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Social dancing of to-day, demonstrated by Mr. John Murray Anderson; with text, twenty-nine diagrams and fifty-two illustrations from photographs by Troy and Margaret West Kinney.

Social Dancing of To-day

The "Brazilian Maxixe" Preparation for a turn (1) — Finish of a turn (2) — Characteristic style (3) — A Dip (4)

SOCIAL DANCING OF TODAY

DEMONSTRATED BY MR. JOHN MURRAY ANDERSON

With Text, Twenty-nine Diagrams and Fifty-two Illustrations from Photographs BY TROY KINNEY AND MARGARET WEST KINNEY

LC

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FOREWORD

Mr. John Murray Anderson, under whose careful supervision this book was prepared, is known as the teacher of many of those most authoritative in New York social matters. His reputation has been attained not chiefly on the stage or in restaurants, but in the homes of leaders of good taste. The illustrations are from photographs of Mr. and Mrs. Anderson .

Those who take up the study of the new dances sometimes express discouragement with the frequency of change in both steps and names. In the course of evolving these dances, a vast number of steps and figures have been tried. Though most of them have dropped out of use, their introduction has caused serious confusion. The remedy lies in a definite course of simplifying and standardizing; and that is the course upon which the most influential teachers have decided .

The steps and figures described in this book (which is reprinted from "The Dance," a work embracing the choregraphic art in general) have the essential character of the dances to which they respectively belong. They have passed through a period of probation amply sufficient to prove their possession of the beauty and dignity that are necessary to permanency. They form a complete list, moreover, of the steps that have established for themselves a definite place in the ballroom of conservatively smart society .

Unusually clever amateurs are interested in figures that have the character of fancy dancing. This book therefore describes certain exhibition figures, in addition to the number

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viii *essential to the accomplished ballroom performer of the One-step, the Boston, the Hesitation Waltz and the Brazilian Maxixe.*

Those who through their interest in social dancing are led to an interest in dancing as an art will find in "The Dance" full information for the spectator about the fundamentals of ballet, pantomime, and folk dancing. The modern Russian ballet, the ballet steps, the dance in other ages and countries, and its place as an art in America are there described .

T. and M.W.K. New York, 1914 .

CONTENTS

PAGE

POSITION OF THE FEET IN BALLROOM DANCING 10

THE ONE STEP:

The Castle Walk 11

The Turn 11

The Dip 13

The Grapevine 13

The Eight 14

The Square 14

Another Figure 16

The Murray Anderson Turn 17

Library of Congress

A Cross—over With Turn 18

A Variation of The Preceding 19

THE BOSTON:

The Essential Step 21

The Step Backward 22

The Boston Dip 22

An Embellishment 26

THE HESITATION WALTZ

Theme 27

The Reverse 28

A Variation 28

The Lyon Chassé 28

THE ARGENTINE TANGO:

The Walk (*el paseo, le promenade*) 35

The Corte 37

The Scissors (*las tijeras, les ciseaux*) 37

The *media luna* (*la demi-lune*) 39

Library of Congress

The Eight (*el ocho, le huit*) 39

A Waltz Turn 41

An Easy Step 42

Same, to the rear 43

A North American Figure 43

El volteo (The Whirl) 45

x

The BRAZILIAN MAXIXE:

An Essential Step 45

A Flying Two-step 46

An Essential Step 46

An Arch à *la pirouette* 47

Miscellaneous 47

ILLUSTRATIONS

The “Brazilian Maxixe” *Frontispiece*

Preparation for a turn (1) — Finish of a turn (2) — Characteristic style (3) — A dip (4).

The “Waltz Minuet” *Page 5*

Library of Congress

Characteristic style (1) — Variation, position of hands (2) — Preparation for a turn (3) — The Mirror figure (4).

The "Gavotte" Showing Present Tendencies " 6

Characteristic style (1) — Characteristic style (2) — A curtsy (3) — Arabesque to finish a phrase (4).

Social Dancing; Position of Feet (*Diagram*) " 10

The One-Step: The Turn (*Diagram*) " 11

Development of an Arch "Á La Pirouette" " 12

Cross to right (1) — Cross to left (2) — Start of turn (3).

The One-Step: Grave-Vine (*Diagram*) " 13

The One-Step: Eight (*Diagram*) " 14

The One-Step: Square (*Diagram*) " 14

The One-Step " 15

The "Kitchen Sink" (1) — Position of couple (2).

The "Brazilian Maxixe" " 15

Characteristic position of advanced foot (3).

The One-Step: A Figure Occupying Three Measures (*Diagram*) " 16

The One-Step: The Murray Anderson Turn (*Diagram*) " 17

Library of Congress

The One-Step: A Cross-Over (*Diagram*) " 18

The Waltz " 20

A position of the couple in the Waltz-Minuet (1) — Correct position of man's hand on woman's back (2) — A position also assumed in the One-Step Eight (3) — A Dip (4).

The "Boston," Essential Step (*Diagram*) " 21

The "Boston," Step Backward (*Diagram*) " 22

The "Boston," The Dip (*Diagram*) " 23

The Waltz " 24

Correct position of couple (1) — Of feet, in short steps (2) — Of feet, in Dip (3) — Another view of the Dip (4).

xii

The "Boston," The Dip Simplified (*Diagram*) Page 25

The "Boston," An Embellishment (*Diagram*) " 26

The "Boston," An Embellishment (*Diagram*) " 26

The "Boston," Same, with Turns (*Diagram*) " 27

The "Hesitation Waltz," Theme (*Diagram*) " 27

The "Hesitation Waltz" Variation on Theme (*Diagram*) " 28

The "Tango" " 29

Library of Congress

Characteristic style (1, 2, 4) — Woman circles man (3).

