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SKETCHES

RELATIVE TO THE

HISTORY AND THEORY,

BUT MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE

PRACTICE OF DANCING;

AS

A NECESSARY ACCOMPLISHMENT TO THE YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES;

TOGETHER WITH

REMARKS ON THE DEFECTS AND BAD HABITS THEY ARE LIABLE TO IN EARLY LIFE; AND THE BEST MEANS OF CORRECTING OR PREVENTING THEM.

INTENDED AS

HINTS TO THE YOUNG TEACHERS

OF THE

ART OF DANCING.

BY

FRANCIS PEACOCK,
ABERDEEN.

Aberdeen:
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co.
Sold by ANGUS & SON, A. BROWN, and J. BURNETT, Aberdeen; LONGMAN, HURST, REES, and ORME, London; and ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE & Co. Edinburgh.

1805.

HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF GORDON.

PERMIT me, Madam, to express the high sense I have of the honour your Grace has conferred on me, by condescending to patronize this little Work. I am truly sensible its chief claim to public notice, next to your Grace's patronage, is the MOTIVE *which induced its publication; and as this motive is founded on humanity, it is the more consonant to your Grace's well known disposition; which is, not only to exercise this virtue yourself, but, by a natural impulse of benevolence, to promote and encourage it in others.*

I have the honour to be, with profound respect,

MADAM,

Your Grace's

Most devoted humble Servant,

FRANCIS PEACOCK.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the following SKETCHES begs leave to observe, that, from the experience of upwards of sixty years, during which he has been a Teacher of Dancing, and the many advantages he derived, in the early part of his life, while under the tuition of a Desnoyer, a Glover, and a Lally, whose excellence as performers and teachers of this art, may yet be remembered by many: These advantages, together with his own observations and practice, during the intermediate space of time, have, he flatters himself, enabled him to throw out some useful hints relative to the art in question; as also, for preventing or correcting many external defects in youth.

SHOULD these SKETCHES not meet with a favourable reception from the public, he has only to regret being disappointed in the hope he entertained, that some small emolument might arise from the publication, which he meant to appropriate, as his mite, towards a Humane Institution lately established in this place.*

ABERDEEN,
April, 1805.

* LUNATIC HOSPITAL, ABERDEEN.

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE is not a more apparent principle of virtue in Man, than his desire to appear agreeable to his fellow creatures. Divested of this principle, he would soon become totally regardless of his outward deportment; and the insinuating mode of *polite address* would be the smallest object of his attention.

Many concurrent circumstances are necessary to form the manners of men. A graceful carriage, an easy unaffected deportment, a manly affability, and a modest assurance, are qualifications which, at first sight, attract our notice, and, therefore, ought not to be the least regarded.

It is no uncommon thing for men to form opinions of one another at first sight; and these opinions very frequently engender prejudices which are not easy to be overcome: so that a man who has acquired an ungainly carriage, whether from bad habits, want of attention, or from his not having frequent opportunities of associating with polite company, such a man, I say, must have many valuable qualifications to counterbalance his want of a proper address.

When young people first appear in public life, external qualifications are then, in particular, of great consequence to them; as such advantages seldom fail to gain them the most favourable reception, when they are introduced to people of fashion and consequence.

A good and graceful carriage is agreeable to every one. It fits and qualifies men for the

the best of company; and, I dare say, there are but few who cannot recollect many instances of men who have made their fortunes, without their having had scarce any other qualifications, besides a good address, to recommend them. As a proof of these remarks, take the following anecdote:—

