

# DIZZY WHIRLS AND SLIDES FROM EUROPE BY ELSIE JANIS



The Position for the Hungarian Czardas A Very Wonderful Dance Which Makes all Nations Sit Up and Rub Their Eyes.



Position for the Dance Seen in Brussels and Described in This Article. Girls Head Thrown Well Back Almost Resting On Partners' Shoulder.



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By  
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They Then Do the Same Variation with Their Arms About Each Other Waltzing From Side to Side.

## EUROPE CALLS US CRAZY, BUT COPIES US, JUST THE SAME.

"It is strange when a country goes crazy over a thing, some other country must bear the blame.

"We blame the Tango on South America, and over there they call everything except the Waltz and Tango 'cette folle danse Americaine' (that crazy American dance). But they are all doing it, and after all we can't complain, because it is something to start a thing and have all Europe copy it, even if it is crazy.

"They think over there that all Americans are quite mad anyway, so one dance more or less to our credit, or discredit, means nothing."

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EVERYWHERE I went last summer in Europe I managed to see dancing of some kind, and while we are putting all kinds of steps to all kinds of times, with no sense of shame, I think there may be some among those steps that I saw in Berlin, Venice, Brussels (not forgetting that splendid little city on the River Seine known as Paris) that we might adopt.

In the first place the ragtime craze was at its height everywhere, and in restaurants where the summer before you had heard dreamy French waltzes in which the Parisians excel, you would be compelled to eat your Sole Margery to the strains of "I Want to Be in Dixie" played all wrong. It's funny about the foreign musicians. They can play "Très Moutarde" or "La Sorella" so snappily that you can't sit still while they are playing them, but when it comes to an American rag they are lost. They don't understand our syncopation, and they play them all too slow, consequently when they start to do the dindon gai (turkey trot) as they call it, they waver from side to side madly. Really, you could not escape ragtime over there last summer, try as you would.

### Pretty German Waltzing Step.

While in Prague (Bohemia), the city of churches, I got so tired of wandering about looking up the interior decorations that I insisted on seeing some life. So in the good company of two Austrian gentlemen, mother and I sallied forth in search of excitement. We were told that there was one cabaret that was very, very exciting, so we went there. After much red tape and the poor Austrians using all their influence to get us inside of the fascinating place, we got in. I had it fixed firmly in my mind that I would see the dance of the seven veils or something equally exciting. We got in just in time for the big feature of the evening, which turned out to be two of the blackest American darkeys you ever saw, singing "Fiddle Up on Your Ragtime Violin" in English. They then did the regular Barbary



Man and Girl Step On Left Feet Throw Right Leg Over, Then Left Back and Right Over Again.

## The LIDO DIP SEEN AT VENICE

When The Right Leg Comes Over the Second Time The Dancers Dip Very Low On It With Left Leg Out Behind Them.

coast turkey trot. They were a great hit. So mother and I went home to bed saying, "Foiled again!"

That's just one example of how ragtime has reached every corner of Europe. Now, in Berlin, while they try all the dances, they still have a soft spot in their hearts for the old fashioned waltz, and I saw some pretty steps done by the waltzing Germans; for instance, one step that I think would be very effective in our Boston, or as a new variation of the hesitation waltz, can be done like this: The man rests his right hand lightly on the girl's shoulder and she rests her right hand on his left shoulder. Leaning well back from each other they hold their other hands straight out at their sides and then they start to waltz or Boston, whichever you prefer. Personally, I think strict one, two, three waltz time is better for this dance. They waltz, leaning from side to side as they do so, twice each way, as in the old German dances we have seen danced to "Lieber Augustine." Now we have bend to right, waltz one, two, three, bend to left, waltz one, two, three. Again right and once more left. Then the dancers stop, take their hands from each other's shoulders and stamp their feet one, two, three—man, right, left, right; girl, left, right, left, two times. During this stamping they are facing each

other and place their hands on their hips. They repeat the waltz movement, only this time with opposite hands, the man's left on the girl's right shoulder and the girl's right on the man's left shoulder. Repeat the waltzing from side to side as they did before and repeat the stamp of the feet, one, two, three at the end of the step twice. Then they do this same variation standing side by side with their arms about each other. Waltz from side to side and the stamp at the finish as they did before. They put a great deal of life in the stamping of their feet, and, in fact, they do all this variation with a great deal of abandon; they seem like big, laughing children just out for a good time.