The "Hesitation Waltz," the "Lyon ChassÉ," (*Diagram*) " 30

The "Tango" " 31

Characteristic style.

The "Tango" " 34

The reverse (1) — The regular Tango walking step (2) — Style of movement (3) — Position of hands sometimes assumed to emphasize the end of a phrase (4).

The "Tango" " 36

The "Tango," The "Corte" (*Diagram*) " 37

The "Tango," The Scissors (*Diagram*) " 37

The "Tango" " 38

The corte (1) — Characteristic style (2) — A variation (3) — Start of a turn (4).

The "Tango," The Scissors Variation (*Diagram*) " 39

The "Tango," The Media Luna (*Diagram*) " 39

A "Tango" Step " 40

Man's foot displaces woman's (1) — Woman's foot displaces man's (2) — Each displaces the other's foot (3).

The "Tango," The Eight (*Diagram*) " 41

Library of Congress

The "Tango," A Waltz Turn (*Diagram*) " 41

The "Tango," An Easy Step (*Diagram*) " 42

The "Tango," Executed to the Rear (*Diagram*) " 43

The "Tango," A North American Figure (*Diagram*) " 43

A North American Figure in the "Tango" " 44

Preparation (1) — After the twist (2) — Finishing with a Dip (3).

The "Brazilian Maxixe," First Figure (*Diagram*) " 45

The "Brazilian Maxixe," Third Figure (*Diagram*) " 46

The "Brazilian Maxixe" " 48

Characteristic style (1) — A dip (2) — Variations (3, 4).

Social Dancing of To-day

1

SOCIAL DANCING OF TO-DAY

THE INSPIRATION

THE present vogue of dancing is sometimes characterised as a fad. As a matter of fact, it is no more than the resumption of a normal exercise. It is not extraordinary that people should wish to dance every day. It was extraordinary that there should have been a period of sixty years in which people did not wish to dance every day. Occidental history recalls few periods when the dance, natural as speech and exalting as music, underwent such neglect as it suffered during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Self-expression

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was in bad taste. A phantasm of misinterpreted respectability standardised conduct. The resulting caution of movement sterilised the dance, and sterility all but killed it.

As that which might conveniently be called the Renaissance of Individuality began to be felt, within the past few years, the endless iteration of one step in each dance became inadequate to interpret feelings. People learned that their own ideas were worth at least a trial; forms fell automatically. But, no one being at hand to show how dancing might be made an expression, people turned to other recreations.

Then came the Russian ballet. It showed that dancing, more completely perhaps than any other action within mortal scope, is a means of expression of every emotion humanity may feel. It showed, too, how inconceivably beautiful may be the human body when it is made to conform to the laws of beauty—which are identical with the laws of choreography. And so perfect was the artistry of these demigods from out of the North that “difficulty” became a forgotten word. Every man thought that he felt within himself at least a portion of the essence that animated Volinine, Mordkin, Nijinski; every woman knew she had latent some of the magic of Pavlowa, Lopoukova, or Karsavina. And they were right. Every normal human is in greater or less degree an artist.

Sudden reactions are usually attended by more violence than discrimination. The appetite for sheer quantity is satisfied before the need of restraint is felt. So with the new dancing that gratified hundreds of thousands of feet suddenly freed from conventional weights on their movements. The *Turkey Trot* (name to delight posterity) raced eastward from San Francisco in a form to which the word “dancing” could be applied only by exercise of courtesy. Literally, caricaturists could not caricature it; it made caricatures of its devotees. But they were not concerned with that. They were in the exaltation of rediscovery; they were happily, beneficially mad with varied rhythm, marked by free movements of their own bodies. The “trot” was easily learned; the problem became one of finding space in which to dance it, so quickly did its performers fill every floor within hearing-distance of a piano.

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The cynical inference that morals or their lack bore any relation to the phenomenon of this dance's rapid spread, is beside the point. Of the original "trot" nothing remains but the basic step. The elements that drew denunciation upon it have gone from the abiding-places of politeness; yet its gains in popularity continue unchecked. As though to emphasise its superiority to former mannerisms, it is just now urbanely changing its name: it prefers to be known as the *One-Step*. And in the desire for a new appellation it is justified, since no history ever so vividly recalled the fable of the ugly duckling. The hypothetical turkey whose trot it once portrayed proves, as it matures, to be a creature closely resembling a peacock. The peacock it was whose designation (Spanish *pavo*) furnished the name of the old *Pavane*; and the *One-Step*, moved by some force more potent than coincidence, is now tending strongly toward the form of that favourite of seventeenth-century courts.

With the *Turkey Trot* came out of the West the *Bunny Hug*, the *Grizzly Bear*, and perchance the bearers of other names reminiscent of the zoo. They treated Europe to a mixture of amusement and irritation, but were not destined to long life on either side of the Atlantic.

While North America turkey-trotted, the *Argentine Tango* was delighting and scandalising Paris. A dance of curious history, the *Tango*. Certain details of its execution justify the assignment of its remote origin to the Gipsies of Spain. Argentina is an attractive market for Spanish dancing; undoubtedly the original *Tango*, composed of Gipsy steps and movements, was shown in Argentina soon after its first exploitation in Spain, some forty years ago. To change it from a solo for a woman into a dance for couples needed only rearrangement, plus modification of movements that might not be considered respectable. The latter being a purely relative term, disagreements followed the dance's appearance in Paris—Argentinian synonym for Paradise. 4 It is to Paris that the prosperous *Argentinos* go for refreshment; and there they introduced their form of the *Tango*. Robert, a popular

Library of Congress

Parisian teacher of social dancing, arranged a version of it to conform to conservative standards, and its spread followed.