A young gentleman (a pupil of mine) who had been more attentive to his literary pursuits, than to his external accomplishments, was called to Jamaica by an uncle of his, who was retiring from business; and who, soon after this event, settled a great part of his fortune upon him. He had not been long there, before he was sensible of the want of those qualifications he had before thought so lightly of; for he found, whenever he was under the unavoidable necessity of being in company where Dancing was introduced, that he always was, as it were, thrown into the back ground, from his inability to acquit

himself with any degree of propriety. He had a young relation whom he wished to settle under his own eye; he, therefore, wrote to his father, desiring him, above all things, not to spare any expence with respect to his Dancing; telling him, at the same time, he never regretted any thing so much as that, instead of half-blinding himself by reading Greek and Latin, he had not paid more attention to his *scrapes*, *bows*, and *pas-graves*. He then mentions a young man who, about this period, had been but a few months at Jamaica, a candidate for fortune's favour. He had few introductory letters with him of any consequence: however, fortunately for him, he had a most engaging manner and address. This circumstance induced a gentleman he had been made acquainted with, to introduce him at an assembly, where he acquitted himself so well, as to attract the attention of all present, who, from this time, vied with each other

other who should be of most use to him.—In short, he was soon settled in a situation far beyond his most sanguine expectations. But to return:

It certainly is incumbent on all parents who can afford to give their children a tolerable education, to have them early instructed in the first rudiments of genteel address: and though many parents and guardians are sufficiently well qualified for this task, yet few choose to take the whole trouble upon themselves: so that this branch of education is generally committed to the care of men whose business ought, at least, to qualify them for so important a trust.

That there are many professors of the art of Dancing who have great merit in this way, is unquestionable: but that there are many more who are deficient in this material article of their business, is equally certain.

For the information of such, therefore, and for the instruction of the young teachers of the art, the following Sketches are chiefly intended. Should I be so fortunate as to throw out any hints which may be thought worthy of more *general* notice, this will, I hope, in some degree, atone for my want of requisite abilities for such an undertaking.

SKETCH

SKETCHES

RELATIVE TO

THE ART OF DANCING.

SKETCH I.

Dancing—its great Utility in forming the Manners of Youth.

THE advantages arising from the cultivation of this art, especially when those that apply to it are young, is very evident. Do we not see with what a graceful mein, and becoming confidence, the well-tutored youth presents himself? How agreeable and well regulated are all his motions? And with what a sensible pleasure do we behold the elegant and engaging deportment of a young

lady, whose natural fine form has been improved by a proper cultivation of all those graces which are characteristic of dignity and ease? Such a one, when compared with the uninstructed, pretty, bashful rustic, just emerged from the country—how striking the contrast! Yet, perhaps, the native qualities of the latter may be equal to those of the former; only the opportunities for improving them have been neglected. A young person, in this situation, may, properly, be compared to the diamond, which is rude in its figure, till the lapidary's skill has wrought it into form, and given it the brilliancy of which it is capable.

There are but few children who are so happily formed by nature, as not to require the assistance of art to rectify some few imperfections which an impartial eye may discover in them; therefore, the sooner those blemishes are attended to, the better; for, when

when the joints and muscles are flexible and yielding, all natural, as well as acquired defects, may be greatly overcome; but if once time has confirmed their position, it will require great labour and trouble to give them a free and easy motion.

Mr Locke is of opinion that children ought early to learn to dance; for, says he, "Nothing appears to me to give children so much becoming confidence and behaviour, and so to raise them to the conversation of those above their age, as Dancing. I think they should be taught to dance as soon as they are capable of learning it; for, though this consists only in outward gracefulness of motion, yet, I know not how, it gives children manly thoughts and carriage more than any thing." In another place he says, "Dancing being that which gives graceful motions to all our lives, and, above all things, manliness, and a becoming confidence to young children,

children, I think it cannot be learned too early, after they are once capable of it. But you must be sure to have a good master that knows, and can teach, what is graceful and becoming, and what gives a freedom and easiness to all the motions of the body. One that teaches not this, is worse than none at all; natural aukwardness being much better than uppish affected postures: and I think it much more passable to put off the hat, and make a leg, like an honest country gentleman, than like an ill fashioned dancing-master. For as for the jigging part, and the figures of dances, I count that little or nothing better, than as it tends to perfect graceful carriage."