In Brussels we went to the Palais d'Été, where they had a marvelous variety show and then dancing afterward. They had an unusual dance there. The public were not favoring it much, but the specialty dancers did it and then I saw some of the more brave amateurs tackling it and it seemed quite easy. It was like this: The entire dance was done with the girl's back to the man, both his arms about her waist and both her hands resting on his hands as if to hold them there, and she throws her head well back, almost resting on his shoulder. Now they do the old fashioned two step

twice each way, starting first to the right, then to the left, and after that they start again as if they were going to two step, but instead of two steps they do eight steps, or, rather, small slides around in a circle. At the end of eight slides they are around to where they started from, then they repeat the same steps again, starting to the left, two steps that way, two back to the right and then to the left for eight slides around in a circle to the left and right back to where they started from. They did several other steps, but as I only saw them once these two variations are all that I could grab and explain fully. These are, I know, quite practical, for I have tried them. The couple that I saw were dancing to the latest tune from America (as Brussels put it), called "Everybody's Doing It."

In Carlsbad, Austria, there are many smart Hungarians, and at a ball there one night, where all the Americans were one-stepping and all the French were tangoing, and all the English were busy on their famous nonreversing waltz, the Hungarians waxed impatient and finally asked the orchestra to play their native dance, the czardas, and, believe me, when they start on that mad, fascinating whirl they make all nations sit up and rub their eyes. It is the most wonderful music

in the world anyway. It starts slowly and dreamily and slowly gets more and more rapid until finally the finish is awe inspiring. And there were old bearded men there who got up and made the average young man look very feeble.

### Variation to the One Step.

I'm not going to try to teach you a dance that I have only a bowing acquaintance with, but the last step of the czardas I have tried to a one step and it makes a very good variation. It's like this: The man and girl stand side by side looking opposite directions. The man puts his arm about the girl's waist as they are standing, and the girl puts hers around the man's waist. So they are in position shown in the picture. They then step on the feet that are next to each other, the man's right and the girl's left and go around in a circle, all the time going forward on their inside feet and pushing themselves along with the outside feet. As they push on the inside feet they bring the heel down hard with a click and tap the outside toe right afterwards, which sounds like a quick one two, one two. They go eight steps one way and then make a quick reverse, the man turning facing the opposite way and the girl doing the same, and the same steps that way.

It's a wonderful dance and can be done well to one step music. In Venice the only dancing we could find was over at the Lido, a wonderful bathing resort about twenty minutes away from there. We went over one night, but as there were mostly Americans and English there, it being a little early for their fashionable Italian season, we did not see much that we had not seen before. They had, however, a professional dancing teacher, a Greek, who with a most fascinating Italian partner, was tearing off all the steps of all nations. They did one step to a waltz that was pretty. I asked an American boy what the man called the step and he said the Lido dip.

So here we have it: Boston first, then swing out side by side, and starting with the left foot do as follows: Both man and girl step on left, swing right leg across with a broad swing, step on right, and throw left leg over right just the same way. Now we have right over, left over, and then right over again, and bend same until the knee almost touches the ground and the left leg goes right out behind. Then up again and throw the left leg over, right leg over, and left over again with the same dip done with the right knee bent almost touching the ground and the left leg right out behind. After that swing into the waltz position, Boston eight beats, and then swing side by side and repeat same. That is the Lido dip.

### Blame Americans for "Crazy" Dances.

These are all good steps in my opinion, and as the popular idea is to know as many steps as possible I thought they might interest the dancing public. It is strange that when a country goes crazy over a thing they must blame it on some other country. We blame the tango on South America, and over there they call everything except the waltz and tango "cette folle danse Americaine" (that crazy American dance). But they are all doing it and after all we can't complain, because it is something to start a thing and have all Europe copy it, even if it is crazy. They think over there that all Americans are quite mad anyway, so one dance more or less to our credit or against us means nothing.

In England they think nothing of our barbarous dances, where the man holds the girl in a more or less tight embrace, and I can understand it, for really the average Englishman, when dancing with you, holds you off so far that you think you are dancing alone.

Next Sunday I shall write on the subject of bringing old steps up to date. I personally believe there is no step too old to be danced to the one step, and from the length of some of the beards I've seen waving to the tune of "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," no one is too old to dance a one step.