

BROOKES 476

ON

MODERN DANCING,

CONTAINING

A FULL DESCRIPTION OF ALL DANCES,

AS PRACTISED IN THE

BALL ROOM

AND AT

PRIVATE PARTIES,

TOGETHER WITH

AN ESSAY ON ETIQUETTE.

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BY

L. DE G. BROOKES

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New York:

1867.

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# INTRODUCTION.

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In presenting this work I have been actuated by gratitude towards those who have sustained me in my long professional career, and also by a desire that it may prove entertaining and instructive to them, as well as to the public at large. My larger work on "THE HISTORY OF DANCING FROM THE EARLIEST AGES TO THE PRESENT TIME," is now in press and will be issued as soon as possible.

L. DE G. BROOKES,

361 Broome Street, New York.







Is not that the best education which gives to the mind and to the body all the force, all the beauty, and all the perfection of which they are capable.—*Plato*.

All persons should, and do, desire to be agreeable to those whose good opinions are worth cultivating. If divested of this desire, we would soon become totally regardless of our outward deportment, and would make but indifferent figures in society.

When young people first appear in public life, external qualifications are then, in particular, of great consequence to them, and they should be qualified for the best of company by a good and graceful carriage.

“When you dance, I wish you a wave o’ the sea.”

*Shakspeare’s Winter’s Tale.*

Beauty, without good manners, speedily creates feelings very different from those of admiration.

Parents, who can afford to give their children a tolerable education, should have them early instructed in the rudiments of genteel, graceful, and attractive address.

The art of dancing is not only necessary, but indispensable, to those who are fond of society. The manner of presenting ones-self, and of receiving others in company with a graceful propriety, and the easy and polite demeanor which is so becoming everywhere, are acquired most effectually by those who have studied the art of dancing.

One of the principal beauties in the female character is modesty, a virtue in itself so lovely that it often captivates where a pretty face or graceful figure would be disregarded. Addison says: “If you banish modesty out of the world, she carries with her half the virtue there is in it.” But while modesty is an essential virtue, timidity and diffidence are weaknesses which should be overcome.

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## BALL DRESS.

Dress, though often considered a trifling matter, is one of considerable importance, for a man’s personal appearance is a sort of “index and obscure prologue” to his character.

Lord Chesterfield has said, “I cannot help forming some opinion of a man’s sense and character from his dress.” Shakspeare has written, “The world is still deceived by ornament.”

The dress should be studiously neat, leaving no other impression than that of a well-dressed gentleman.

Black dress coat, black or white vest, black trowsers, white necktie, patent leather boots or pumps, and black or white stockings, white kid



gloves, hair well dressed. Coats of fancy character and colors, velvet collars and metal buttons are not proper for the opera or ball.

Ladies in dress should display the form with taste and elegance, but avoid affectation. Gentlemen look more to the *effect* of dress than to its cost.

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### THE BALL ROOM.

The top or head of a room is generally that part farthest from the entrance door, should the entrance be at one end of the room; but whenever the door is upon the side of a room, custom or the floor manager decides which is the head. The head of the room is never determined by the situation of the music; the orchestra is frequently located at the side of a room, which is never the head.

Your first duty on entering a ball room is to ascertain from the floor-manager (master of ceremonies) the head of the room.

The master of ceremonies is the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the ball room, who directs and superintends the arrangements for the time being, to whom all appeals must be made, whose authority is unquestionable, and decisions final; with such powers as these, it is scarcely necessary to add, he should unite the knowledge of the proficient with the manners of a gentleman; and while his dictum is without appeal, it should never seem peremptory. It is apparent the office is a very delicate one, and as the appointment is most flattering to the individual, the responsibility is considerable and not lightly to be encountered.

A lady or gentleman wishing to dance, and not being provided with a partner, should apply to the master of ceremonies.

The master of ceremonies is the arbiter in all disputes, who, with the parties at variance, leave the room.

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### ETIQUETTE.

Invitations to a ball or party should be issued, if possible, eight days before it takes place.

Go to a private party as near the hour invited as possible.

On entering a private house to join an evening party, you should, as soon as convenient, pay your respects to the host and hostess. If you are late, and they should be in the rooms where the party is dancing, you must await your opportunity to pay them your respects.

The necessary introductions to the company are obtained through the lady and gentleman of the house, or some member of the family. On leaving a private party you should not allow your departure to be par-



ticularly noticed, or to interfere with the general arrangements, but should find your host and hostess and return them thanks for the enjoyment you have received, and express to them your regret that you must leave.

