

Rameau's "Nouvelle Methode" (Part 2)

Translated by Ellis A. Rogers

ABBREGE
*DE LA NOUVELLE METHODE DANS
L'ART D'ECRIRE ou DE TRACER
TOUTES SORTES DE
DANSES DE VILLE*
Dedié à
Son Altesse Serenissime
Mademoiselle de Beaujaulois
et Mise au jour Par le S^r. RAMEAU Maître
à Danser Ordinaire de la Maison de
sa Majesté Catholique, la Reine Seconde
Douairriere d'Espagne.
Et seul privilege' du Roy pour la corection
et augmentation de la Choregraphie
Ouvrage
tres utile pour toutes Personnes qui ont s^çu
ou qui apprennent à Danser, puis que par le
Secour de ce livre, on peut se remettre facile-
ment dans toutes les Danses que l'on a appris
On trouve *Se vend 5.^{te} broché* *dans les*
mêmes *et 6.^{te} reliez en vau* *endroits*
le livre *du*
Maître *Paris*

APARIS
L'Auteur faubourg mont marthe
à la Villette à la Croix d'or rue S^{te} Jacques
Jacque Josse rue S^{te} Jacques à la Colombaroye
le S^r. Boivin rue S^{te} Honore à la regle d'or
le S^r. des-hayes rue charlot au marais. Renou Sculp^r

Translated by Ellis A. Rogers

PART 2

This article appeared in Issue 9 of the Dolmetsch Historical Dance Society Journal, 1979.
In 1980, the journal title became Historical Dance, starting with Volume 2 Issue 1.
The original layout did not have a title on this page, so it has been added.

Chapter 4

VARIOUS WAYS OF MOVING

THESE examples of the way to move, such as forward, backward or sideways, will contribute no less than those of the preceding chapters, to the advancement of those desiring to understand the Art. They will explain the use of lines for indicating the various tracks; and which foot should move, the right or the left, by observing on which side of the line it is placed.

They will also learn that when one has been moving forward on a track, and then wishes to retire backwards on the same track, it is necessary to follow a dotted line which leads to another straight line where the steps are drawn for retiring backwards, this you see in the two first examples.

The first, starting at the bottom of the room, goes to the top. The little V which is at the end of the last step signifies the placing down of the toe only, in order to retire backwards with the same foot, in following the dotted line leading to the other line, in order to return backwards on the same track.

As regards the second example, of moving sideways whilst facing forward, carry the foot from the second to the fifth position, either with a cross before or behind, whichever way it is drawn.

The third, is to move forwards in a circle and return backwards on the same track.

A circle can be shown another way where it is broken by dotted lines but this is covered by the eighth example, which shows two people moving in a circle.

In the fourth*, there is a man and a woman who ascend towards the top of the room and retire backwards.

The fifth, shows two people who come obliquely, one from the bottom of the room towards the top and the other from the top to the bottom and cross over, returning by the same route to their own place.

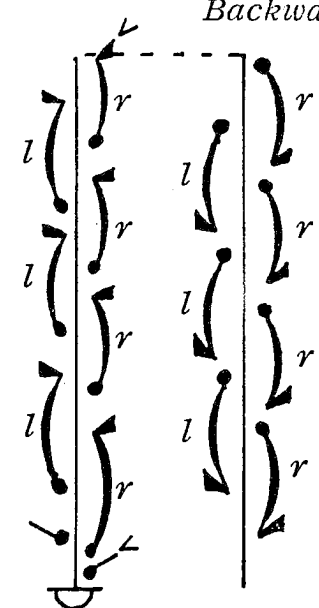
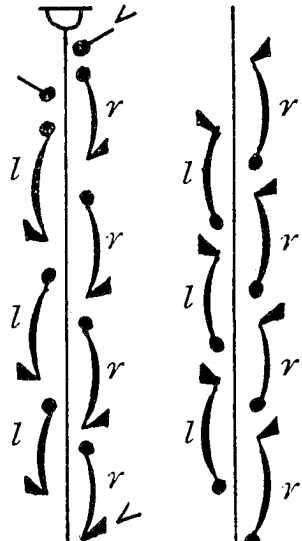
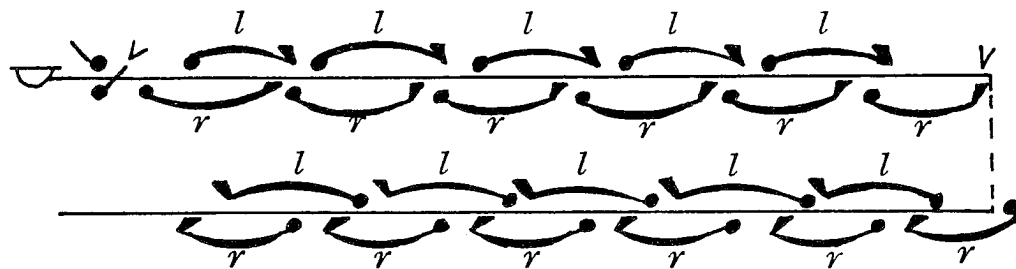
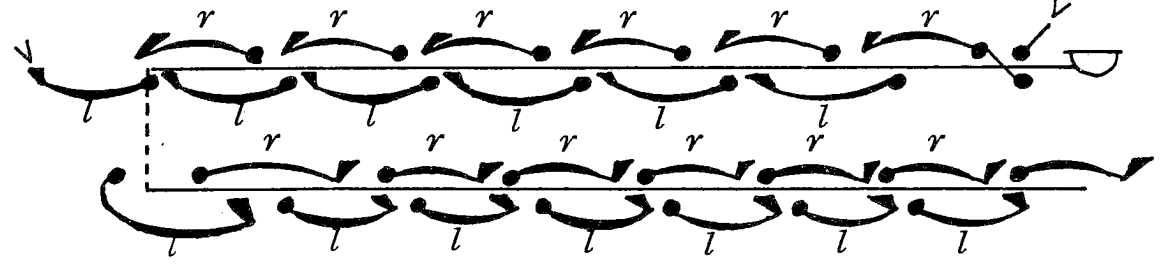
The sixth, is a man and a woman moving sideways, one going from left to right and the other from right to left, passing each other and returning to their own place; this is called a double pass.

