

The Hesitation The Castles Explain This Popular Dance

Fifth in a Series of Illustrated Articles on Dancing as an Art.



1 Assume Ordinary Plain-waltz Position, In This Step, Gentleman Steps Back with Right Foot Taking Two Steps on Two Counts.

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BY VERNON CASTLE.

AS TO the origin of the waltz there are varied opinions. Professor Desrat claims that it came from Russia; another writer states that it is derived from an old dance, the alle-mande. Notwithstanding this controversy, it has been proved beyond a doubt that the waltz in its first form came from Italy to Provence, and thence to the Court of Valois, under the name of "La Volta." Henry III and Marguerite of Valois were both fervent devotees of this dance, which they called "valse a trois temps." Other dances overshadowed and crowded it out later on, and little was heard of it until, in its present form, it was brought from Germany to Paris in 1795. Castil-Blaze, an accepted authority, called it "that imp from France brought up in Germany." The first German waltz tune was the well-known "Ach du Lieber Augustin," and dates as far back as 1778.

It immediately became a favorite with the pleasure-loving Parisians, and when the Austrian Embassy in Paris introduced its famous "dejeuner dansant" in the beginning of the 19th century, the waltz was the prime favorite at these gatherings. Its reception by the English public was less cordial when the French dancing master, Cellarius, introduced the waltz into London society in 1812. Caricatures appeared in the papers picturing the sentiments of the ultra-purist section of the community, who had persuaded themselves that the introduction of the waltz into England was a conclusive step on the national downward path. There still is in existence a letter from a shocked parent, who hurried his daughter away from a ballroom where he saw his precious offspring held by a young man in a position that he could not deem better than the "very reverse of back to back."

This first real round dance did not become popular until the Russian Emperor Alexander, with Countess Lieven as partner, had danced it in 1812 at Almack's, then the meeting-place of the fashionable world of London. For a long time however, the waltz was a perpetual thorn in the side of the anemic moralist, and even as late as 1870 a pamphlet by John Haven Dexter was issued against it, in which he objected to the lawless arm of the partner, sex encircling the graceful form of a young and beautiful female. At the present day a new form of the dance has crowded out the old-fashioned waltz. It is the hesitation waltz. Before I go any further I want to admit being no great authority on this dance; I only try to explain the way it is done by the best dancers. Every one seems to do it differently, and I know at least four persons, whose word I would swear by, who assure me that they are the originators of the hesitation, in fact, my wife and I seem to be the only dancers who have had not a hand (or a foot) in this sometimes beautiful and much-abused dance.

The dancers assume the ordinary plain waltz position. Then the man steps back with the right foot, taking two steps on two counts, alternating the right and left foot; then he moves forward two steps—right foot, left foot—again allowing each step to fill in one count of the music. Thus, to be very explicit, four counts have been occupied, but the steps should not be directly forward and backward, leaving you in the same position; you should turn and travel just a little. For the next two counts the gentleman allows his weight to rest on his left foot. This creates the sense of hesitation



2 Lady Starts Forward Left, Right and Back Left, Right, Finally Holding Her Weight on Right Foot, Through Fifth and Sixth Counts.

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3 For Variation in Dance, Swing Lady and Travel Back Two Steps, Again Getting Into Stride. © Hill Studio.

in the dance which has given it its name. The lady starts forward—left, right and back left, right—finally holding her weight on the right foot through part of the step—left, right and the fifth and sixth counts. Then she forward, left, right—finally holding

PENROD BY BOOTH TARKINGTON

Continued From Page 3.

field hastily interposed the suggestion of dinner, and the small procession went in to the dining-room. "It has been a delicious day," said Mr. Kinoshing, presently, "warm but balmy." With a benevolent smile he addressed Penrod, who sat opposite him. "I suppose, little gentleman, you have been indulging in the usual outdoor sports of vacation?" Penrod laid down his fork and glared, open-mouthed, at Mr. Kinoshing. "You'll have another slice of breast of the chicken?" Mr. Schofield inquired, jolly and quickly. "A lovely day!" exclaimed Margaret, with equal promptitude and emphasis. "Lovely, oh, lovely! Lovely!" "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!" said Mrs. Schofield. "Yes, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!" Penrod closed his mouth and sank back in his chair—and his relatives took breath.