Invitations to a party are issued in the name of the mistress of the house, and to her answers are to be sent.

Of a family containing sons and daughters, one card is to be sent to the master and mistress, one to the daughters, and a third to the sons.

If any guest is staying with the family invited, a distinct card must be sent. These are all enclosed in an envelope unsealed, and directed on the outside to the mistress of the house.

Answers should be sent in the course of the next day or the day following.

In ordinary cases, the safest way is to send one answer for the females and one for the males, enclosed in one fold.

The sons and daughters of the lady by whom the party is given should dance as little as possible during the evening, as their time will be required to entertain the guests. They should also avoid talking in a loud voice, and hoping that everybody finds everything agreeable.

If a servant offends you by any grossness of conduct, never rebuke the offence upon the spot; it only gives rise to a scene.

A gentleman, attending a lady to the assembly room, will see her to the ladies' dressing-room, and then repair to the gentlemen's, to divest himself of his hat, overcoat, &c.; and having adjusted his toilet and drawn on his gloves, will await at the portal of the ladies *entrée salon* for the lady or ladies he accompanied, and usher them into the ball-room.

After the promenade music ceases as a preliminary to the commencement of the dancing, the dancers will take their positions on the floor at the sound of the trumpet, or by the announcement of the master of ceremonies. Universal custom requires that a gentleman escorting a lady to a ball or party should, when practicable, be her first partner in the dance as soon after their entrance to the ball-room as may be convenient.

Ball-room introductions cease with the object, viz: dancing; nor subsequently can the gentleman anywhere else approach the lady, by salutation or in any other mode, without a re-introduction of a formal character. The lady may, at her election, on meeting the gentleman afterwards, salute him or not; but it awaits her pleasure and discretion.

In a ball-room never address a lady unless properly introduced.

When the Quadrille or other dance is over (for which the introduction was made) the acquaintance ends; nor can the gentleman invite the same lady to dance again, unless he is again introduced; the acquaintance ends with every dance.



Never introduce one person to another without knowing that it is agreeable to both.

Gentlemen are introduced to ladies, not ladies to gentlemen. Ladies should be first consulted.

Occasionally in the ball-room and at private parties, a very improper habit of criticising others who are present is indulged in.

This should always be avoided as beneath the character of a gentleman or lady. A true gentleman or lady will never so far forget themselves as to wound the feelings of those with whom they may be associated.

A gentleman should never form an engagement with a lady while she is engaged in dancing with another.

On being introduced to a lady for the purpose of dancing, you bow respectfully and say, "Can I have the pleasure of dancing the next set (or waltz or whatever the dance may be) with you?" The lady, if she be not engaged, with a gentle inclination, will reply, "With pleasure, sir."

In private parties, introductions are not considered necessary; the fact of your being invited is a voucher for your respectability.

When a lady civilly declines to dance with you, do not take any notice although you see her afterwards dancing with another. Ladies are not obliged to tell their reasons, neither to show them.

After engaging your partner for a Quadrille, secure a couple if possible for your vis-à-vis.

Do not neglect your partner (*pro. tem.*) to hold protracted conversation with others, in the same or other sets.

On the finish of a dance, leave your partner as near to the seat you received her from as possible, unless she request you to lead her to another.

Lord Chesterfield very justly remarks that in mixed companies of the sexes, whoever is admitted to make part of them, is for the time at least, supposed to be on a footing of equality with the rest.

In offering refreshments, bouquets, or any other attention to a lady, avoid being too urgent, as it often gives offence.

Ladies should not leave a ball-room assemblage unattended.

The etiquette of the Ball-Room varies slightly in country places, and in different cities. In country ball-rooms generally, a gentleman may ask a lady to dance with him, and enter into conversation or promenade with her through the room; but in the city an introduction must take place before the gentleman can be entitled to offer himself as a partner; and though he may be intimately acquainted with a lady, it is considered proper for him to ask the consent of the person accompanying her; unless that person delegates the floor-manager or some other gentleman



to perform that duty in his stead; in such cases he will apply to the proper parties. This consent must be obtained for each and every dance.

Floor-managers or teachers of dancing, when attending a ball, have no right to introduce partners to ladies, unless the ladies or their gentlemen escorts so request it; notwithstanding the lady may be the teacher's own pupil.

