. If you intend to reverse, it is not of much more assistance to tell your fair partner what you are about to do, than it would be to tell your horse which way you wanted him to go. The lady must obey the indication of your arm just as the horse obeys the indication of the rein, and what is really required in either case is *decision of purpose*. This decision, however, must be in no wise akin to obstinacy; certainly there must be no application of misdirected strength. The movements should be gentle, but firm—the decision of action resulting from the knowledge that what you are doing is absolutely correct.

The better plan is for the gentleman to always make sure that his partner is ready to reverse before he attempts to do so himself, and to effect this the alteration of muscular action in the right arm must not be made too suddenly; it must be brought about so that the lady is gradually prepared for some change of direction, and then the course must be clearly indicated. Thus, if she is to go backward in a direct line, the arm will be kept fully extended directly in front, accompanied by a very slight forward pressure of the wrist; while if she is to reverse, she will feel herself impelled further over to the left, so that her right foot will come outside the gentleman's left foot as he advances it between hers.

Another valuable point is to greatly modify all movements

before attempting to reverse. By stopping almost still during the two previous bars, and taking the steps merely as if executing a *balance* first to the left, then to the right, before advancing the left foot—being careful not to break the continuity of action, or proper alternation of balance—you may to a considerable extent overcome the effects of inertia. This alone is a very important consideration, but there is another advantage, if anything still greater, which the practice gives. It is, that instead of wasting muscular energy on your own movements, you are conserving it towards directing the movements of your partner.

I have not hitherto said anything about the employment of the man's left arm in reversing, because the practice of indicating change of direction with this arm is a very feeble practice. There are some misguided people who imagine that if the partners put the palms of their hands together and stick their arms out (see plate "no style"), it gives them an immense advantage in steering. Well, so it does in a sense! It causes all other dancers to get out of their way. But if every one held his arm in this manner when dancing, there would soon have to be a special Ball-room Accidental Insurance Company started. Fortunately the majority of dancers have better sense and better taste than to adopt this ridiculous style.

A first-rate waltzer will be able to guide his partner entirely with his right arm; but at the same time it is perfectly legitimate, having once indicated the change of direction, to employ the left arm in slightly drawing the lady forward during your rotary steps when reversing. In this manner you will be able to make up for any deficiency in the impellent action of the right arm.

I should mention that you must be particularly careful to avoid any impulsive or precipitate action of the limbs in

reversing. If, for instance, you were to advance your left foot before you had satisfactorily prepared your partner for the alteration of position, it would inevitably come in contact with her foot. The reason so many men in waltzing, especially when reversing, find their feet continually coming against the toes of their partners, is because they do not give them sufficient latitude to move their feet freely, and because they are so concerned and occupied with the consideration of their own movements, that they omit altogether to prepare the lady beforehand for any change of direction that they intend to make.

If a man thoroughly understands the true system of reversing, and knows something of the principles of human mechanism, he can make a partner reverse almost immediately, even if she has never tried to do so before; because he can bring controlling influences to bear upon her movements, so that she will feel instinctively compelled to put her left foot forward when such action is required. This he accomplishes by a combination of synchronous and accordant movements, but especially by an upward action of his wrist and fore-arm against the left scapula, and a simultaneous drawing back of his own shoulder. The fact is, an influence brought to bear upon any one part of the body will indirectly affect other parts, and a result may be frequently thus attained of which the person influenced is himself or herself altogether unconscious. Personally, I have found that it is quite possible to teach a pupil to waltz, and to waltz well too, without so much as uttering a single word of explanation, or even showing the steps. This, of course, is not the proper *modus operandi* to adopt in giving lessons. It has merely been tried experimentally to test the efficacy of certain muscular actions in bringing about a desired result. I have proved that it is of the greatest

advantage to a teacher if he makes some study of the anatomical structure of the human frame, and of the influences by which our movements are regulated. Such study, combined of course with practical experience, will enable a teacher of dancing to perceive at once what special difficulties beset the individual pupil. He will discover in what particular part of the body the muscular action is imperfect or out of accord with the rest, and having done so, he may, by some specially adapted exercise, which causes the pupil to *feel* what the proper action should be, succeed within the space of a few minutes in obtaining a result that would not be obtained by years of misdirected practice, or indeed by ordinary instruction on conventional lines.