The *Boston Waltz* (the latter word is generally omitted), born in the period when Sousa's marches and two-steps were omnipresent, existed as little more than a theory until, with the advent of the new dances, it was found to be in tune with the times. With the *Tango* and *One-Step* it has come into a family relationship, now borrowing from them for its own embellishment, again lending them a step for the good of their variety. Add to these the *Brazilian Maxixe* and the *Hesitation Waltz*, and we complete the list of dances which, at the moment of writing, animate social gatherings on both sides of the Atlantic; inspire restaurant-keepers to provide dancing floors, hotel managers to give *thés dansants*, with periodical competitions, and instruction if desired; the dances that are successfully demanding for themselves a new and unobjectionable species of dance-hall, and causing grave scientists to debate over them as symptoms—with profound allusions to the so-called “dancing mania” of an earlier century. The extent of the vogue needs neither record nor comment in this place. That which has not been duly noted in the periodical press is the fact that a fashion of rhythmic exercise is proving to be a well-spring of good spirits and a fountain of youth for millions of men and women. Every one benefits by it. None discontinue it. The only people not seeking new steps for their repertoire are those who have riot yet found time to make a beginning, or who have been dismayed by the forbidding number of

The “Waltz Minuet” Mr. John Murray Anderson, Miss Genevieve Lyon Characteristic style (1) — Variation, position of hands (2) — Preparation for a turn (3) — The mirror figure

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The “Gavotte,” Showing Present Tendencies Characteristic style (1, 2) — A curtsy (3) — *Arabesque* to finish a phrase (4)

7 new names, both of steps and of dances. For their benefit, it is in order to make a digression at this point.

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Let it be emphatically understood that the dances above enumerated are the only ones that have any present significance in French, English or American ball-rooms. So-called "new" dances, bearing names of summer and winter resorts, heroines and what-not, are presented in endless succession; but analysis always shows their almost complete lack of individuality. Their claim to recognition regularly consists of a minor variation o a familiar bit of one of the *Waltzes* , the *Tango* , or the *One-Step* . Around this nucleus are gathered steps taken from the other dances directly; and the "composition" is supposed to contribute publicity to some progressive teacher or performer. At the present moment a "Spanish" something-or-other is claiming attention, on grounds which, examined closely, consist in a drawing of one foot up to the other, with a slight accompanying body movement. Spanish dancing does use this movement, it is true. So does the *One-Step* ; the *Turkey Trot* had it on its birthday. Examples of such efforts might be multiplied, but one is sufficient to show the needlessness of concern over strange and unproved titles.

The steps and figures hereinafter described are standard. The list cannot be complete, since the *Tango* alone has figures to a number variously estimated at from about fifty to more than a hundred; nor is it desirable that it should be. Many of those figures are wholly alien to the true *Tango* character, contribute nothing of beauty or interest, and might well be allowed to perish. Others are of such slight variation from basic forms that they can be learned in a moment by any one familiar 8 with the principles. Embellishments are easily added, once the structure is solidly built.

The instruction that follows was prepared under the careful supervision of Mr. John Murray Anderson, To vast experience in the teaching of our new dances Mr. Anderson adds the results of profound study of the seventeenth century court dances, toward whose beauty and dignity the dances of to-day are tending. The photographs were made from the work of Mr. and Mrs. Anderson. Their dancing, wide as is its scope of step and expression, is notable for consistent dignity of movement and posture. These photographs may be

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studied with full reliance upon their value as guides to the style of each of the dances described.

To the beginner, the diagrams and text will serve as a grammar, by whose guidance the steps can be put into practice. Familiarity will accustom the limbs and body to the mechanism of the steps, and the mirror will go far in revealing the faults inseparable from any new undertaking that requires skill. At that point the photographs have their special value.

As soon as the student is reasonably conversant with his grammar, he should begin to avail himself of opportunities to put his knowledge to practical use. Also, if he wishes to dance with distinguished grace and style, he should put himself for a term under the eye of a capable teacher. Ambitious professional performers, possessed of the knowledge and skill derived from years of concentrated study of their art, periodically submit themselves to rigorous coaching. The amateur, though measured by much less exacting standards, has commensurately 9 less preliminary training on which he may depend to give him the qualities that make for graceful execution. No dancer can see his own work truly. All need at least the occasional oversight of a skilled eye; and a teacher's experience in detecting the causes of imperfections enables him to cure them in a minimum of time.

The figures (*enchainements*) composing the new dances have no set order of performance; their sequence is at caprice, usually suggested by the music. Nor is there yet any indication that their increasing number has reached its limit. Every one is at liberty to test his powers of invention and composition, to experiment with the adaptation of steps of one dance into another, and, in general, to give play to his individuality. But, to hasten the uniform acceptance of a certain set of figures as a standard basis of each dance, it would be best to postpone indulgence in fantasies until after the subjoined figures have been learned. At present the progress of the *Tango* , in particular, is hampered by the fact that hardly two people in the same ballroom will be found in agreement as to what steps constitute that dance. And, as noted before, a preliminary learning of the fundamentals will

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enable him who dances to decide intelligently what new steps may be added to a dance appropriately, and what are out of harmony with that dance's character. (The relation of step to theme is considered in a chapter on ballet technique, in *The Dance* .)

Explicit verbal description of steps is possible only by use of the accepted designations of positions of the feet. If they do not impress themselves on the memory clearly, the reader should by all means copy the diagram 10 on a separate slip, and keep it before him as he experiments with the translation of text and diagram into practice of the steps.