Mr. Kinoshing looked pleased. This responsive family, with its ready enthusiasm made the kind of audience he liked. "Youth relaxes in summer," he said. "Boyhood is the age of relaxation; one is playful, light, free, unfettered. One runs and leaps and enjoys oneself with one's little companions. It is good for the little lads to play with their friends; they jostle, push and wrestle and simulate little, happy struggles with one another in harmless conflict. The young muscles are toughening. It is good. Boyish chivalry develops, enlarges, expands. The young learn quickly, in-

tuitively, spontaneously. They perceive the obligations of noblesse oblige. They begin to comprehend the necessity of caste and its requirements. They learn courtesy in their games; they learn politeness, consideration for one another in their pastimes, amusements, lighter occupations. I make it my pleasure to join them often, for I sympathize with them in all their little wholesome joys as well as in their little bothers and perplexities. I understand them, you see; and let me tell you it is no easy matter to understand the little lads and lassies." He sent to each listener his beaming glance, and, permitting it to come to rest upon Penrod, inquired:

"And what do you say to that, little gentleman?" Mr. Schofield uttered a stentorian cough. "More! You'd better have some more chicken! More! Do!" "More chicken!" urged Margaret simultaneously. "Do, please! Please! More! Do! More!" "Beautiful, beautiful," began Mrs. Schofield. "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful." It is not known in what light Mr. Kinoshing viewed the expression of Penrod's face. Perhaps he mistook it for awe; perhaps he received no impression at all of its extraordinary quality. Certainly Penrod's expression, which, to the perception of his family, was perfectly horrible, caused not the faintest perturbation in the breast of Mr. Kinoshing. Mr. Kinoshing waived the chicken, and continued to talk. "Yes, I think I may claim to understand boys," he said, smiling thoughtfully. "One has

been a boy oneself. Ah, it is not all playtime! I hope our little gentleman here does not overwork himself at his Latin, at his classics, as I did, so that at the age of 8 years I was compelled to wear glasses. We must be careful not to strain the little eyes at his scholar's tasks, not to let the little shoulders grow round over his scholar's desk. Youth is golden, we should keep it golden, bright, glistering. Youth should frolic, should be sprightly; it should play its cricket, its tennis, its handball. It should run and leap; it should laugh, should sing madrigals and glees, carol with the lark, ring out in chancies, folk songs, ballads, roundelays."

He talked on. At that instant Mr. Schofield held himself ready to cough vehemently and shout, "More chicken!" to drown out Penrod in case the fatal words again fell from those eloquent lips; and Mrs. Schofield and Margaret kept themselves prepared at all times to assist him. So passed a threatening meal, which Mrs. Schofield hurried, every evening with decency, to its conclusion. She felt that somehow they would all be safer out in the dark of the front porch, and led the way thither as soon as possible. "No cigar, I thank you," Mr. Kinoshing, establishing himself in a wicker chair beside Margaret, waved away her father's proffer. "I do not smoke. I have never tasted tobacco in any form." Mrs. Schofield was confirmed in her opinion that this would be an ideal son-in-law. Mr. Schofield was not sure. "No," said Mr. Kinoshing. "No tobacco for me. No cigar, no pipe, no cigarette, no cheroot. For me, a book—a volume

of poems, perhaps. Verses, rimes, lines, metrical and cadenced—those are my dissipation. Tennyson by preference; 'Maud,' or 'Idylls of the King'—poetry of the sound Victorian days; there is none later. Or Longfellow will rest me in a tired hour. Yes; for me, a book, a volume in the hand, held lightly between the fingers."

Mr. Kinoshing looked pleasantly at his fingers as he spoke, waving his hand in a curving gesture which brought it into the light from a window faintly illumined from the interior of the house. Then he passed his hand over his thin hair and turned toward Penrod, who was seated upon the railing in a dark corner.

"The evening is touched with a slight coolness," said Mr. Kinoshing. "Perhaps I may request the little gentleman—" "Er-r-ruff!" coughed Mr. Schofield. "You'd better change your mind about a cigar."