The seventh and the eighth, these show two people who move together in a circle, in the former they make one turn but in the eighth they make two.

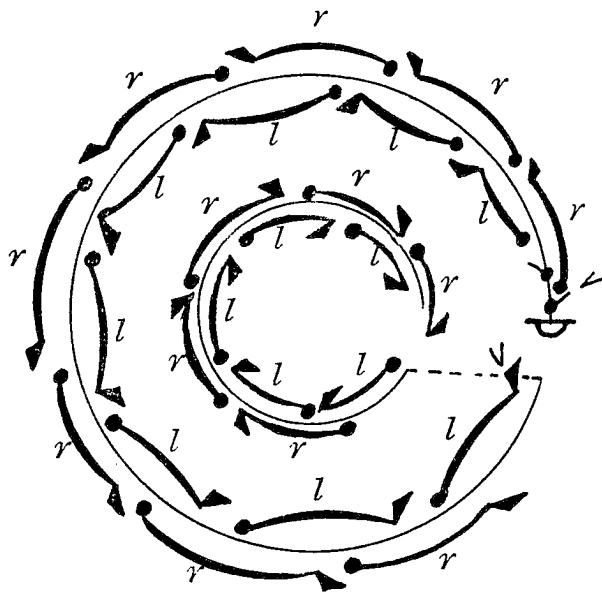
* * * *

* Printer's error in original. The fourth diagram shows another circle.

Table of Various Ways of Moving

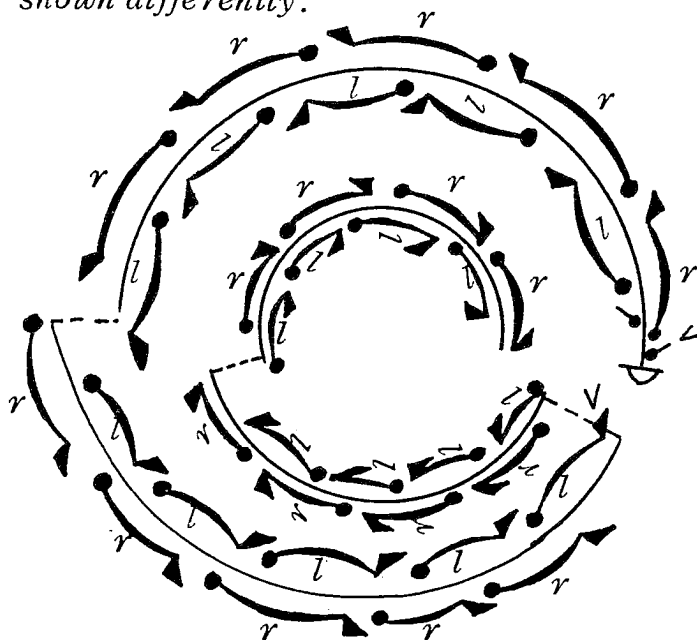
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>To Return Backward</i></p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>To Move Forward</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>To Move Backward</i></p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>To Return Forward</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>To move sideways to the right whilst facing forward and come back from right to left using the 2nd and 5th positions.</i></p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>To move sideways from the right to the left and to return to the right</i></p> 	

To move in a circle forward and to return in a circle backwards.