It will be seen that the designations of positions differ from those of the ballet in the respect that the feet "toe out" at an angle of 45° to an imaginary line of advance, instead of the 90° prescribed by the classic ballet. Modifications of the simple positions, such, for instance, as anterior or posterior position of either foot, open or closed position, etc., will explain themselves readily.

The relative positions of partners are (1) closed position, (2) side position, and (3) open position. Closed position is that of the individuals facing each other, shoulders parallel, each looking over the other's left shoulder, the man's left hand holding the woman's right hand, and his right hand on her back. Side position moves the figures (holding each other practically as before), each to his left or each to his right, far enough to take each away from in front of the other. Coming toward the spectator, the couple in side position shows the width of both bodies. Open position places the man and the woman side by side, facing in the same direction, joined by his hand on her waist, or by holding hands.

Necessary preliminaries disposed of, we are ready to proceed with the actual mechanism of the dances, of which the first to be considered is

THE ONE-STEP

1. The Castle Walk (invented and introduced by Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle). This is a walking step of direct advance and retreat, not used to move to the side. The couple are

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in closed position, the woman, therefore, stepping backward as the man steps forward, and vice versa. The advancing foot is planted in fourth position, the knee straight, the toe down so that the ball of the foot strikes the floor first. The walk presents an appearance of strutting, although the shoulders are held level, and the body firm; a sharp twist that punctuates each step is effected by means of pivoting on the supporting foot. The shoulder and hip movements that originally characterised the “trot” are no longer practiced.

In all the following floor-plan diagrams, the right foot is indicated by solid black, the left foot by outline.

2. The Turn is a walking step, pivoting on one foot to change direction.

The right foot comes from the preceding step to the place of starting; while it makes two successive long steps (1, 2) the left foot turns “on its place.” The turn's completion brings the right foot into anterior fourth position. The woman's steps are the converse of the man's, her left foot making the long steps, while her

Development of an Arch “À La Pirouette” Cross to right (1) — Cross to left (2) — Start to turn (3)

13

right foot turns on its place. The turn gains smoothness by means of allowing the right knees to touch each other lightly.

3. The Dip . Starting with (say) the right foot in posterior fourth position: during the first beat, sink (for form see photograph); on the second beat, rise, transferring the weight to the left (advanced) foot, gliding the right foot up to third position, on arriving at which it instantly receives the weight again, if the dip is to be repeated. In that case the left foot again glides to anterior fourth position, and the step is effected as before. Frequently several dips are made in succession. They often succeed a turn, the latter's finish leaving the feet in appropriate (fourth) position for the purpose.

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The dip is executed in any direction, with the performers in any position of the couple. It occurs in other dances, but its technique is always the same.

4. The Grape-Vine is an alternation of second and fourth positions of the feet; one foot travelling sidewise on a straight line, the other foot going from anterior

to posterior fourth position, and vice versa. The step travels to the woman's right (the man's left), without turning.

The man's steps are the converse of the woman's, he 14 starting with his left foot. The step is executed in closed position of the couple, and is usually performed several times in succession.

The arrival of the feet in fourth position (i. e., the steps marked "2" in the diagram) is usually punctuated with a slight dip.

5. The One-Step Eight , so called from the number of beats it occupies, is distinct from the *Tango Huit* , described later, which describes a figure 8 on the floor. The eight of the *One-Step* is a simple walk, with turn.

The man's steps are the converse of the woman's; she pivots on her right foot, he on his left foot. Executed in closed position of the couple.

6. The Square , originally a *Tango* figure, is equally effective in the *One-Step* . From posterior third

position, the right foot steps to (1) anterior fourth position; left foot glides to (2) second position; right foot glides into (3) first position; left foot steps back

The "One-step" The *Kitchen Sink* ; position of couple (1, 2) The "Brazilian Maxixe"
Characteristic position of advanced foot (3)

Library of Congress

16

to (4) posterior fourth position; right foot steps to (5) anterior third position. It is usually repeated several times. Executed in closed position of the couple.

Execution of the figure occupies two measures of music; steps done in half-time are indicated by the word “and,” instead of a number. The learner will find it useful to chant the count aloud, avoiding stress on the half-count of “and.”

Let it be understood that the word “and,” used in counting, has the above significance in descriptions to come.

7. A figure whose execution occupies three measures. The steps of the first bar are quick, those of the second slower; the difference of speed should be emphasised.

First bar: As the left foot crosses over to “3,” it will be noted that the next placement of the right foot is marked “and”; this is done because the time occupied by the little movement is only one-half beat. In practice the steps are counted, *one, two, three* and *four*. The left foot's step marked “4” is a *coupé*; as the foot is planted, it displaces the right foot; which takes a position extended to the rear, raised from the floor.

17

Second bar: The space between the last place of the right foot in the first bar and its place in “1” in the second bar, does not represent proportionate progress across the floor; the steps of the three bars are diagrammed consecutively, to avoid the confusion of superimposed lines. On count “1” of the second bar, advance the right foot from its raised posterior position to anterior fifth position. Fill in the count of “2” with a slow advance of the left foot to fourth position, which it reaches on count “3”; upon which it receives the weight, the right foot simultaneously being raised from the floor in posterior fourth position on count “4.”

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Third bar: On “1,” plant the right foot in posterior fourth position and slowly sink the weight back on it; on “2,” glide the left foot back slowly (3) to reach third position on count “4.”

The figure is executed in open position of the couple. Its manner is smooth, without dips. It is usually repeated several times in succession.

8. The Murray Anderson Turn : a turn *en arabesque* .

The man crosses the right foot in front of the left, and transfers his weight to it (i.e., the right foot). 18 Simultaneously the woman, holding his hand in her hand (open position of couple), begins a walk around a circle of which the man's right foot is the centre. As his legs “unwind,” he rises to the ball of the right foot, extending the left leg easily to the rear (see *arabesque* , Chapter on ballet technique) and raising the left foot from the floor.