Mankind in general will, I doubt not, readily assent to the justness of Mr. Locke's observations; yet so various are the opinions of men, and their notions of things so opposite, that we need not wonder when we meet with

with people of a contrary cast of mind. The Spectator, in a paper on this subject, (No. 334. vol. 5.) says, " It is very natural to us to take for our whole lives a light impression of a thing which, at first, fell into contempt with us for want of consideration. The real use of a certain qualification (which the wiser part of mankind look upon as, at least, an indifferent thing, and, generally, a frivolous circumstance) shews the ill consequence of such prepossessions. What I mean, is the art, skill, accomplishment, or whatever you will call it, of Dancing. I knew a gentleman of great abilities, who bewailed the want of this part of his education to the end of a very honourable life. He observed, that there was not occasion for the common use of great talents; that they are but seldom in demand; and that these very great talents were often rendered useless to a man, for want of small attainments. A good mein, a becoming motion, gesture and step, is natural

ral to some men; but even those would be highly more graceful in their carriage, if what they do from the force of nature, were confirmed and heightened from the force of reason. To one who has not at all considered it, to mention the force of reason on such a subject, will appear fantastical; but when you have a little attended to it, an assembly of men will have quite another view: and they will tell you it is evident, from plain and infallible rules, why this man, with those beautiful features, and well fashioned person, is not so agreeable as he who sits by him without any of those advantages. When we read, we do it without any exerted act of memory that presents the shape of the letters; but habit makes us do it mechanically, without staying, like children, to recollect and join those letters. A man who has not had the regard of his gesture in any part of his education, will find himself unable to act, with freedom, before new company, as a child

child that is but new learning would be to read without hesitation. It is for the advancement of the pleasure we receive, in being agreeable to each other in ordinary life, that one would wish Dancing were generally understood as conducive as it really is, to a proper deportment in matters that appear the most remote from it. A man of learning and sense is distinguished from others, as he is such, though he never runs upon points too difficult for the rest of the world. In like manner, the reaching out of the arm, and the most ordinary motions, discover whether a man ever learnt to know what is the true harmony and composure of limbs and countenance." In another paper (No. 466. vol. 6.) he observes, "That as all art is an imitation of nature, this (speaking of Dancing) is an imitation of nature in its highest excellence, and at a time when she is most agreeable." Towards the conclusion of this paper, he says, "It may, perhaps, appear

pear odd, that I, who set up for a mighty lover, at least, of virtue, should take so much pains to recommend what the soberer part of mankind look upon to be a trifle; but, under favour of the soberer part of mankind, I think they have not enough considered this matter, and, for that reason only, disesteem it."

Dr. Fordyce (in his Sermons to Young Women) speaks of Dancing in a manner that does credit to his good sense and liberal mind. "For my own part," says he, (Sermon 6. p. 223.) "I must acknowledge I can see no reason for declamation against the moderate and discreet use of Dancing. *To every thing*, says Solomon, *there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven;* among the rest—*a time to dance.* Even those pursuits which all approve, and approve most highly, may be abused. Nothing is exempt from snares; but one of the worst is

is a disposition to be peevish, illiberal, and unsociable. In the Jewish institution, it is well known, the exercise in question was adopted into their religious worship itself.—It is yet more remarkable that, in the parable of the prodigal son, our Saviour mentions Dancing as making a part of the friendly and honest festivity indulged on his return. The single instance recorded in the New Testament, wherein it was perverted to a pernicious purpose, has been weakly urged against a practice that, used with temperance and prudence, is certainly adapted to promote health and good humour, a social spirit, and kind affections between the sexes, with that easy graceful carriage, to which nature has annexed every pleasing perception in the beholder.

"With respect to this last," continues he, "it seems to me that there can be no impropriety in it, any more than in modulating the voice

voice into the most agreeable tones in singing; to which none, I think, will object. What is Dancing, in the best sense, but the harmony of motion rendered more palpable? Aukwardness, rusticity, ungraceful gestures, can never, surely, be meritorious. It is the observation of a celebrated Philosopher, who was deeply skilled on most subjects, that "The principal part of beauty is in decent "and graceful motion." And here one cannot help regretting that this, which may be considered, in some measure, as the virtue of the body, is not oftener seen in our country, as if the sole design of Dancing were to supply the amusement of an hour.— A modest, but animated mien, an air at once unaffected and noble, are, doubtless, circumstances of great attraction and delight. I said, a modest mien, for that must never be given up." After this, he says, "I freely confess that I am one of those who can look on with a very sensible satisfaction, well pleased,

pleased, to see a company of young people joyful with innocence, and happy in each other. If an exercise so sociable, and so enlivening, were to occupy some part of that time which is lavished on cards, would the youth of either sex be losers by it?—I think not."