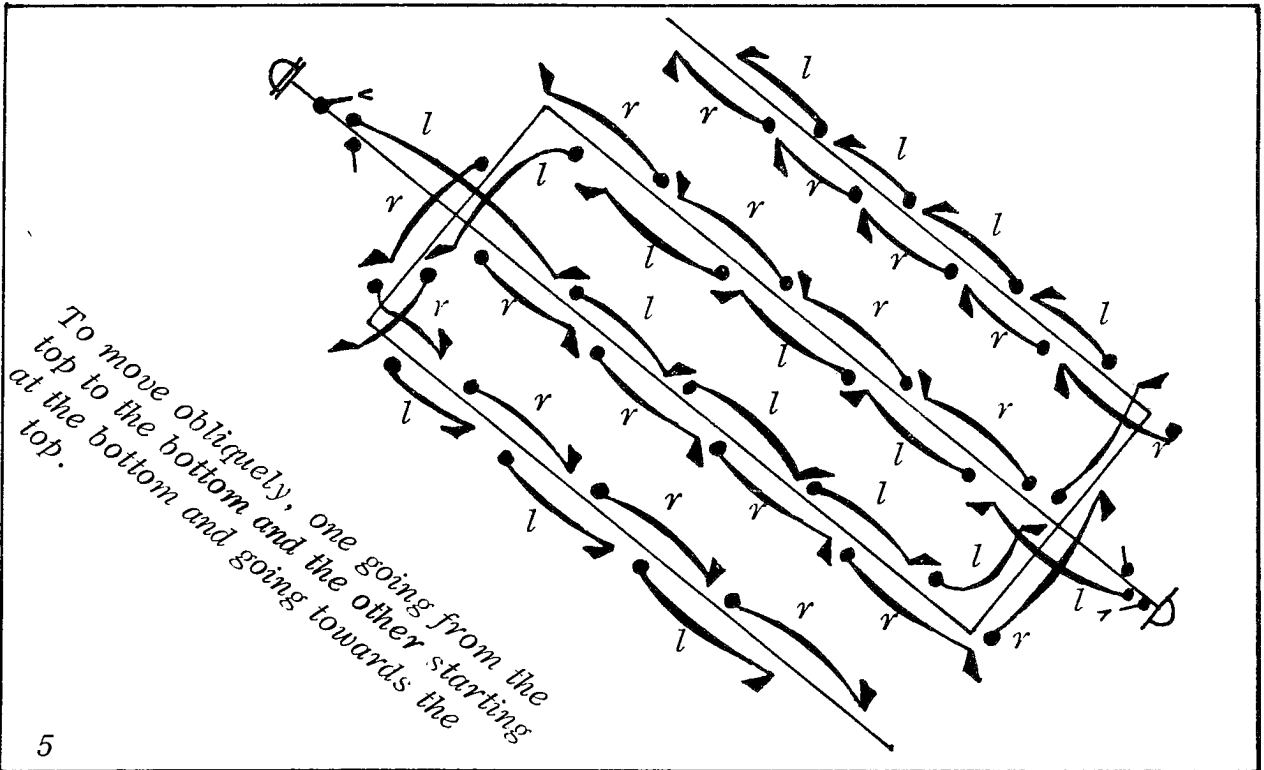


3

The same, shown differently.

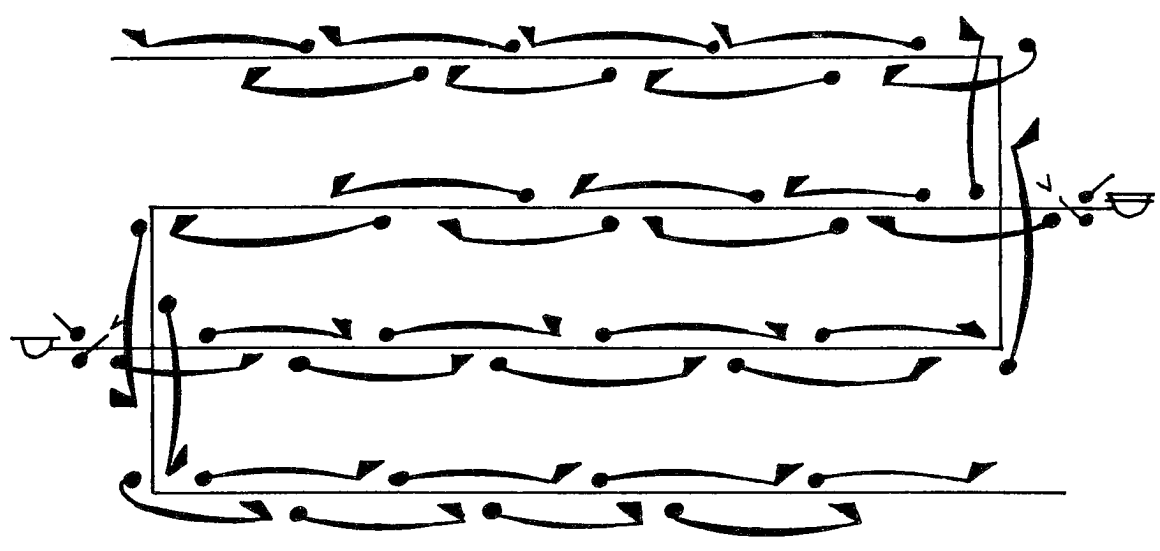


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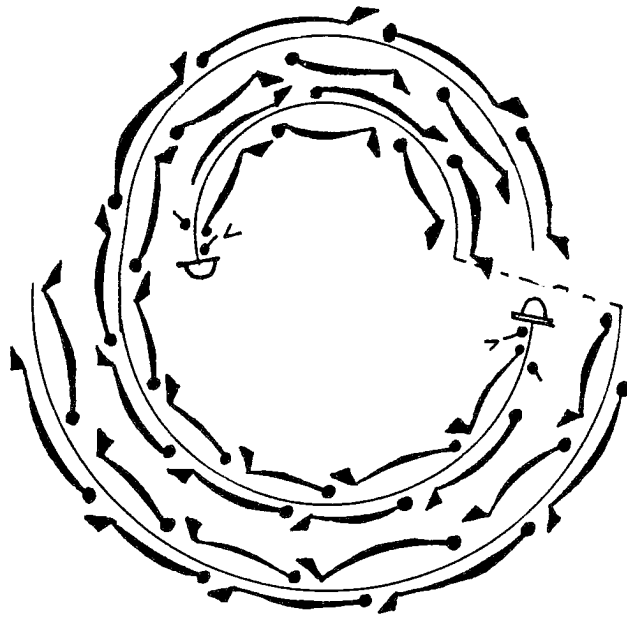
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A man and a woman moving from the 2nd position to the 5th and passing one above the other.