The woman's walking movement should be smooth rather than accented. After repeating the turns *ad lib* ., it is found that the *One-Step Eight* follows harmoniously after the turn.

9. A cross-over with a woman's turn. This figure looks complicated in the diagram and in performance. As a matter of fact, it is not especially difficult.

The diagram represents the cross-over, which precedes the turn. The turn is described in words.

In preparation for the cross-over, the couple changes from closed to side position, the man on the woman's left. The man's steps are the converse of the woman's; and his travel back and forth counters hers, so that the two pass and repass—in the side position of the couple, he is now on the her left side, now on her right, and so on.

Keeping track of the woman's steps on the diagram, read the man's steps one by one, correlating them with the woman's.

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After taking side position on the woman's left, the man takes two walking steps forward, *right, left*; crossing the right foot in front of the left, he changes to the woman's right side. Still walking forward, *right, left*, two steps bring him to the end of the third measure. Finish in first position of the feet.

Note: In the work of both man and woman, the turn in the first two measures, and the half-turn in the third, involve only simple walking steps, plus a pivot to change direction. The interaction of arms suggests itself in practice.

The fourth bar marks the woman's turn—or *pirouette*, as it is often and usually mistakenly called. The man's left hand holding the woman's right hand, the woman executes a turn—a real *pirouette* (q. v.) is permissible—under the man's raised left arm, finishing in closed position of the couple. (See photographs.) The turn under the arm is sometimes called the *arch à la pirouette*.

10. A woman's turn, varying the preceding, with which it is identical up to the end of the second bar.

Having completed the turn occupying the first and second bars, the woman lets go her partner's hand and walks around behind him, completing the circuit in four steps. These must be measured so that the fourth step brings her into readiness to go into closed position of the couple; and timed so that, after going into closed position, the couple has neither to wait nor to hurry in order to move with the next beat.

During the walk around, the woman lightly glides her left hand around the man's neck. The man remains stationary, his left arm extended horizontally before him. The woman's right hand takes the man's left hand as she comes into closed position.

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The Waltz A position of the couple in the *Waltz Minuet* (1) — Correct position of man's hand on woman's back (2) — A position also assumed in the *One-Step Eight* (3) — A Dip (4)

21

The foregoing movements of the One-step must be executed not only with fine regard to rhythm, but also to continuity. If they are not made to flow one into another, the effect is jerky and uncertain-looking.

THE BOSTON

The distinguishing step-combination of this very attractive dance is complete in one measure. Its essence is in a certain effect of syncopation, secured by keeping the weight on the same foot through two successive beats—contrary to the practice of transferring the weight with each beat, as in the old *Waltz*. Another peculiarity of the *Boston* is the carriage of the weight counter to the line of direction of travel, giving an effect of holding back. The dance is performed with deliberation; its execution aims at a rather grand style.

The dip characteristic of and named for the Boston is, in execution, the same as the dip described in connection with the *One-Step* (see photographs). The management of a sequence of dips as they occur in the *Boston* is, however, a matter for special attention, which will be given it in its place.

I. The essential step:

On count "1," the entire weight is thrown upon the right foot; and there it continues through the remainder of the bar. On count "2," swing the left foot forward into anterior fourth position, straightening the left knee, touching the floor with the point, as far forward as is possible without taking any of the weight off the right foot; meanwhile the right foot rises to the ball. On count "3," lower the heel of the right foot to the floor.

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Turn by pivoting on the supporting foot, continuing to touch the point of the free foot to the floor.

In the bar that follows, the left foot takes the first step, as before. To accomplish this the weight must be kept on the right foot.

2. The step backward is the converse of the foregoing. The diagram indicates, as start, the position in which the feet were left by the preceding step.

For the sake of simplicity, the diagrams indicate a straight advance-and-retreat movement. It will be understood that, in practice, this is varied to effect turns, i. e., by pivoting on the supporting foot.

The execution above indicated applies to the *Long Boston*. In the *Short Boston* each beat is—or was—made the equivalent of two counts for the feet. The resulting jerkiness and lack of sweep excluded the *Short Boston* from any lasting popularity.

3. The Boston Dip is, in practice, a series of three successive dips, executed in reverse turning movement. Each of the three occupies a whole measure, and a fourth measure is used in returning to the regular Boston walking step.

In putting the step into practice from the diagram, the student will greatly simplify the process by chanting the count: *right*, ' left, right; *left*, ' right, left; *right*, ' 23 left, right, etc., accented as indicated, on the first beat of each measure. Because the foot designated by the accented count receives the weight; and the more nearly the disposal of the weight can be made to take care of itself, the more attention the student has for other details.

The dip begins on the first beat, completing the recovery on the third. It always is made with the right foot in posterior position. In fact, the right foot does not get out of posterior position. Now, on measures where the left foot takes the first count, as in the first measure (above diagram) this is easy. But in alternate measures the right foot takes the first beat,

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and just here begins confusion from which few find any escape except by means of practice. Perhaps owing to a rhythm that the dip has in common with the old *Waltz*, the right foot has a tendency to go, in its turn, into the anterior position. But it must be kept back. It must be kept, broadly speaking, on the outer of two curving paths, of which the left travels the inner. Note the appearance of this on the diagram showing turns.

If the learner succeeds, at this point, in performing

The Waltz Showing correct positions Of couple (1) — Of feet, in short steps (2) — Of feet, in Dip (3) — Another view of the Dip (4)

25 the dip to the satisfaction of a candid and intelligent critic, let him by all means proceed to the next section, praising Allah for the gift of facility. If not, let him be cheered by the fact that it is as difficult for any one else as for himself. A semblance of it is easily acquired. To insure reality, return to the figure on page 286.