I may here observe, that there cannot be a greater proof of the utility of Dancing, than its being so universally adopted, as a material circumstance in the education of the youth of both sexes, in every civilized country. Its tendency to form their manners, and to render them agreeable, as well in public as in private; the graceful and elegant ease which it gives to the generality of those who practice it with attention, are apparent to every one of true discernment.

SKETCH II.

Of the Origin and Antiquity of Dancing.

BEFORE I enter upon this subject, it may not be improper for me to premise, that I do not mean, nor is it consistent with my plan, to enter into a minute investigation of the origin and antiquity of Dancing, or of its appropriate uses among the ancients; all I mean to do is, to give a few Sketches relative to this subject, founded on most respectable authorities, for the information of the youth of my own profession; referring those who wish

wish for more particular details, to Weaver's ingenious Essay towards an History of Dancing; Gallini's (now Sir John) deservedly esteemed Treatise on the Art of Dancing; and the Encyclopædia. These, together with what Mr. Noverre has favoured us with, are the only publications, on this particular subject, of any value, that have appeared during the last century, at least that I know of.

It is an unquestionable truth, that Dancing, as well as Music and Poetry, was in high esteem among the ancients. Its importance in the ancient Jewish worship is well known. Different authors ascribe the invention of it to different nations, or people. The Egyptians, the Grecians, and the Indians, have each advocates in their favour. But as most arts and sciences had their origin from the Egyptians, the most generally received opinion is, that they were the first who adapted motion to musical sound.

Though it is uncertain who were the first inventors of Dancing, we have all the reason in the world to believe that it was practised by almost all the nations upon earth, and, probably, in the most early periods.

Some ascribe the invention of Dancing to the Goddess Rhea; others to Theseus, who, they say, instituted Dancing in the Isle of Delos. The dance performed on that occasion was, it is said, contrived to represent the various turnings and intricate windings of the labyrinth. "The labyrinth," (says M. de Guys, in his Sentimental Journey through Greece) "is now no more, but the dance it gave birth to, exists in its pristine state of excellence." He says again, "At this day the Greek Brawl presents you with the tender Ariadne, who leads Theseus through the mazes of the winding dance."

Hierony-

Hieronymus Mercurialis has been at great pains in his enquiries with respect to the art in question; but with as little success as his predecessors. He says, "It is not clear who was the first inventor of the art of Dancing, unless we give credit to Theophrastus in Athenæus, who, says Androneus of Calana, a musician, produced motion and number to the sound of the flute." In short, the uncertainty of its origin is so great, that, were I to multiply conjectures, it would, at best, be but a trifling entertainment to my readers. I shall, therefore, confine my enquiries to the accounts which the best authors have transmitted to us, of the antiquity of the art, and of its estimation in the most flourishing periods of Greece and Rome. With respect to more early periods, we need only to have recourse to sacred history.

In the Old Testament we have many proofs of the antiquity of Dancing. I shall only

remind my readers of two or three remarkable occurrences, relative to this practice, in those days. After Moses had miraculously conducted the Children of Israel through the Red Sea, he, and his sister Miriam, to testify their grateful thanks to God, in the most public manner, for preserving them and the Israelites from their enemies, the Egyptians, made two great choruses, the one of men, the other of women, and danced to the music of the song; the account of which makes the greatest part of the 15th chapter of Exodus. It is supposed that Moses led the chorus of the men, and that Miriam led that of the women: for we read in verses 20th and 21st of the same chapter, that "Miriam, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances." This dance is beautifully described by Antonius Millileus, in the sixth book of his Moses Viator.