I will bring this chapter to a conclusion with a description of a new dance, in arranging which it has been my endeavour to unite something of the stateliness and elegance which characterized the old-time dances with the more lively movements of the modern waltz. It is called:

THE VERSA,

A new Valse Dance.

This dance, the name of which is derived from the Latin *versare*, to turn round, consists of two distinct and successively alternated parts. In the one part the hands of the dancers only are joined, and in the other their position is the same as in ordinary round dances. The movements are effective, but very easy, and any one who is able to dance and waltz well, will have no difficulty in satisfactorily accomplishing them with about an hour's practice.

One of the special advantages claimed for the Versa is that while all the pleasurable qualities of the waltz are

retained in the dance, an additional element of enjoyment is found in the alternation of rotary with rectilineal movement, which not only gives the charm of variety, but obviates that feeling of nausea which many people experience after much waltzing. The various and elegant positions assumed in performing the different parts of the *Versa*, when it is properly taught, should strongly recommend it to those parents who desire that their daughters should acquire an easy and graceful carriage.

The music¹ is in three-four time, and begins with a few bars of introduction, during which the partners promenade, as in an ordinary round dance, stopping opposite one another at convenient distances ready to begin the dance.

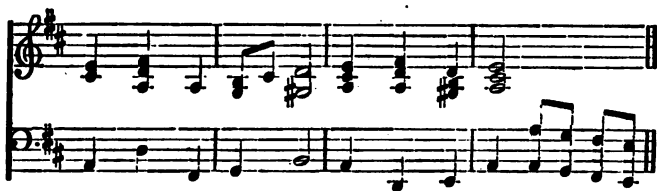
Now follow some chords, during which the hands are given across, as shown in the photograph, first the right hand, which is raised high, then the left, which is kept about level with the chest, so that the arms form as it were a frame through which the partners look at each other in turning.²

The music of this part, or *tour des mains*, is after the style of the minuet, with a decided accent on the second beat. There are sixteen bars to this part, of which the following eight will serve as a specimen of rhythm :—



¹ Published by Messrs. Francis, Day, and Hunter, by whose permission this description is given.

² If preferred, one hand only may be given.



Steps for the tour des mains, the same for both partners.

One: Slide the right foot to the *fourth crossed position*, as shown in the illustration, and in finishing the slide, transfer the balance to the right leg.

Two: Point the left toe lightly in the *second position*.

Three: Make a *quarter turn* on the sole of the right foot, *still keeping the balance thereon*. This will cause the left foot to be in the *fourth position* behind, and the partners will face just a quarter round.

Four, five, six: For the next bar, transfer the balance gradually to the left foot; then draw the right backward, closing it slowly to the *third position* in front of the left, with a graceful lingering action, and in doing this draw slightly away from your partner, but do not, on any account, lower the raised arm so as to cover the face.

Now slide the right foot again to the *fourth position* crossed, again point the left toe lightly in the *second position*, pivot another quarter round on the sole of the right foot, which will bring you to the position exactly opposite that whence you started, and once more close the right foot gracefully to the *third position* in front of the left.¹

This movement again done twice, that is, four times in all, will bring you to your original place and position. It occupies eight bars of the music—as much as the extract here given. There are, however, eight more bars of this part, during which the movement is repeated in the opposite direction. The last closing of the right foot should be made to the *first position* instead of the *third*, which enables the

¹ A popular and pleasing variation is to give the right hands only for the first eight bars and left hands only for the reverse turn, as in the minuet.



To face page 170.

The Versa.

left foot in commencing the reverse turn to pass freely across.