Observe that in bars where the right foot takes the first count (the even-numbered measures, beginning with the second) the right foot does not step out in advance of the left foot. Instead, it sweeps out to the *side*; the movement is accompanied by pivoting on the left foot. A short step of the left foot to place "2" marks the cadence and preserves its anterior fourth position. On the other hand, in measures where the left foot takes the first count, it keeps its anterior position almost automatically.

As an added expression of the difference of treatment between the alternate measures, it is here reduced to the form of a straight advance.

The *Boston Dip* carries with it the possibility of beauty commensurate with its difficulty. On the other hand, its good execution is none too common. The exhilaration that attends its performance appears, sometimes, to flatter the performer into a belief that his style is as agreeable as his sensation. It is, therefore, more than others, a step in which every one should submit his execution to rigorous and intelligent criticism.

Library of Congress

26

4. An embellishing *enchainement* , complete in six measures, of which each is filled by one step.

Until the “6” count, the figure represents a straight advance and retreat. The diagram departs slightly from that form in order to avoid the confusion of superimposed lines.

As an aid, count as follows: Step,’ Dip,’ Point-dip, Step,’ Dip,’ Turn.’ Turn in the regular direction, not in reverse; and accompany the turn also with a dip.

In the third measure, the left foot recedes quickly from its anterior position (where it points) to its posterior position. In the third, fourth and fifth measures, note that the left foot makes three successive movements..

5. Another embellishment. Without turns, its theory is as follows:

Each count represents one measure.

With turns included, the figure works out as follows (for instance):

27

The couple is in closed position. The above diagrams represent the man's steps; the woman's are the converse.

Repeat at will.

THE HESITATION WALTZ

This new evolution preserves all the charm of the old-fashioned *Waltz* , and by means of certain embellishments has given it new life and interest.

I. Its theme is readily understood by means of diagram:

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This key step is complete in two measures. It will be noted that the first measure is devoted to a walking step.*

If the movement is begun with the walking step, as is usual, the woman's first step is with her left foot. If the couple start with a "hesitation," however, her first step is with her right foot.

Elevation: the "1" beat in the second bar is accompanied by a slight dip. Toward the last of the second bar the dancers slowly draw themselves up until, on "3," they are raised to the ball of the supporting foot. The man's right leg, as it draws the right foot up to place "3," is distinctly relaxed.

Note, in the second bar, that the right foot continues to move during the second beat.

28

The step is performed in either open or closed position of the couple. If the former, the woman's steps are identical with the man's; if the latter, the converse. If in open position, the travel is forward.

To turn in the regular direction, the step indicated in the second measure is in use.

2. The Reverse is effected by an alternation of a "hesitation" measure with an equal measure of old-fashioned *Waltz* steps, executed in reverse direction.

3. A variation of the theme:

For convenience, count the time: *one* , *two* , *three* , *pause* . On the word "pause," throw the weight strongly on to the left foot, the right remaining easily in second position, the edge of the sole resting on the floor.

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In repeating, move at right angles to the direction followed in the preceding measure. The man's direction turns toward his left, the woman's toward her right.

4. The Lyon Chasse : an effective figure in open position of the couple. Complete in one measure; advantageously repeated several times.

The "Tango" Mr. Anderson and Miss Lyon Characteristic style (1, 2, 4) — Woman circles man (3)

30

Count *one, two and three* .

Description of the man's steps: Advance right foot to fourth position, where it receives the weight (1); cross left foot over in front of right foot, pivoting on the latter with the swing of the left foot, so that the left foot when planted is in anterior fourth position (2); cross right foot behind left (and) step out with left foot in the direction of starting. The travel effected is a straight advance.

The woman's steps are the converse of the man's, bringing the couple face to face on "2."

THE ARGENTINE TANGO

To some people the *Tango* seems to be an object of suspicion. In a previous incarnation, three or four years ago, it did, in all likelihood, fall short of the requirements for acceptance in Anglo-Saxon ballrooms. Yet, notwithstanding the correction of its shortcomings, or the transformation of them into virtues, there lingers a semifashion of nagging at it. Of those volunteers for its reformation who make specific complaints, no two factions have a point of belief in common; the factions are numerous, and their observations not very logical. Indeed, it would be illuminating as well as entertaining if dictagraphic reports could be collected, of all the discussions the *Tango* has inspired since its introduction

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The “Tango” Characteristic style

32

in Paris. Such reports should be given to one of the serious-minded critics of the dance for compilation, with his own comments. “The movements employed in the *Tango* , soberly viewed as a measure of respectability”—some such title as that the treatise should have, to be representative of a species of misgiving of which expression has not wholly subsided.

It is time that the ghost should be laid, since the *Tango* is now, and has been for a year or more, a beautiful and irreproachable dance—assuming, of course, its performance in the clean spirit usually found in good society. Any dance can be made suggestive or offensive. So can walking. But that is no reflection on the intrinsic quality of either dance or walk. The measure of the beauty or character of a dance is to be found in the movements which, by common acceptance, that dance prescribes; a rendering that departs from those movements fails to measure those attributes, in so far as it violates the accepted form. Now, a couple of specimens of the movements that bring criticism upon the *Tango* .

Of its characteristics, one is a manner of touching the point to the floor, the foot pointing straight forward; followed by a quick raise of the foot, the raise accompanied by a turn outward of the heel. The effect is, undoubtedly, exotic; that is part of its charm. It is criticised, however, on grounds of respectability!