The

The following is a part of this poem :—

" Let Jacob's sons their cheerful voices raise,
" In grateful hymns, to their Preserver's praise;
" Let the glad dance attend th' harmonious sound,
" And shouts of joy from earth to heav'n rebound.
" This when the chief had said, on either side
" The troops, obedient to command, divide;
" He, with his rod, directs th' attending choirs,
" And first begins the song which Heav'n inspires.
" Soon as the men the holy dance had done,
" The Hebrew matrons the same rites begun;
" Miriam, presiding o'er the female throng,
" Begins, and suits the movement to the song."

It appears very plain from this song, that Moses thought Dancing, as well as Music, a proper appendage to his devotional ceremonies.

We read in Judges, (chap. ii. v. 34.) that when Jephthah had conquered the Ammonites, and was returning home, " his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances." In like manner, when David re-

turned from the slaughter of the Philistines, "the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet King Saul," &c. (1 Sam. chap. xviii. v. 6.)

David is generally represented as joining Music and Dancing together in his most serious acts of devotion; as, when the people of Israel removed the ark from the house of Obededom, to Mount Zion, he, after the usual sacrifices, danced to the music of his own harp.

It is observed in the Encyclopædia, "That the origin of Dancing among the Greeks was most certainly the same as among all other nations; but, as they proceeded a certain length in civilization, their dances were, of consequence, more regular and agreeable than those of the more barbarous nations. They reduced Dancing into a kind of regular system; and had dances proper for exciting,

ing, by means of the sympathy above mentioned, any passion whatever in the minds of the beholders. In this they are said to have proceeded very great lengths, to us absolutely incredible. At Athens, it is said that the dance of the Eumenides, or Furies, on the theatre, had so expressive a character, as to strike the spectators with irresistible terror: men grown old in the profession of arms, trembled; the multitude ran out; women with child miscarried; people imagined they saw, in earnest, those terrible deities commissioned with the vengeance of heaven, to pursue and punish crimes upon earth.

"The Greeks had martial dances, which they reckoned to be very useful for keeping up the warlike spirit of their youth; but the Romans, though equally warlike with the Greeks, never had any thing of the kind. This, probably, may be owing to the want of that romantic turn for which the Greeks were

were so remarkable. The Romans had no heroes among them, such as Hercules, Achilles, or Ajax; nor does the whole Roman History furnish one example of a general that made war after the manner of Alexander the Great. Though their soldiers were as valiant as ever the Greeks could pretend to be, the object with them was the honour of the republic, and not their own personal praise. Hence there was less fury, and much more cool deliberate valour exercised by the Romans, than any other nation whatever. The passions of pride, resentment, obstinacy, &c. were excited in them, not by the mechanical means of Music and Dancing, but by being taught that it was their chief honour to fight for the republic. It does not, however, appear that the Romans were at all less capable of being affected in this mechanical manner, than the Greeks. When Dancing was once introduced, it had the very same effects at Rome as at Athens."

Again.—

Again.—"Plato reduces the dances of the ancients to three classes:—1. The *Military dances*, which tended to make the body robust, active, and well-disposed for all the exercises of war;—2. The *Domestic dances*, which had for their object an agreeable and innocent relaxation and amusement;—3. The *Mediatorial dances*, which were in use in expiations and sacrifices. Of Military dances there were two sorts: the *Gymnopedique* dance, or the dance of children; and the *Enoplian*, or armed dance. The Spartans had invented the first for an early excitation of the courage of their children, and to lead them on, insensibly, to the exercise of the armed dance. This children's dance used to be executed in the public place. It was composed of two choirs, the one of grown men, the other of children; whence, being chiefly designed for the latter, it took its name. They were both of them in a state of nudity. The choir of the children regulated