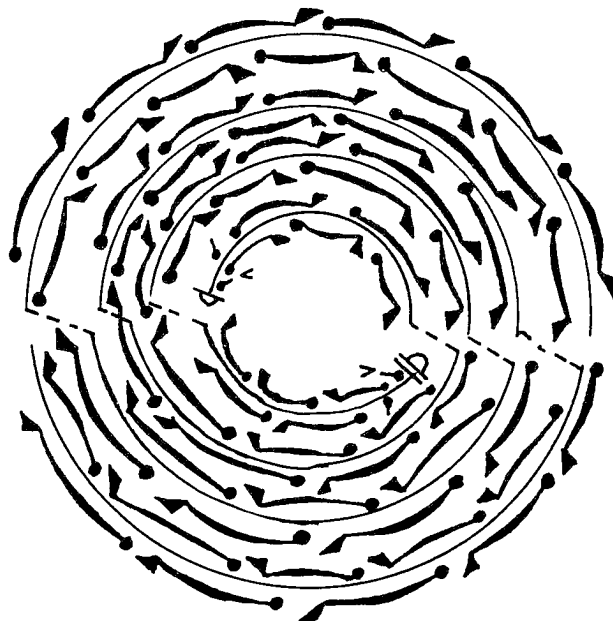
6

To move forward in a circle.



7

Another, for two circuits



8

Chapter 5

THE VARIOUS SIGNS WHICH SHOW THE MOVEMENTS AND OTHER ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR DANCING

ALL the preceding ways of travelling are composed solely of simple steps which consist of nothing more than carrying the feet forward or backward and generally all that is called walking.

But in actual dancing, the characters which represent the steps and the positions or half positions will be sometimes charged with several of those signs which, by their various shapes and the part of the step where they are displayed, make known the manner one must assume for making steps, whether to raise the foot, or bend the knee, where to straighten it in rising or even to jump: in a word, to try to show clearly all that it is intended the leg should do.

For example, the sign for sinking A, shown by that little line which slopes down towards the head, can be placed at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of steps.

Thus, when it is at the beginning, one must sink before moving.

In the middle, the foot which is behind approaches the first position and one sinks whilst continuing the step to the proportionate distance.

And when the sign is at the end, one makes the sink as the step is finishing.

As regards the sign for rising, which is different in that it is strait (i.e. it does not slope), rising nevertheless for a short distance on the same side as the toe, it is similarly put in the same places.

The 7th, 8th and 9th squares are charged with the signs for sinking and rising; but the explanation, which is contained in each square, is sufficient for understanding how they are done.

The sign for raising the foot, shown by the line C which crosses the step, is placed at the beginning, the middle and the end in squares 10, 11 and 12.

The one for sliding the toe of the foot, D, is only placed in the middle of a step; and that for placing it on the ground is shown by a V, placed just to the right of the toe of the character representing the step.* The sign for falling is also placed in the middle.

CONTINUATION OF THE VARIOUS SIGNS

The sign for jumping, which is shown by two little lines marked on a half position, can also be placed on the step but it depends on whether the step calls for it.

In the second square, the half position is charged with the signs for sinking and jumping, for this one says, a hop.

The third, is to sink on one foot and allow yourself to fall onto the other; this is called a jetté.

The fourth, is to sink and spring forward on the same foot.

* On a step made with the left foot, it would be on the left of the toe

The fifth, is to sink and spring forward on both feet at the same time, as though the feet were joined together.

In this example the sign for jumping should be in the same place on the step as for a jetté, where the jump is made to finish the step, (i.e. at the end, not in the middle as drawn in the original.)

The sixth, is a half jetté which I have pictured here for the sake of those coupés of two movements and other steps which contain half jumps.

The seventh, is to lightly touch the toes of the foot to the ground and so move it forward and hold it up in the air.

The eighth, is an extremely slow step which is shown by a white head to the step and also by the dot which gives it the value of three crotchets.

The ninth, is a slow step, the head of which is white and in consequence it has the value of two crotchets.

The tenth, takes the time of a dotted crotchet.

The eleventh, is a simple crotchet.

The twelfth, is a quick step which has the value of a quaver.

The thirteenth, is a half step or imperfect step which has a time value of a semi-quaver.

This sign is for showing the action made by one leg when the body leans the other way on the other foot. (i.e. It is merely a counter-balancing action.)

THE SIGNS FOR TURNING AND THE VARIOUS WAYS OF GIVING HANDS

The sign for turning has many applications such as turning before making the step, whilst making it and at the end of the step. These three types I have decided to remove from the steps and to invent some others which are equally understandable in order to place them in a more suitable position.

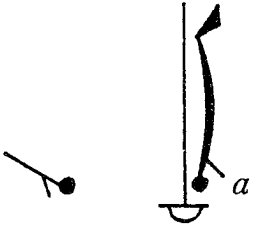
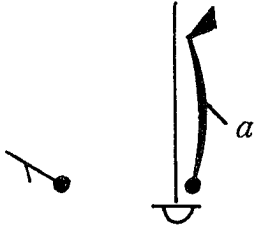
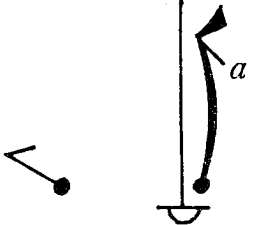
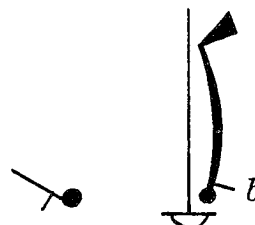
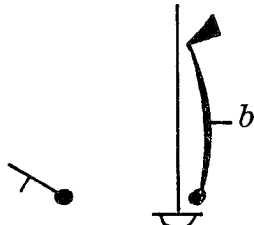
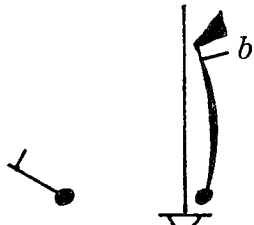
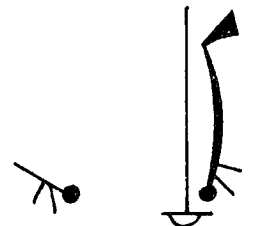
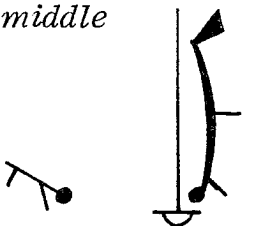
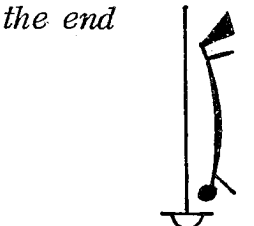