A gentleman having ladies under his charge may address a stranger and offer him a partner.

When there is a difference with regard to the pre-occupancy of a place in a set, a quiet appeal to the floor-manager or master of ceremonies should settle the matter.

It is improper to leave one set and go to another, unless you have been directed to do so by the floor-manager or master of ceremonies; you have the right, however, to retire from a set and be seated, should an objectionable party take a place in the same set after you have formed there. It is improper for two gentlemen to dance together when ladies are present. Two ladies may dance together, if they wish, without infringing proper etiquette, as privileges are always accorded to them which may not be claimed by the other sex.

Ceremonies vary in every country, but true politeness is everywhere the same, which is generally the result of proper cultivation.

Etiquette is moulded in Europe by the custom of courts, so that the forms of politeness in each nation are distinct, but good breeding readily conforms to all modes with ease and grace. For instance: at Vienna men always make courtesies instead of bows to the Emperor; in France nobody bows to the Emperor or kisses his hand; but in Spain and England bows are made and hands are kissed. Thus every court has some peculiarity, which those who visit it ought previously to inform themselves of, to avoid blunders and awkwardness.

In London the laws of the court dancing tribunal are administered by a *Gynesocracy*, viz: twelve persons of the first rank, four Duchesses, as many Marchionesses, and the same number of Countesses. To these are added a sub-committee of ladies, chosen more for their wealth and influence than for their rank. All measures originate with this committee, to be referred for approval to the upper house.

The lady patronesses are chosen from this two fold council. The royal personages may consent to be at the head of the list, but take no part in this government of women. To be eligible to membership in this Terpsichorean temple of London *haut ton*, the qualifications must be fortune, rank, accomplishments, or the antiquity of their family; thus are tickets granted or rejected agreeably to this scale.

All introductions are through the auspices of the sub-committee, and



once introduced, they are deemed a passport to family intimacy. The ordeal is of a searching nature, and the entree of difficult attainment.

In France a gentleman, without an introduction, may ask any lady to dance with him; but then he must restore her to her seat, immediately after the set is concluded, and may not enter into individual conversation with her after the dance is over, such being deemed a wise precaution, rendered the more necessary, perhaps, from the greater liberty allowed in forming the partnership.

In England, on the other hand, a regular introduction must take place between the parties before a gentleman can be entitled to offer himself as the partner of a lady; but this indispensable ceremony having been gone through, he is at full liberty both before and after the dance to take his seat by her side, or promenade with her through the room, without being considered guilty of presumption in so doing; he may also invite her to partake of refreshments, which she can decline or accept.

## GLOSSARY OF FRENCH TERMS FREQUENTLY USED IN QUADRILLE DANCING.

ASSORTIMENT DU QUADRILLE.—A set of quadrilles.

CHAÎNE ANGLAISE.—English Chain.—Two couples right and left to opposite sides and back.

DEMI CHAÎNE ANGLAISE.—Half right and left.

BALANCÉ.—Set or setting.—It implies that a certain portion of time is to be occupied in the performance of a step or steps, to be danced in one and the same place. In a few Quadrille figures, the balancé is omitted, and a walking or galop movement to the opposite side and back is substituted.

CHAÎNE DES DAMES.—Ladies chain. Two opposite ladies advance to the centre, give right hands, pass on and turn opposite gentleman with left hands, and return to places in the same manner.

TOUR DES MAINS.—Turn, giving both hands to opposite person and resuming places.

DEMI PROMENADE.—Half promenade.

TRAVEVERSEZ.—Cross over to opposite place.

RETRAVEVERSEZ.—Return to place.

DOS-À-DOS.—Back to back. Two opposite persons pass round each other, back to back, and back to places.



**DOS-À-DOS EN QUARRÉ.**—The four couples forward to the centre, and turn back to back in the form of a square, each gentleman passing his lady in front of him, and all finishing with their backs to the centre.

**DEMI TOUR À QUATRE.**—Four hands half round.

**CHASSEZ CROISEZ TOUT LES HUIT ET DE CHASSEZ.**—Gentlemen all change places with partners, and back again.

**LES DAMES EN MOULINET.**—Ladies cross right hands half round and back again with left hands.

**PAS D' ALLAMANDE.**—Pas d' Allamande is quite different from the Allamande figure. The Pas d' Allamande is a movement of the arms, when the gentleman takes either hand of the lady and passes her under his arm on either side; there are a variety of these movements which properly belong to the dance called the Allamande.