lated their motions by those of the men, and all danced at the same time, singing the poems of Thales, Alcman, and Dionysodotus. The *Enoplian*, or *Pyrrhic*, was danced by young men, armed *cap-a-pee*, who executed, to the sound of the flute, all the proper movements either for attack or for defence. It was composed of four parts: The first the *Podism*, or footing, which consisted in a quick shifting motion of the feet, such as was necessary for overtaking a flying enemy, or for getting away from him when an overmatch. The second part was the *Xiphism*: this was a kind of mock-fight, in which the dancers imitated all the motions of combatants; aiming a stroke, darting a javelin, or dexterously dodging, parrying, or avoiding a blow or thrust. The third part, called the *Komos*, consisted in very high leaps, or vaultings, which the dancers frequently repeated, for the better using themselves, occasionally, to leap over a ditch, or

spring

spring over a wall. The *Pentacomos* was the fourth and last part. This was a square figure, executed by slow and majestic movements; but it is uncertain whether this was every where executed in the same manner." Lycurgus instituted a dance, doubtless, of the military kind, being of opinion that it not only gave them strength and agility of body, but a vast expertness in the use of their weapons, and in the various evolutions of the art of war. It was accompanied with the singing of verses. It consisted of three choruses—the first of old men, the second of young men, and the third of boys. The old men began and addressed the youth in these words:—

"We once were young and gay as you,
"Valiant, bold, and active too."

The young men answered—

"'Tis now our turn, and you shall see
"You ne'er deserv'd it more than we."

Lastly, the boys cried out—

"The day will come when we shall shew
"Feats that surpass all you can do."

The

The Lacedæmonians had other dances, which were accompanied by the singing of verses, particularly a slow and serious dance, mentioned by Athenæus, called the *Hyporchematic*.

The military dances, it is generally allowed, were at first performed by men alone, and that the amusement was afterwards heightened, by giving each man a partner of the other sex. This improvement is ascribed to Dædalus, who composed a dance, and taught it to seven youths, and as many virgins, that were saved by Theseus from the labyrinth of Crete. This is the dance hinted at by Homer, in his description of the famous shield of Achilles:—

" A figur'd dance succeeds; such one was seen
" In lofty Grossus; for the Cretan Queen
" Form'd, by Dædalian art, a comely band
" Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand:
" The maids in soft cymarrs of linen dress't,
" The youths all graceful in the glossy vest;

" Of

" Of those the locks with flow'ry wreaths inroll'd,
" Of these the sides adorn'd with swords of gold,
" That, glittering gay, from silver belts depend:
" Now all at once they rise, at once descend,
" With well-taught feet; now shape in oblique ways,
" Confus'dly regular, the moving maze:
" Now forth at once, too swift for sight they spring,
" And, undistinguish'd, blend the flying ring:
" So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle tost,
" And, rapid as it runs, the single spokes are lost."

Lucian takes notice of a dance called the *Hormus*, which the Lacedæmonians were fond of. It was performed by the youth of both sexes. The men endeavoured to exceed each other in the variety of their warlike attitudes; their partners following them with a most becoming modesty, and graceful step. The set was generally conducted by one who played on the lyre, and their motions were regulated by his music.

Polybius, in the fourth book of his history, speaking of the humanity of the Arcadians towards strangers, as well as of their piety towards

wards the gods, and of the different dispositions of the Cynæthians, who were in reality Arcadians, he imputes the ferocity and cruelty of the latter to their neglect of the laudable institutions of their ancestors, who even compelled their youth to study music to the age of thirty, and, at the public expence, had them trained to Dancing and Military exercise.

Baron de Montesquieu, (in his Spirit of Laws) speaking of the many severe laws enacted by the magistrates in Greek republics, says, "They would not have the citizens apply themselves to trade, to agriculture, or to the arts, and yet they would not have them idle. They found, therefore, employment for them in gymnic and military exercises, and none else were allowed by their institution."

In many of the Greek dances, as has already been observed, their women partook of

of the amusement, and were not less fond of the exercise than the men. They endeavoured to appear as amiable in the eyes of the spectators as possible; to this end, they studied to surpass each other in every ornament of dress; and the applause which was given to those who excelled, sufficiently gratified their ambition.