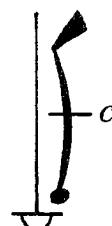

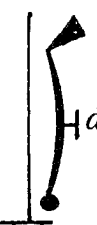


Those which occupy the first squares of this illustration seem to me to differ the one from the other in such a manner as to avoid mistakes. Thus one is able to place them easily just above the appropriate part of the step.

For example, if you are obliged to turn before making the step, the sign for turning will be before the step but if you are obliged to turn during it, the sign should be above the sink. In the same way, if one turns only on rising the sign will be above the rise.

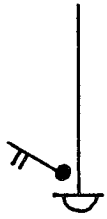

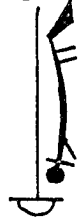
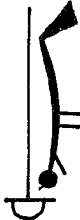


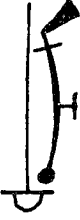






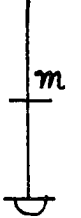

As regards the various methods of taking hands, this seems a very useful appendage to me, in that it makes known how one has to hold hands.

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








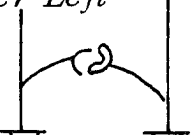
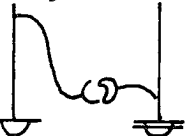
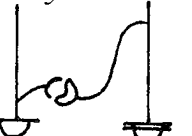
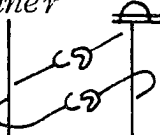

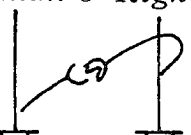

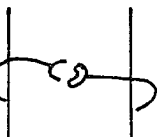




(The Various Signs)

<p><i>Sink before stepping</i></p>  <p>1</p>	<p><i>Sink in the middle</i></p>  <p>2</p>	<p><i>Sink at the end</i></p>  <p>3</p>
<p><i>To rise before</i></p>  <p>4</p>	<p><i>To rise in the middle</i></p>  <p>5</p>	<p><i>To rise at the end</i></p>  <p>6</p>
<p><i>To sink & rise before</i></p>  <p>7</p>	<p><i>Sink at the start, rise in the middle</i></p>  <p>8</p>	<p><i>Sink at the start, rise at the end</i></p>  <p>9</p>
<p><i>To raise the foot before</i></p>  <p>10</p>	<p><i>To raise it in the middle</i></p>  <p>11</p>	<p><i>To leave the foot in the air at the end</i></p>  <p>12</p>
<p><i>To slide the foot</i></p>  <p>13</p>	<p><i>To place only the toe on the ground</i></p>  <p>14</p>	<p><i>To fall</i></p>  <p>15</p>

The Various Signs, continued.

<p><i>To Jump</i></p>  <p>1</p>	<p><i>To Sink and Jump</i></p>  <p>2</p>	<p><i>To Sink on One Leg and Spring on to the other</i></p>  <p>3</p>
<p><i>To Hop Forward</i></p>  <p>4</p>	<p><i>To Jump with Both Feet together</i></p>  <p>5</p>	<p><i>A Half Jetté</i></p>  <p>6</p>
<p><i>To Scrape the Toe while moving it Forward, Finishing in the Air</i></p>  <p>7</p>	<p><i>A Slow Step</i></p>  <p>8</p>	<p><i>A Slow Step</i></p>  <p>9</p>
<p><i>A Dotted Crotchet</i></p>  <p>10</p>	<p><i>A Crotchet</i></p>  <p>11</p>	<p><i>A Fast Step with the Value of a Quaver</i></p>  <p>12</p>
<p><i>An Imperfect Step</i></p>  <p>13</p>	<p><i>Indication of the Down-beat in a Bar</i></p>  <p>14</p>	<p><i>To Indicate Two Bars (Rest)</i></p>  <p>15</p>

A Table of the Various signs for Turning and the Manner of Giving Hands

A quarter turn to the Right 	A half turn to the Right 	A three-quarter turn to the Right 	A whole turn to the Right 
A quarter turn to the Left 1 	A half turn to the Left 2 	A three-quarter turn to the Left 3 	A whole turn to the Left 4 
A man's hand 	To present the right hand with the arm extended 	To present the left hand 	To present both 
A woman's hand 5 			
To release one hand 9 	To release both 10 	To lead with the Right hand at the side 11 	To lead with the Left hand 12 
Two hands joined one Right, the other Left 13 	The man leading with hand held out Sideways 14 	The woman leading with hand held out Sideways 15 	To take hands in the German Dance Manner 16 
To give Left hands 17 	The woman gives her Right hand to the man's Right 18 	Right hand to Right hand 19 	To give Right hand to Left hand 20 
To indicate Two Bars (Rest) 21 	One Bar 22 	Half a Bar 23 	A Hesitation 24 

Chapter 6

THE 'TEMPS DE COURANTE' OR 'PAS GRAVE'

WHEN one comes to understand all the various signs the problems are over, because the knowledge of the steps is easily acquired by paying attention to the location of the signs.