**GRANDE PROMENADE TOUT LES HUIT.**—All eight dancers promenade.

**A LA FIN.**—Finish.

**CHAÎNE DES DAMES DOUBLE.**—Double ladies chain, which is performed by all the ladies commencing at the same time—thus: four ladies cross right hands, go half round, and turn opposite gentlemen with left hand; cross right hands again, go half round, and turn partners with left hand.

**MOULINET.**—Hands across, or cross hands.

**BALANCEZ EN ROND.**—All join hands and set in a circle.

**LE GRAND TOUR DE ROND.**—All join hands in a circle and move to the left around to places.

**A VOS PLACES.**—To your places.

**TOUR À COIN.**—Turn the corners.

**PAS DE BASQUE.**—This step is peculiar to Southern France, and bears a strong resemblance to the step of the Redowa.

**LA GRANDE CHAÎNE.**—Right and left all round.—All eight pass round until they regain their respective places, giving alternately their right and left hands, commencing with the right to partners.

**EN AVANT.**—Advance forward.

**EN ARRIÈRE.**—Retire backward.

**CHASSEZ À DROITE ET À GAUCHE,** } Chassez, move sideways in a straight  
**CHASSEZ ET DÉCHASSEZ,** } line to the right and left.

**LES TIROIRS.**—First couple join hands and cross over between the opposite couples, while the latter separate, pass outside to opposite places; then leading couple separate, and the opposite couple pass between them all regaining their first places.

**CHASSEZ OUVERT.**—Chassez from your partners.

**LE GRAND QUARRÉ.**—Grand Square.—The leading couples advance to centre together; at the same time the side couples separate from



each other sideward, the ladies to their right corners and the gents to their left corners. They (the sides) move into the places of the leading couples, while the leading couples glide into the vacated sides. The sides then move up to centre, while the leading couples separate, as the sides did, to reach the corners, and so to their own places, while the sides move by the right and left into their own places. This figure is effected by four distinct movements for each person; *all must move together*—each dancer making a square in one corner of the cotillion, and the whole figure makes the *Grand Square*.

DEMI QUEUE DU CHAT.—Half promenade four.

DEMI ROND.—Half round.

BALLOTEZ.—A setting step of four times in the place.

A DROITE.—To the right.

FIGUREZ DEVANT.—Dance before.

FIGUREZ À DROITE.—Dance to the right.

A GAUCHE.—To the left.

LA MAIN.—The hand.

VIS-À-VIS.—Face to face (opposite.)

TOUR SUR PLACE.—Turn in place.

PROMENADE OR QUEUE DU CHAT.—Promenade and Queue du Chat are the same.

GRANDE (all) PROMENADE.—All the couples, one following the other, move around within the limits of their own set until they have regained places.

DEMI PROMENADE.—Half promenade is performed by the opposite couples moving in a half circle, round to, and taking each others situation; if this circle was continued round to places, it would then be the whole promenade of two couples.

EMBOÏETTÉ.—A step in Quadrille dancing generally used to retire with.

LE PREMIER CAVALIER.—The first gentleman.

LA PREMIÈRE DAME.—The first lady.

LES QUARRÉS.—The squares.

LE PETIT QUARRÉ.—The small squares. The first couple describe squares, with the lady and gentleman on the right and left.

RIGADOON.—A setting step used in Quadrille dancing.

LA POUSSETTE.—Is performed by holding the lady's hands and making her retreat, then she does the same by her partner.

DEMI POUSSETTE.—Two couples join hands with partners and promenade round each other to places.







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MUSIC.

VALESE LES PATINEURS.

VALESE LA COSKA.




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## An American Ballroom Companion: Dance Instruction Manuals

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**Brookes on modern dancing, containing a full description of all dances, as practised in the ball room and at private parties, together with an essay on etiquette. By L. De G. Brookes.**

[Brookes, L. De G.](#) (Laurence De Garmo)

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### SUMMARY

The format for this manual is typical of nineteenth-century dance treatises. It begins with a short discussion on the utility of dancing followed by a section devoted to etiquette of the ballroom and how to give balls. Descriptions of dances in this manual include quadrilles, waltz, polka, polka redowa, schottisch, polka mazurka, varsovienne, and the waltz in 5/4. The book concludes with eighty-seven cotillon figures and eight pages of ballroom dance music.

### NOTES

Includes music.

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[\(Video clip for p. 55\)](#) - La Esmeralda

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