In the Greek festivals they had hymns and songs composed in honour of their gods and heroes; and the dances which followed the songs were contrived to describe their principal actions. They danced round the altars, whilst they sung the sacred hymns, which consisted of three stanzas, or parts; the first of which, called *Strophe*, was sung in turning from east to west; the other, named *Antistrophe*, in turning from west to east; then they stood before the altar, and sung the *Epode*, which was the last part of the song. These hymns were generally composed in

honour of the gods, and contained an account of their famous actions, their clemency and liberality, and the benefits conferred by them upon mankind; and concluded with a petition for the continuation of their favours.

Few of their festivals were held in higher estimation than those which were dedicated to Cybele, Venus, Minerva and Pallas, goddesses of the shepherds, and Diana. The latter, in particular, was celebrated with great solemnity. None but virgins of the most spotless character were admitted into her temples, which were generally situated in countries most proper for hunting, and magnificent in the highest degree. The dances they performed before the altar were decent and graceful. They invoked the goddess to inspire them with pure thoughts, and to protect their chastity; and those whose superior performance entitled them to

a distinction, were not only rewarded by the priestess, but also by their own parents.

Orpheus and Museus were of opinion, that a man could not be properly initiated into holy mysteries, without Music and Dancing. In Delos, scarce any thing sacred was ever performed without it. Hesiod, in the beginning of his Theogonia, speaks of the muses, at sun-rising, dancing about a fountain, near to an altar that was consecrated to their father Jupiter. Even the Indians thought it a religious duty, when they rose in the morning, to adore the sun—to salute him with a dance. This custom yet prevails in many Indian nations.

These few remarks may be sufficient to convince those who are unacquainted with ancient history, that the ancients, the Greeks in particular, as before observed, were scarcely ever religiously employed, but Dancing made

a part of the ceremony. This mode of addressing the Deity they probably had from the Egyptians; to whom, it is generally allowed, they were originally indebted for their beginnings in geometry, mathematics, philosophy, architecture, sculpture, and other fine arts. And as the Romans had their laws and customs from Greece, it may naturally be supposed that they must, in some degree, have copied the Greek mode of worship.

The invention of the *Pyrrhic*, or armed dance, is, by some, referred to Minerva, who is said to have led up a dance in her armour, after the conquest of the Titans.—Others ascribe it to the Curetes, or Corybantes, who, whilst they guarded Jupiter in his cradle, danced up and down all the while, clashing their weapons against their bucklers, to keep old Saturn from hearing the cries

cries of his infant son. This circumstance is thus described by Lucretius:—

——" Those armed priests who strove
" To drown the tender cries of infant Jove;
" By Dancing quick, they made a greater sound,
" And beat their armour as they danc'd around;
" Lest Saturn should have found, and eat the boy,
" And Ops for ever mourn'd her pratt'ling joy."

The Romans had their Salii, or Dancing Priests, who presided in all their solemnities, and who, from Lucian's account of them, were instituted by Numa Pompilius. He chose twelve of them, whose office it was to celebrate the rites of Mars on the Palatine hill—whence they were called Palatini.—These, as Dionysius informs us, were certain dancers and praisers of the gods, and who were tutelars of, and presided over battle. Tullus Hostilius afterwards appointed twelve more, in pursuance of a vow he had made in a battle with the Sabines. The first

twelve were called Salii Palatini; the other twelve, Salii Collini, or Agonenses. They also had their Salian virgins.

The dances performed by these priests were, in many respects, not unlike the Pyrrhic. They were headed by their præsul, or leader of the dance, by whom they were directed in their various evolutions. They were particularly nice in the choice of them; for none were admitted into this office, but persons of the most dignified and graceful appearance. This inspired the beholders with a religious veneration towards them.