I shall begin with the Temps de Courante in the first square, this step is begun from the fourth position, starting with the foot which happens to be behind in order to pass it forward to finish in the fourth position.

But I cannot dispense with drawing it in all its parts so as to omit nothing at all that would render it easier to understand.

For example the half position A* represents the foot which carries the weight of the body; it is charged with the signs for sinking and rising because this leg contributes the most to the shape of this step and the other only moves to pass from behind to its appointed place in front. In sliding, the pointed toe begins the slide from the middle of the step. I am not saying that it should not perform the sink at the same time; and it is for this reason that a line, which will serve to show the same thing in all the other steps, joins the two heads, because when the head of a half position is joined by a thin line to the head of a step, the leg which moves participates in the movements assigned to the leg which supports the body.

The head of the step is white, in order to indicate that it is a slow one, because it fills the whole extent of a bar of triple or duple time.

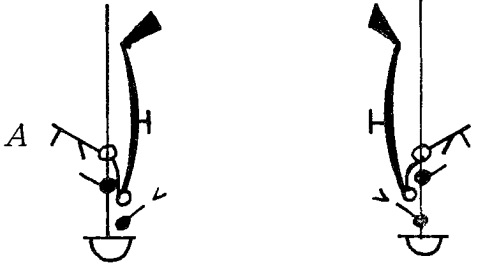

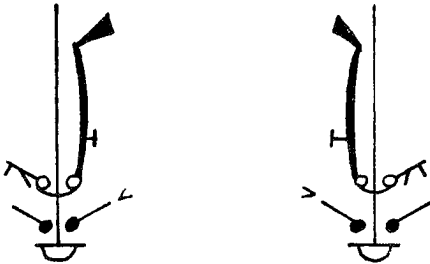
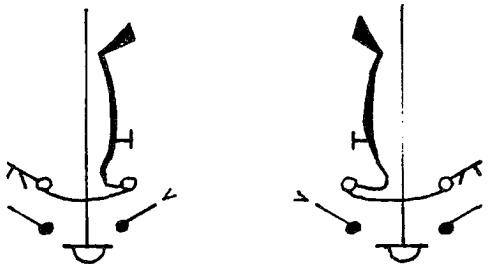

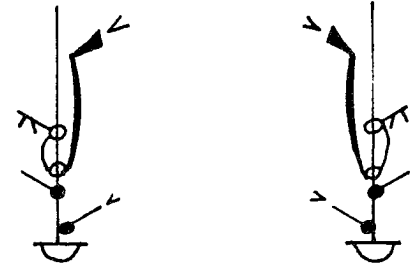
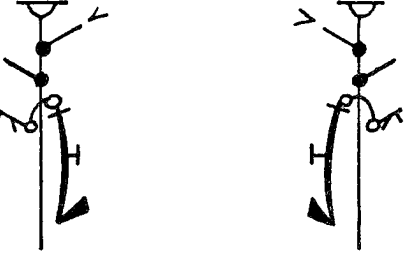
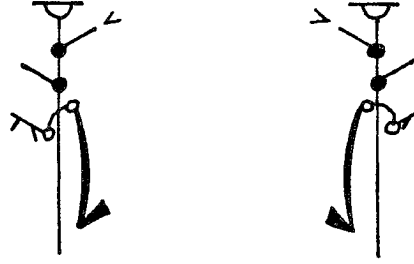
In those which start from the first or third position, the sink must be closer to the head.

One finds in each square the steps drawn for both feet. This is because when one has evolved a step for one foot it is necessary to show it for the other, so giving plenty of information.

* * * *

*The letter A does not appear in the original illustration, presumably a printer's omission.

Table of Courante Steps

<p><i>The Temps de Courante Forward</i></p> <p>1</p> 	<p><i>The same without scraping the Foot</i></p> <p>2</p> 
<p><i>Another, starting from the 1st Position</i></p> <p>3</p> 	<p><i>Another, going from the 2nd to the 4th</i></p> <p>4</p> 
<p><i>Another, starting from the 3rd</i></p> <p>5</p> 	<p><i>Another, where only the Toe is placed on the ground</i></p> <p>6</p> 
<p><i>Another, Backwards</i></p> <p>7</p> 	<p><i>Another, without sliding the Foot</i></p> <p>8</p> 

Chapter 7

THE HALF COUPÉ

THE half coupé is only a part of a composed step, like a coupée, a Pas de Bourée and others, hence the name, half. It is varied only by the position from which it starts, as can be seen by this table.

In the first square the step starts from the fourth position: this is why the sign for raising the foot is just above the head of the step, to let it be known that the foot which is behind, is lifted in order to move it up to the first position, which is the middle of the step, and at this point one places the sink and the rise is at the end, this being clearly shown where, having sunk, one passes the foot forward to the proportionate distance, where one rises, this completing the extent of the step.

It is not the same in the second square. The step starts from the third position, thus the sink is just above the head and the foot is raised afterwards in order to lead forward, up to the proportionate distance, where the rise occurs at the end as is normal.