One more movement carries this offending step to the attention of a wholly different set of censors. These latter have found no fault with the touch of the foot to the floor in (say) second position, and its raise in the indicated manner. But now, the same foot moves back to fourth position. Just that. The same old fourth position, without innovation or adornment. And thereupon, 33 with all seeming earnestness, the second informal committee of censors protests on grounds of respectability! Why? Is it because, in coming to that fourth

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position, two steps were taken in succession by the same foot? No, that is not it; it seems that fourth position is at fault, per se.

The character of the objections suggests the existence of an apprehension that an unqualified acceptance of the *Tango* would be risqué. There is no other explanation for the hostility, under present conditions of the dance. Yet, idle as are the objections, they cannot be quite overlooked. A certain number of vacillators are listening now to one voice, to another tomorrow: however great or small their influence, in ratio to its strength it will tend to denature a product that now has a flavour to interest discerning taste, yet hardly to imperil the weak-headed.

Dropping the above issue, the *Tango's* trick of the foot continues to be interesting; this time in relation to the interest of character. The sharp in-twist of the foot is one of the points of individuality both of the *Tango* and the dance of the Arab. Now, probable family relationship puts the *Tango* under no obligation to family traits, for the sake of family dignity; that is beside the point. But, in its own interest, the *Tango* would do well to take a careful look at the work of the Arab, to see that it is deriving equal profit from the same resources. Which it is not. By current usage (in the United States at least) the *Tango* makes a practice of toeing forward, or even in, to an extent that is not only monotonous, but which robs the quick in-turn device of the value of surprise. The Arab woman, on the other hand, places her feet at a natural angle; moreover, she

The "Tango" The Reverse (semi-open position) (1) — The regular Tango walking step (2) — [1 and 2 apply also to the *One-step Eight*] — Style of movement (3) — Position of hands sometimes assumed to emphasize the end of a phrase (4)

35 precedes the sharp turn-in with an outward turn sufficiently marked to give the former a telling contrast. The same is true of the *Flamenco* dances in Spain. Their superior use of the trick justifies attention on the part of those under whose influence the new dance is determining its final form.

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In point of merit, the *Tango* measures up to a standard which, though by no means a true measure of quality, has a certain practical value: it is sufficiently picturesque to cover the faults of a half-good dancer. Conversely, as a vehicle for the equilibrium and style that unite in a very good dancer, it is not excelled by any social dance of modern times.

It should be noted that the most suitable music is among the compositions of the Argentinians themselves.

1. The Tango Walk (Spanish, *el Paseo*; French, *le Promenade*) is used as a variety to figures. The man moves forward, starting with the left foot, the woman backward. The step brings the advancing foot to position squarely in front of the supporting foot, both (by the present mode) pointed straight forward. The full weight is transferred to the advanced foot as soon as possible, the knee of the leg in posterior position promptly relaxed, the posterior foot resting, for a moment, lightly on the point. The step in advance is made with a light gliding movement.

In turning, follow the reverse direction invariably.

Technique of the step backward: Start the foot with a glide, letting it rise from the floor toward the end of the step, meanwhile toeing inward; plant the foot squarely to the rear of the supporting foot. At the moment of placing the retreating foot, the knee of the advanced leg is relaxed, and the advanced foot is turned

The "Tango" The two upper pictures represent phases of the "Scissors" figure. The two lower show characteristic style of the "Tango"

37

inward, the heel remaining placed as a pivot. The same directions apply to man and woman.

2. The Corte .

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Starting in first position: Put the weight on the right foot (1); step forward with the left foot, quickly bringing the right up to third position, both steps accomplished on (2); bring the left foot back to fifth position, rise on balls of feet (3), drop heels to floor with *plié* of knees (4).

The second measure finds the right foot in anterior fifth position. The first beat brings it back to posterior fifth position and throws the weight upon it. Continue same as first measure.

3. The Scissors . (Spanish, *las Tijeras*; French, *les Ciseaux* .)

The “1” count is marked by a touch-and-turn of the foot; touch the point to the floor, and instantly raise it, sharply, throwing the heel out; set foot on place “2.”

With the turn of the foot, allow the hips (but not the

The “Tango” The Corte (1) — Characteristic style (2) — A variation (3) — Start of a turn (4)

39

shoulders) to turn also in such manner as to bring the right foot, for the moment, into posterior fourth position. This applies to beat “1.” “1a” represents the pointing of right and left foot respectively.

A variation of the same is effected as follows:

Turning may be accomplished by (a) the man crossing the right foot over the left, and (b) the woman “unwinding” him by moving around him executing scissors steps, turning to her right. Done in closed position of the couple.

4. The Media Luna (French, *la Demi-lune*).

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Start in first position. Right foot to anterior fourth position (1); left foot to second position (and) right foot glided to first position (2). Left foot to posterior fourth position (3); right foot to second position (and) left foot to first position (4).

The place and position of start and finish are identical.

5. The Eight (Spanish, *el Ocho*; French, *le Huit*).

Start in first position. Cross right foot in front of left (1); bring left foot to first position (and) right

A “Tango” Step Man's foot displaces woman's (1) — Woman's foot displaces man's (2) — Each displaces the other's foot (3)

41

foot to posterior fourth position (2); cross left foot over in front of right (3), right foot to first position (and) left foot forward to fourth position.

Executed either in open or closed position of the couple. In the latter, the woman's steps are the converse of the above. In open position the same steps are used by both partners; their travel describing a zigzag figure.

6. A Waltz Turn . To change from one figure to another, the couple may make several turns in reverse direction, by means of *Waltz* step.

First measure: With the rise on the left foot, the right foot would best be considered, for simplicity's sake, as leaving the floor, and remaining in the air until “1” of the second measure.

Second measure: On “1,” the weight goes back upon the right foot; consider the left foot in the air, until “1” of the third measure.