Now relinquish the right hand of your partner, raise the left high, and gracefully present the right underneath, so that your arms will appear just as they do in the plate, *if you look at it in a mirror*. For the reverse *tour des mains* :—

One : Slide the left foot to the *fourth position*, crossed in front of the right, and transfer the balance wholly to the left leg.

Two : Point the right foot very lightly in the *second position*.

Three : Make a *quarter turn* on the sole of the left foot, which action brings the right toe to the *fourth position* behind.

Four, five, six : Transfer the balance gradually to the right foot, and close the left with a graceful lingering slide to the *third position* in front of the right, still keeping the balance on the right leg.

This movement done four times, will once more bring you to your original place and position, occupying the remaining eight bars of this part of the music.

For the second part of the dance the music changes somewhat in character, and becomes livelier, thus :—



Steps for the round dance. The gentleman begins with his left foot, the lady with her right. For the gentleman :—

One: Holding the lady as for an ordinary waltz, but facing the line of direction, slide the left foot forward to the *fourth position*, and transfer the balance to the left leg, raising the right foot a little behind.

Two: Coupé dessous. That is, let the raised right foot drop boldly down in the place occupied by the left, which is simultaneously raised and extended, with the toe turned well downward, in front, so that in descending the right foot appears to pass under the left heel.

Three: Coupé dessus. That is, bring the raised left foot boldly down backward, so that in descending it passes over the toe of the right, which is at the same instant raised and pointed downward behind the left.

Four, five, six: For the next bar place the right foot softly down on the floor, in the *fourth rearward position*, and then close the left foot, with a slow, graceful sliding action, to the *third position* in front of the right, as in the former part of the dance. These steps on the whole are taken somewhat *en reculant*, or with a rearward inclination of the body. At the third count of the bar, let there be a slight rising movement on the right toe in turning, and then for the next two measures.

Make a single *tour de valse* of six steps in the ordinary position, as already explained. The gentleman must, however, not turn the body during the last step, but simply close the right foot by pivoting on the sole thereof, to the *third position* behind, so as to have the left foot in front ready to recommence the forward slide, resuming the position as shown in the plate.

The forward and backward *coups* and *tour de valse* occupy four bars, and as, with the repeat, there are thirty-two bars in this part, the movement is done eight times. After this there are again chords in the music, during which the hands are again given across, as in the photograph, and the first movement is repeated; thus the dance consists of successive alternations of the *tour des mains* and waltz movement.

The lady's step in the round dance is the exact counter-part of the gentleman's, she using the right foot where he uses the left, and *vice versa*. Her steps in the *tour de valse* are precisely the same as in ordinary waltzing.

The dancers in the plate are represented in fancy costume ; but this of course is not necessary for ordinary ball-room performance.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HIGHER CULTURE OF DANCING.

It is much to be regretted that the prevalence of customs which tend to degrade the practice of dancing may be in some measure attributable to the misguided action of teachers, in being over-anxious to secure and impart to their pupils what they believe to be the *latest style*, instead of endeavouring to ascertain and propagate only what is the *best style*—the most artistic, the most refined, the most elegant and courtly.

Only those teachers deserve to be included in the foremost rank who endeavour always, according to their power, to improve the national style of dancing, to refine the popular taste, and who consistently oppose, irrespective of personal interests, all objectionable practices. A teacher may at all times impart by preference the style of dancing that is most fashionable, provided it does not militate against established principles of art. Subject to this reservation, by all means let him teach what is fashionable ; but he is no more justified in teaching pupils a custom which is contrary to the rules of gracefulness, than a music-master would be justified in allowing his pupils to write contrary to the rules of harmony. A good teacher may be guided by fashion, but he will never become a slave to custom ; he will never admit that an intrinsically ungraceful action, however general, is correct.