In the third square, it starts from the second position; it is for this reason that the sign for raising the foot comes first and the others as normal.

In the fourth, it starts from the first position and the sink* is just above the head for the reason I have just told you, which is that the action of sinking is made in the first position.

In the fifth, which is a half-balance, the step is sunk first and carried to the side whilst rising.

In the sixth, it is crossed in front as far as the fifth position, because the step crosses the straight line.

In the seventh, it is beaten behind, whilst sinking, and then carried again to the front.

In the eighth, it is beaten before on the instep, whilst sinking, and then carried forward again for the rise.

As regards those steps that are made in turning, it suffices to observe the turning signs which accompany the step, which show clearly if it is a quarter turn or a half turn.

One thing more, those who are interested in drawing in this form regularly must see to it that the toe of the foot is turned the same way as it is intended the step should be made.

* * * *

* 'pied' in the original; almost certainly a printer's error, should be sink - 'plie'.

Table of Half-Coupés

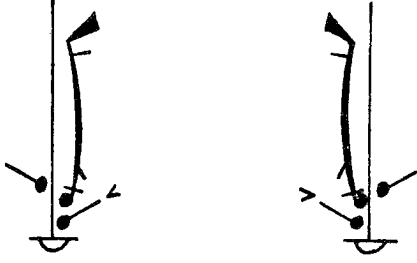
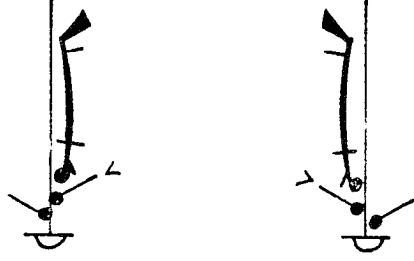
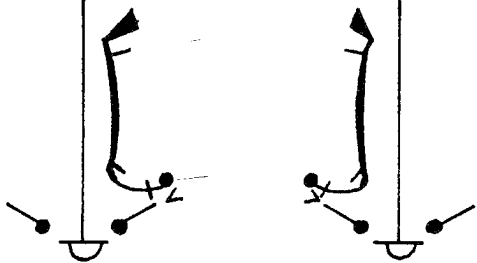
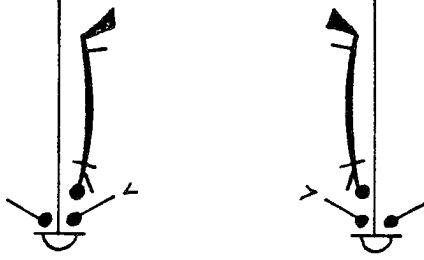
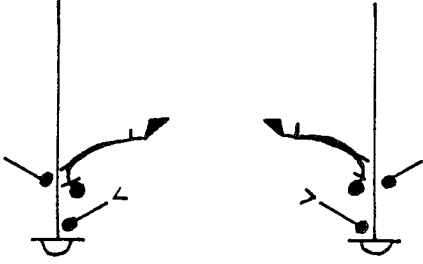

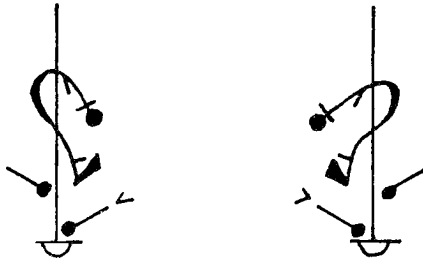
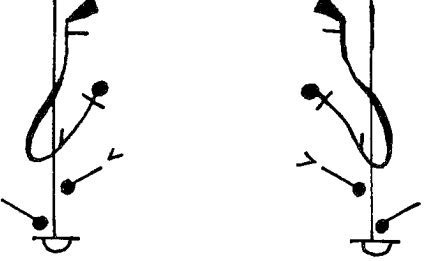
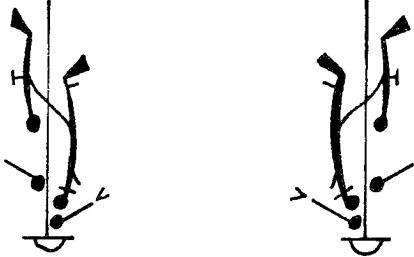


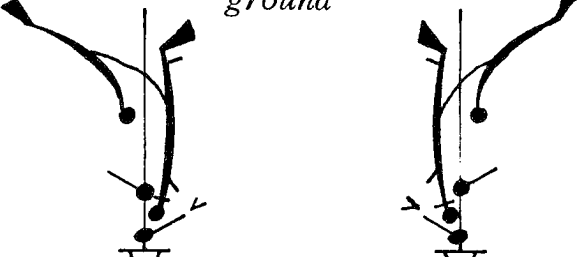


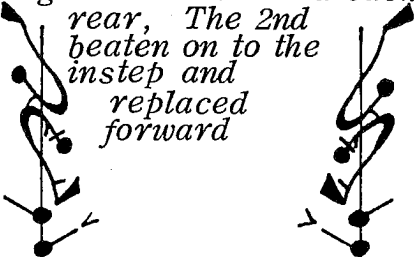

<p><i>Half-coupé from the 4th Position</i></p> <p>1</p> 	<p><i>Another, starting from the 3rd.</i></p> <p>2</p> 
<p><i>Another from the 2nd</i></p> <p>3</p> 	<p><i>Another, from the 1st</i></p> <p>4</p> 
<p><i>Another, opening to the Side</i></p> <p>5</p> 	<p><i>Another, crossed in Front</i></p> <p>6</p> 
<p><i>Another, beaten behind</i></p> <p>7</p> 	<p><i>Another, beaten on to the Instep</i></p> <p>8</p> 