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Third measure: Same as first measure.

Fourth measure: Cross right foot over left foot and simultaneously rise (1); hold the position until "2." Sink with sufficient *plié* to give softness of movement. Pick up the right foot smartly at the end of the last measure in which this step is used.

In character with the *Waltz*, the above movements are made to flow together in execution. But a thorough grasp of their sequence must be acquired primarily.

The turn is used to separate *enchainements*, in the manner of the reverse of the *Hesitation Waltz*, to which it is analogous in structure.

7. An easy step.

On "3," bend the right knee, at the same time slightly raising the left foot from the floor (posterior fourth position). On "4," pick up left foot sharply.

In execution, pivot on supporting foot, to turn in regular direction.

43

As the right foot does its touch-and-turn, incline the body away from it; and vice versa. Note same as a *Tango* principle.

8. The same, to the rear.

In this and the preceding figure, "2" indicates the *Tango's* manner of touching the point to the floor and quickly raising the foot, at the same time turning the heel out sharply. This (a) bends the knee and (b) throws the hip slightly forward. Give reasonable play to both tendencies.

9. A North American figure, used principally by exhibition dancers.

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Start in first position. Advance left foot to fourth position, *stamp* (1); advance right foot to fourth position,

A North American Figure in the "Tango" Preparation (1) — After the twist (2) — Finishing with a Dip (3)

45

keeping it in the air (2); a *rond de jambe* half-turn, very fast, pivoting on left foot, to bring right foot to anterior fourth position (3); very low dip or kneel (4).

Exhibition dancers frequently adorn the *rond de jambe* with a little circle (from the knee as pivot) described by the foot, executed during and without interrupting the big sweep. The little movement adds dazzle to the rapidly executed big movement.

Performed in open position of the couple. The half-turn brings them about-face, facing each other in the course of turning. (See photographs.)

10. El Volteo (the Whirl) is the name of a figure of which descriptions come from Paris. The mechanism of the step is identical with that of the grapevine of the *One-Step* .

THE BRAZILIAN MAXIXE

This is, virtually, a revival of the *Two-Step* , plus certain *Tango* steps and *enchainements* . Instead of the *Tango's* touch-and-turn-in of the foot, it employs a device of resting the heel on the floor, the foot pointed upward, while the body assumes a bent-over posture not particularly attractive.

The First Step.

46

As in other present-day dances, usage requires no set sequence of figures.

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1. Execute the first measure with the body somewhat supple, and a good deal of rise and sink in the steps. The effect may be varied by inclining the body rather sinuously from side to side.

2. A Flying Two-Step : a two-step in which the advanced foot points upward, touching the heel to the floor in alternate steps, the intervening steps pointing the toe downward—except on turns; eight are not too many.

Another Step .

3. Man's steps: Starting in first position, advance right foot to fourth position (1); glide left foot to second position (2); glide right foot to posterior third position (3); carry left foot to posterior fourth position, pause *en attitude*, *and*, plant it, transferring weight to it and raising right (advanced) foot, point down (4).

Woman's steps: Advance left foot to posterior fourth position (1); glide right foot to second position (2); glide left foot to posterior third position (3); plant right foot in anterior fourth position *and* raise the left foot from the floor (4). During the pause on “4,” the woman leans slightly forward.

Until the third beat, her steps are the converse of the 47 man's. Then, it will be noted, her position becomes the same as the man's: each, through a half-beat, is supported on the right foot, the left extended back *en attitude* . The count of “4” again finds the couple in converse positions, the man's right foot being pointed forward while the woman's is extended back.

4. An Arch a La Pirouette . Holding his partner's right hand in his left hand, the man executes four polkasteps forward; while the woman, by means of four polkasteps, makes a complete turn toward her left. The engaged hands are raised to allow her to pass under the arms.

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Whatever be the verdict in regard to the *Maxixe* , it is unlikely to be remembered as of the group whose spread over the Occident have represented a striking social phenomenon. Of the *One-Step* , the two *Waltzes* and the *Tango* , the leap into popularity has been so incredibly sudden, and the popularity so far-reaching, that it suggests a great, curious story; a story with dances and nations as characters; a story whose capacity for surprises is so well proven that all the world keeps asking itself, "What next?"

That the tendency is not in the direction of the grotesque is evidenced in the history of the *Turkey Trot* .

So far the layman may read for himself. For more definite opinion, we turn to those who, by intimate association with the art in the capacity of teachers and performers, are situated to observe the attitude of the public toward the art; and who also, by virtue of a broad knowledge of dancing, are capable of relating their observations to choreographic geography and history. Madame Pavlowa, of the world; Mr. Anderson, now of America; and Miss Nellie Chaplin of London, have

The "Brazilian Maxixe" Characteristic style (1) — A Dip (2) — Variations (3, 4)

49

committed themselves definitely as to future probabilities; and with their opinion authorities generally are in full agreement. To the effect that:

The dances of the seventeenth-century courts are the objective toward which present-day steps are moving directly. They are a part of the curriculum of Miss Chaplin's famous London school. A *Gavotte Directoire* presented by Madame Pavlowa, one of her most popular numbers, seems the very spirit of modernism. It is his scholarly knowledge of the old dances, coupled with masterful execution, that gives Mr. Anderson the position of most genuinely modern among his contemporaries in the field of social dancing. For the choreography of the Occident is completing one of those cycles whose repetitions

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make the history of the arts. We have thrown off old restrictions. We have tried our hand at inventing, and learn that novelty without beauty quickly loses its interest. That we turn for further material, to the dances whose lasting qualities have been proven, augurs exceedingly well for the healthy continuance of the present renaissance of the art.

END