

THROUGH THE MAZES OF THE NEW SPANISH DANCE



Ready for the Dance

A True Terpsichorean Revel That Thrills Even the Smart Set

THE strains of "Espanita" that floated over the cool waters of Newport's cliff-edged bay this summer are floating over the whole United States this fall.

The dashing, piquant figures of the Spanish barn dance which accompanied the "Espanita" in Newport's ballrooms are trying the grace and skill of the thousands who love a lively dance wherever the thrilling rhythm of that alluring air is heard—which seems to be pretty nearly everywhere.

Sometimes the earlier and once more familiar tune of "Santiago" measures the whirling steps, and again some old Spanish air that fitted the classic castanet dance is levied on for the compelling rhythm. But whatever the air, the picturesque swaying of the body and the fascinating flash of the ankle which mark the Spanish barn dance for the brilliant performance it is are contributing to the enrapturing of partners and the delight of interested spectators.

It is the new dance of the season, and it is acknowledged to be, in itself, an amply important contribution to national pleasure for the whole year of its appearance. But it means a good deal more, according to experts in the dance, than is apparent now.

This dance will probably be accounted *passe* next summer by those who pretend to intimate or distant acquaintance with the dance fads affected by the inner social set. But there will be other dances, not less energetic than this, which will constitute an entirely new order of things for her strenuousness Madame Terpsichore.

WE MUST hark back not a few years—almost to the days when the matrons of today were in their short skirts—to recall the time when the few plain, foundation steps of dancing were esteemed sufficient for the variation of the numbers on a ball program, sandwiched in between more or less easy quadrilles. The ancient raquet was an innovation which to the conservative was startling, and to the prim shocking.

But it marked the beginnings of the trend in dancing which the Spanish barn dance of this year finally positively determines.

Imperceptibly, all dancing has been moving toward figures and steps that are properly classed as "fancy dancing," and, indeed, are not very far removed from regular stage dancing. The girl who a dozen years ago would have been regarded as quite an accomplished partner is today almost completely out of it if she has not taken the trouble to acquire a fresh repertoire of steps.

And even the well-equipped performer of three or four years ago is at a marked disadvantage unless she possesses that all-around training which enables her to grasp at once the application of fancy steps to the succession of novel figures.

It has been this demand for something new, always something new, that has compelled the evolution of dances which, only a few years ago, would have been classed as strictly limited to the professional stage, and the Spanish barn dance, when it came, set the seal of the once-esteemed professional on every dainty little shoe that twitched a private ballroom.

COUSIN TO THE BARN DANCE

Why it is the Spanish barn dance, and which barn or mansion it came from, Newport itself would have a hard task finding out. It may have sprung, as Minerva did from the brow of Jove, full fledged from Terpsichore's own toe. All anybody knows positively is that it was there, is here and next year is liable to be nowhere. Here are the figures and steps it is made up of:

The partners take position, the man holding the woman's left hand with his right, he setting the left foot forward and she the right.

They make one long but not high kick together, he with his right foot, she with her left. That leaves in the air his right foot and her left, and the position is held for a perceptible instant. Then each springs forward on the extended foot and taps lightly on the floor with the toe of the foot that remains in the rear. A distinct hop on the advanced foot follows.

Next instant they turn back to back and do the regular Spanish dance step, the man stamping with his left foot and bringing up to its instep the heel of the right, which rests on the toe. He stamps the right foot again and remains planted firmly on both feet. The woman does the steps in time with him, but uses the feet in opposite order. The man steps out with the left foot, kicks with the right and hops on the left, the woman stepping as he does, but, as before, using the feet in opposite order. Both are left with one foot in the air—the man, the left for the woman.



First Figure, the Start



Third, Facing Your Partner

He takes her hand again and, with positions of feet reversed from those in the preceding figure, they go forward and repeat until the progress of the dance, the order of the steps being the same save for the change of precedence as to the feet, brings them face to face instead of back to back.

Confronting each other, they do two delicate little balance steps in waltz time, and then the man, taking the woman's right hand in his right, raises it high above her head and lets her whirl around once, pivoting under her own hand and his outstretched arm. He bends over her upturned face, as she leans far backward, smiling at him.

If he kisses her then, he may get arrested; but nobody can blame him.

The music by this time is ripe for the waltz, so, if he hasn't kissed her and broken up the function with riot,

they wait four turns, and then repeat the whole dance. If the orchestra gets tired first, the dancers have to quit; and if the dancers play out first, the orchestra has an intermission.