Table of Coupés Forward

<p><i>Forward, the 2nd sliding the Toe in passing</i></p>  <p>1</p>	<p><i>The same without sliding the Foot</i></p>  <p>2</p>
<p><i>Another, where only the Toe is placed on the ground</i></p>  <p>3</p>	<p><i>Another, the 2nd Step sideways, placing only the Toe on the ground</i></p>  <p>4</p>
<p><i>The same, holding the Foot forward in the air</i></p>  <p>5</p>	<p><i>The 1st Step crossed before and the 2nd opened sideways</i></p>  <p>6</p>
<p><i>Another, beaten behind whilst sinking and then carried back to the rear, The 2nd beaten on to the instep and replaced forward</i></p>  <p>7</p>	<p><i>The same, the 2nd opened sideways</i></p>  <p>8</p>

Chapter 8

THE COUPÉ

THERE are only two sorts of coupé.

The ordinary coupé.

And the coupé of two movements.

The first is composed of a half-coupé and a slow step.

The second of a half-coupé and a half-spring (demi-jetté).

The ordinary coupé is sometimes augmented with beats. But as this type of step is seldom found in town dances, I have restricted myself to a particular number, capable of giving all the necessary information.

As one will see in the tables following in this first section, I have observed the same arrangement as in the other tables, in placing the steps forward first, followed by those backward and similarly the others.

* * * *

Chapter 9

BOURÉE STEPS AND FLEURETS

ONE distinguishes between two sorts of Bourée steps; there is the Bourée step of two movements, which is the old step, and this is composed of one half-coupée, one walking step made on the toes and one half-spring which makes the third step. It is this one that is shown in the first square of the table of Bourée steps.

But as one smooths out the way of doing those movements that occur too frequently, one more often uses the second which one calls a Bourée step with a Fleuret and it is composed of one half-coupée and two walking steps on the toes.

The Fleuret is still a type of Bourée step, because it is composed of three steps. It can be made in two ways, with the first there is only one movement and the second is with a leap on the third step.



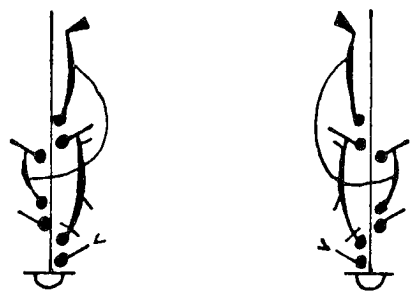
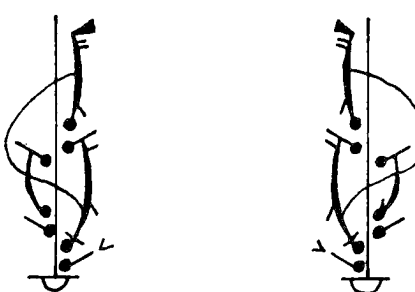

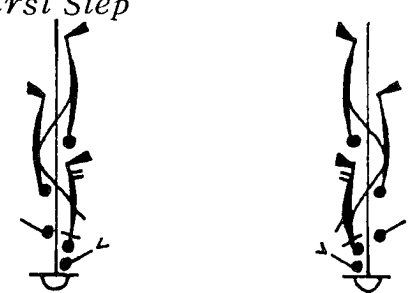
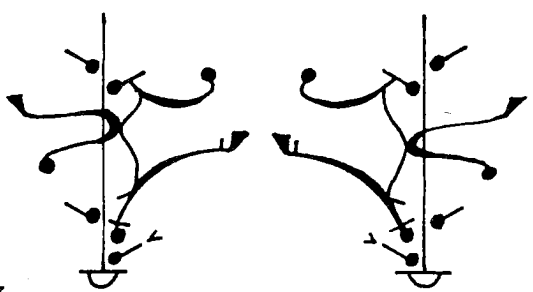

There is also one other type; this is where one makes a half-spring on the first step instead of a half-coupé. This step is very suitable for tunes in duple time, such as Rigadoons and other fast tunes.

There is again another step which is at the end of the tables; which one calls a double Bourée step (Pas de Bourée doublé) or Fast Bourée step (Pas de Bourée Vite); and it is composed of four steps; as you will see it begins with a half-coupé and two walking steps on the toes and the fourth is a half-spring (demi-jetté) this finishing the four steps of which it is composed.

But as I presume those that will be using this book will have learnt dancing, a longer explanation would become as boring as unnecessary; moreover it (the explanation) appears in each square. Nevertheless, some are left where I have not put it in, in order to employ you in their decipherment yourselves and in this way to acquire a more perfect understanding of them.

* * * *

Table of Bourée and Fleuret Steps Forward

<p><i>Bourée Step Forward</i></p>  <p>1</p>	<p><i>Bourée Step with a Fleuret</i></p>  <p>2</p>
<p><i>Fleuret Simple, Forward</i></p>  <p>3</p>	<p><i>Fleuret of Two Movements with a Jump</i></p>  <p>4</p>
<p><i>Bourée Step Forward placing only the Toe on the Ground on the Last</i></p>  <p>5</p>	<p><i>Another Jumped by making a Jette on the first Step</i></p>  <p>6</p>
<p><i>Another, Opening</i></p>  <p>7</p>	<p><i>Another, Beaten Behind and the 2nd Enclosed. The 3rd Forward</i></p>  <p>8</p>