How are the sister arts—music, painting, and literature—taught? All these are also to a great extent dominated by fashion. But they are taught according to definite rules. The rules of music are far more arbitrary than are those of painting and dancing, because in both the latter we have an infallible guide in nature. But all are subject to change. Certain rules of counterpoint that were once definitely laid down, are now seldom regarded; the technique of modern painting is altogether different from that of the pre-Raphaelite style. But the changes introduced in music and painting are regulated either by evolution or genius. Why, then, is it not thus with dancing? A great musician may introduce something unusual in harmony, and a new rule is framed accordingly; a great painter may exert a legitimate influence on the rising generation of artists. Suppose, however, that some prince, or leader of fashion, who fancied he possessed the gift of composition, produced a piece containing successions of fifths, and unresolved discords, which he imagined produced a fine effect. What should we think if his example were immediately imitated by rising composers, and promulgated by teachers of music? Again, suppose some exalted amateur painter were of opinion that what is known as aerial perspective was all rubbish, and set to work to paint a landscape, in which distant objects were as distinctly and vividly represented as those close to hand. Do you think that legitimate artists would alter their style accordingly? Why, he would not find an imitator even among the smallest fry of the profession.

In ordinary parlance we know that it is quite usual to hear such expressions as "Neither John nor Reginald are good dancers." "What a number of people there are!" "Is that her?" "Everybody is standing in their places;" and I once heard a Queen's Counsel say, "Let you and I

go." But however customary such grammatical errors may be; however fashionable it might become to drop final *g*'s to pronounce "here" as if it were spelt *he-ar*, and generally to speak incorrectly, what should we think of a schoolmaster who taught the English language thus?

A schoolmaster is expected to qualify himself for his profession by studying, among other things, the rules of grammar; a musician studies the rules of harmony and counterpoint; and an artist studies the rules of perspective, light and shade, harmony of colours and anatomy. According to these rules they teach their pupils, and as it is known that proficiency in any art can only be obtained by hard study, the professors thereof are respected as men and women of culture.

Now the art of dancing requires as much and as careful study as any other art; moreover, in perfection, it necessarily involves some acquaintance, not only with the sister arts, but with anatomy, geometry, dynamics, and science generally; especially in the case of those who instruct others. All men of genius who have written special treatises on dancing, from Lucian to Noverre and Carlo Blasis, have been of this opinion, to say nothing of those who have discoursed incidentally on the subject, like Plato, Athenæus, Plutarch, and many others among the immortal classics. Lucian's estimate of the qualifications necessary for a dancer is well known. He must understand every art, and possess encyclopædic information. Noverre was almost equally exacting in his demands upon the dramatic and imitative dancer. Blasis held that the arts were inseparably connected. He considered that a knowledge of drawing was essential to a dancer, just as the elder Mozart considered a knowledge of rhetoric necessary for a musician.

To those who are disposed to think lightly of dancing, we

may point out that in its nobler aspects, rightly practised and rightly understood, it is an art that enables the most perfect of God's creatures to display, to the best possible advantage, the natural beauty of form, the exquisite grace with which they have been endowed, and to manifest before delighted eyes all those subtle harmonies and delicacies of movement of which the wondrous human frame is capable.

The beauty of all things animate, and of some inanimate, is enhanced by motion. We admire the graceful bending of the lily, the rippling of water, the waving of corn, the changing shapes of summer clouds ; and trees look lovelier when their leaves are agitated by the passing breeze. Bereft of motion, nature would lose half her charm. And what is dancing but perfection of motion in the loveliest of created beings? The spectacle of a young girl, or company of girls, beautifully executing some graceful, modest dance is perhaps one of the most delightful that can be witnessed.

It is true that the demand for really noble dancing may not at present be very great. On the stage there is far too much of what is grotesque and inferior, and too little of what is dignified, pure, and elevating. In the ball-room improvement is needed. But still there are not wanting signs that people are beginning to better appreciate artistic dances. Anyhow, as teachers, we shall ourselves lose nothing by striving to acquire a thorough knowledge of the highest principles of the art. If we attain this, we can always endeavour to refine and cultivate the taste of pupils, to ennoble our profession and gain the respect of our fellow creatures.