"No, thank you. I was about to request the lit—" "Do try one," Margaret urged. "I'm sure papa's are nice ones. Do try—" "No, I thank you. I remarked a slight coolness in the air and my hat is in the hallway. I was about to request—" "I'll get it for you," said Penrod suddenly. "If you will be so good," said Mr. Kinoshing. "It is a black bowler hat, little gentleman, and placed upon a table in the hall."

some of your own. After you have a rough idea of this first step I advise you to cease counting and try to do the hesitation when the music seems to 'ask it'—if you know what I mean. Nearly every good waltz has certain strains which, if you have a good ear for music, you will not fail to recognize as calling for some sort of hesitation or pause.

In my opinion it is much better to hesitate when the music hesitates, and when it does not simply do the ordinary waltz movement or steps to that tempo. Avoid always the terrible schedule

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Penrod entered the door and a feeling of relief, mutually experienced, carried from one to another of his three relatives their interchanged congratulations that he had recovered his sanity. "The day is done, and the darkness," began Mr. Kinoshing—and recited that poem entire. He followed it with "The Children's Hour," and after a pause at the close to allow his li-



5 Another Form Variation in Dancing the Hesitation, Now, Yet Restful, the Steps Gentleman Forward, Left, Right, etc.

which obliges you to wait, hesitate, etc., no matter what tune is being played or who is in your way. That kind of dancing belongs to the people who count to themselves, looking up at the ceiling, 1, 2, 3—1, 2, 3—1, 2, 3.

There is little or no difficulty about the Half-and-Half dance, except the time, and that is a little difficult, because it is entirely new to dancing. It is 5-4 time, which means there are five beats to the bar. In waltz time there are six, and you usually count 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, but in the half-and-half you count 1, 2, 3, 1, 2.

And now for the dance: The ordinary position is assumed, the gentleman holding his partner a little farther away from him than in the waltz, and on the first three counts you take one long, slow step, and on the next two counts you take two steps. For instance, supposing the man starts off forward with his left foot; he in a way hesitates on this foot for three counts. Then he takes two short steps for the other two counts, continuing forward on the right foot comes forward for three counts, and so on. The lady does the same step on the opposite foot. This is the Half-and-Half, and when done properly looks like something between the Tango, Lame Duck and Hesitation. It is a very quiet and pretty dance.

Other things you can do in this dance are unlimited. For instance, the gentleman can turn the lady so that she is going in the same direction as he is, and they can do the Eight-Step—of course always keeping the 1, 2, 3, 1-2 time.

If you wish to spin you must do so on the slow step, continuing forward on the last two counts. All of the modern waltz or hesitation steps fit in beautifully after one has caught the rhythm. (Copyright, 1914, Otis F. Wood.)

ugh!" He dropped his hands from his hat and rose. His manner was slightly agitated. "I fear I may have taken a trifling—ah—cold, I should—ah—perhaps be—ah—better at home. I will—ah—say good night."

At the steps he instinctively lifted his hand to remove his hat, but did not do so, and, saying good night again, in a faint voice, departed with visible stiffness from that house, to return no more. "Wall of all—" cried Mrs. Schofield, astounded. "What was the matter? He just went—like that!" She made a hurried gesture. "In heaven's name, Margaret, what did you say to him?" "I!" exclaimed Margaret indignantly. "Nothing! He just went!" "Why, he didn't even take off his hat when he said good night!" said Mrs. Schofield. Margaret, who had crossed to the doorway, caught the ghost of a whisper behind her, where stood Penrod. "You bet he didn't!" He knew not that he was overheard. A frightful suspicion flashed through Margaret's mind—a suspicion that Mr. Kinoshing's hat would have to be either bolted off or shaved off. With growing horror she recalled Penrod's long absence when he went to bring the hat. "Penrod," said Margaret sharply, "let me see your hands!" She had toiled at those hands herself late that afternoon, nearly scalding her own, but at last achieving a lily purity. "Let me see your hands!" She seized them. Again they were tarred. (Copyright, 1914, by the Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.) Next week's Penrod story is entitled "The Fall of Georgie Bassett."