It is as delightful to dance and witness as it is tiresome to read the detailed description. A really expert dancer, who is willing to give herself up to the daring abandon of its full possibilities, can almost make the spectators see the voluptuous swaying of the hips of fervent Castile. Above all, it satisfies the modern craving to have something doing every minute.

A well-known teacher of stage dancing, much of whose work of late has been the instructing



End of the Frolic, Before the Waltz

of society women in the fancy steps that are called for on the professional boards, unhesitatingly declares the new dance one of the most successful, from a technical and artistic point of view, that has been brought forward of late years.

Yet he is by no means sanguine of its survival. He is far more assured that the general type of dance which it represents is already fixed as a feature in society's diversions and all destined to persist indefinitely.

"This Spanish barn dance," he says, "is the di-

rect successor to the American barn dance, which was so universally popular last year. Besides being much prettier, it is less laborious. It is a combination of the old-fashioned three-step waltz and the steps that belong to the historic castanet dance of Spain, with a few kicks introduced, perhaps to keep the general variety from getting stale. It affords the opportunity, to a genuinely graceful and accomplished dancer, to introduce the beautiful Spanish movements of the shoulders as well as the hips. It is extremely graceful and active, even when performed in ordinary ball dress; when the short skirts and gay colors of the Spanish costume are worn, it becomes brilliantly picturesque. You don't have to take a trip abroad to behold what was always considered the most beautiful spectacle in old Madrid."

He was asked what agencies had brought such an exotic to the fore.

"It is really due to society's desire for something new and it may be to some few leaders' pride in their own skill. It is very pretty to look at; it is singularly charming to perform. But it takes a very good dancer to do it well. She should be up in the niceties of fancy dancing. If she is going to execute the hop and kicks elegantly enough to escape the suspicion of awkwardness, I suspect it made its hit just because there are now fancy dancers in society numerous enough to form a clique whose object is to emphasize their superiority to all social rivals in the matter of dancing."

"Perfectly simple, you see, Mrs. So-and-So knows that if she and a few of her friends can look ravishingly attractive in a dance which all the rest of the Newport circle must take a couple of weeks to learn, their enterprise in launching the Spanish dance mystery will give them a temporary monopoly of admiration. They haven't been living close to Wall street for nothing."

CHANCE TO SHOW SKILL

"And, anyway, apart from the feelings of admiration-loving human nature, the society woman who takes the trouble to become expert in fancy dancing deserves all the distinction she can gain by her skill; she has a perfect right to make the most of it. Let her competitors work as she does, if they want to share her glory."

"This new dance," added Mr. Wroe, "is nothing more than an incident developing in the course of the pronounced trend toward fancy dancing. Everywhere the society girl is being trained not merely for ballroom steps, but for some of the most exacting features not demanded by the stage. She takes to it kindly, partly because she realizes the exercise is a splendid beautiful one, mainly because it is her ambition to be qualified, from her very debut, to keep pace with all future changes in the art. Learned thoroughly in girlhood, she leaves her free from the necessity of running to the dancing master whenever a new dance is invented—which is just about once a year."

"The subject has now taken on, definitely, the aspect of a national preference for fancy dancing. For any one in society's younger sets, fancy dancing and, curiously enough, e-log dancing are well-nigh indispensable accomplishments. As for this Spanish barn dance, it can't hold the floor longer than a year, in the very nature of things. Society is too insistent on having at least one new dance every twelve months."

"What will the new harvest be?"

He smiled, at first mysteriously, then frankly. "I've never yet known the man who could safely prophesy," he rejoined, "but you needn't be surprised if all society next summer finds itself doing an Irish jig. No; there's no 'Oh, tut' about it. There are far fewer society girls who are helpless in the face of an Irish jig than people imagine. The jig is one of the most heart-whole dances that man's foot—or woman's either—ever thrilled to; and I've found plenty of pretty pupils who could do it as well as if they'd been bred in dancing Donegal. Watch them next year."

A New Astronomer Royal

ENGLAND has a new astronomer royal, Prof. Frank Watson Dyson, previously astronomer royal of Scotland and the holder of the chair of astronomy in the University of Edinburgh. He becomes next director of Greenwich Observatory, which ranks as the most famous in the world.

To the boy who hates mathematics the circumstance that Professor Dyson's school career was marked by an exceptional facility for figures may afford no encouragement to have over his vulgar fractions or his more refined trigonometry, but it does show the heights to which the possessor of a real vocation for mathematics can rise in an era when every one imagines everything has been discovered and calculated.

He had remained at Trinity College, Cambridge, for several years as a fellow when he was appointed to the post of chief assistant at Greenwich in 1894. He observed three total eclipses of the sun between the time he was appointed and the year 1901.

He was given the post of astronomer royal of Scotland five years ago, and was chosen professor of practical astronomy in Edinburgh University at the same time.

He didn't have a large class at the university—astronomy is far from a popular study as compared with chemistry or natural philosophy, for example. But he himself was extremely popular in Edinburgh, not only socially, but with his students, who had never found astronomy so lucidly and helpfully explained. His book on "The Systematic Motions of the Stars" proved to be a valuable contribution to the greatest of all astronomical problems—the construction of the heavens, which he presented from the point of view of the stellar motions.

It looks as though, besides the supreme distinction he now enjoys in his profession, he has secured the patent of an extremely long life. For, since the post of astronomer royal of England was established in 1575, there have been only eight other incumbents, and Professor Dyson's predecessor, Sir William Christie, hasn't died. He has simply retired.

YOUR CAT YOUR WORST ENEMY?

ALL the comfort has been taken out of the satisfaction of being an old maid.

No comfort in being an old maid! Why, where in the world will you find any one so cozy and content as your sure-enough old maid, who has abandoned all hope of marriage and has settled down to her crocheting, her cup of tea and her faithful cat?

That's just where it is—the cat. Those prying old doctors, who can never rest satisfied unless they are discovering some new and terrible danger to frighten humanity, have just announced that the cat is a hygienic traitor to the household that harbors it, carrying around germs that might otherwise be exterminated through cleanliness and intelligent care.

O H. WELL, who can't get along without an old cat?

That, Alice, was a very ungrateful question to ask. Even you, in the rosy flush of your girlhood, have known times when, after a quarrel with the young man who happened, that week, to be your best young man, you gathered up patient Jimima Ann, or Thomas Fells, as the house cat's name happened to be, cried convulsively into the soft fur and whispered:

"I'm just going to never marry anybody. I'll be an old maid and have you for my only friend."

You see, Alice, cats and old maids naturally board together, and the inborn instinct of a girl is to look to the cat for comfort when she decides that her heart has been shattered into fourteen pieces and can never be patched up again.

But you are in a parlous way indeed if you want to be dead instead of an old maid, and that's precisely what the cat is liable to do for you before you get through with your adventure in celibacy.

Those terrible doctors have found that cats, in nine cases out of ten, have consumption, which, while it used to be the favorite means of demise for heroines in the days when the novelists hadn't any



other word for death than that same grandiloquent "demise," is nowadays regarded with as little favor as death by being run over by an auto. It is one thing to plan, in the anguish of disappointed love, a career continuing up into the eighties with its loneliness mitigated by toasted marshmallows and an affectionate feline domestic, and quite another thing to forego yourself inhaling the fatal germs of tuberculosis from your one companion, and having to

forego the joys of the marshmallows at the early age of thirty or so.

The wiser thing to do, all circumstances considered, is to let the recalcitrant lover go his ways and make haste to marry the other fellows—one after another, if the marriage prove a failure and the divorce laws hold out.

But, even then, the cat seems to be one of the necessities of the city household. As for the country, the department of agriculture, having sternly tried the house cat on the indictment of neglecting its proper duty of catching rats and of committing its habitual crime of killing birds, has convicted it, and sentenced it to extermination without any recommendation to mercy.

In cities, however, the only ornithological prey awaiting the cat is the English sparrow, which would stand extermination as ruthlessly as that proposed for the cat; and rats and mice assuredly do call for some means of repression, with the cat as the traditional standby since the days of Dick Whittington.

But, even there, human invention has progressed far enough to make it possible to get along without the Whittington protegee. The London veterinarians, who have found the cats filled with tuberculous, declare that there are plenty of traps which will catch rodents far more surely than the best cat that ever lived. And there are vermin killers innumerable that leave the mice and rats small change for their lives if used regularly.

But the sovereign remedy is the very one which the civilized world has been fairly rushing to during the period since the discovery of the germ theory—cleanliness. Wherever you have dirt, you have rodents. And dirt being merely matter out of place, the definition includes every least particle of food material that isn't kept in some receptacle whose construction safeguards it from insects and bacteria of dust as well as from the bigger creatures that prey on man's food stores.

Old maids are notoriously cleanly housekeepers; so the inhibition of the cat from the old maid's menage does not necessarily doom her to consorting with mice or rats. You can still calculate on single blessedness, if your broken heart inclines that way, and have to fear that woman's finest foes will corral you on the table if there's no cat to guard you.

But the better course is the one mentioned previously—take the other fellow instead, and treat yourselves to such ineffable, old-maid, hygienic cleanliness that you won't need a cat, though married.