Pliny, as well as Lucian, attribute the invention of the Pyrrhic dance to Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, (the son of Achilles) who instituted a company of dancers, all armed from top to toe, at the funeral of his father; or, according to other accounts, after the victory which he gained over Eurypylus: but

but the most probable conjecture is, its being derived from the Memphitic dance of Egypt: be this as it may, we need no greater proof of its antiquity at least, than its being so frequently hinted at by Homer. Here I cannot omit the description which Claudian gives of this dance, in his poem on the sixth consulship of Honorius:—

" Here, too, the warlike dancers bless our sight,
" Their artful wand'ring, and their laws of flight,
" And unconfus'd return, and inoffensive fight.
" The master's signal urges to the prize,
" Their moving breasts, in tuneful changes, rise;
" The shields salute their sides, or strait are shewn
" In air high waving; deep the targets groan,
" Struck with alternate swords, which thence rebound,
" And end the concert, and the sacred sound."

Julius Scaliger tells us, when he was young he often performed the Pyrrhic dance before the Emperor Maximilian, who was, at one time, so much surprised at his warlike activity, as to cry out, " This boy either was

born in a coat of mail, instead of a skin, or else has been rocked in one, instead of a cradle."

M. de Guys* (in his Sentimental Journey through Greece) says, "A few remains of the Pyrrhic dance are yet to be found in that part of Greece called Magnesia, and at Misetra." And in another place he says, "The Pyrrhic is a dance much in vogue with the Turks and Thracians."

The ancients had many other dances which they exhibited in arms: such were those of the Lacedæmonians, the Lusitanians,

* This author makes many curious and learned remarks on the ancient Greek dance. The analogy between it, and that which is practised by the modern Greeks, (he observes) is, in many respects, so apparent, that I should be wanting in justice to my subject, were I not to avail myself of his observations respecting this circumstance.

ans, the Mysians, the Thracians. The latter, Xenophon observes, performed theirs in imitation of battle; and it is said by Diodorus, that the Lusitanians even engaged the enemy dancing.

Those who performed these armed dances, which were generally exhibited to the music of flutes, were equipped with bucklers, lancets, and short swords, which they used with great address and dexterity.

In Kennett's Antiquities it is remarked, that Dancing had a considerable share in the sacred, votive, and funeral games of the Romans. Amongst the number, was the Ludi Megalenses, instituted to the honour of Cybele, when her statue was brought with so much pomp from Pessinum to Rome. The representations consisted, chiefly, of scenical sports, and Dancing. In the solemn procession, the magistrates appeared in all their robes,

robes, and the women danced before the image of the goddess.

Athletic exercises, combats, and Dancing, were the chief entertainments in all their rural feasts: such as the Agonalia, instituted by Numa Pompilius, in honour of Janus: the Lupercalia, an institution in remembrance of the wolf that preserved Romulus and Remus.

The Palilia, or feast of Pallas, goddess of the shepherds, was celebrated with songs and dances by the shepherds of the field; who made prayers for the fruitfulness of their sheep, and, at night, feasted and danced round the fires, which they made with chaff, straw, or stubble. It is supposed they did this in order to frighten away the wolves. In the Cerelia, or feast of Ceres, were offered the first fruits to the guardian deities of the harvest. As the chief actors in this solemnity were women, one of them was chosen

sen to personate the goddess. She wore on her head a sort of crown, made of the ears of ripe corn, and the whole of her dress was both rural and elegant. Those who composed the circle, and danced round her, were dressed like wood-nymphs, with their hair flowing loose, and their heads ornamented with garlands of flowers.

Though the exercise of Dancing among the Romans was, doubtless, as old as Rome itself, yet it was not till it was introduced into their theatres, that it received its full improvement. There we are assured by Lucian and others, that were eye witnesses of the surprising powers of the Pantomime dancers of those days, that it was carried to a degree of perfection hardly to be credited.—The events of antiquity, ancient fable, and the several passions which work upon the human mind, were so justly represented, solely by the motions of the body, or Pantomime

mime expression, that the spectators were frequently melted into tears.

However much we may wonder at the faculty those Pantomimes were endued with, of expressing their thoughts by motion and gesture alone, yet our wonder will, in some degree, cease, if we give credit to what Mr. Brydone (in his Tour through Sicily and Malta) says of the Sicilians, who, he observes, are the descendants of the Syracusans. By his accounts, they are a people who possess the talent of communicating their sentiments, by dumb-shew, in a wonderful degree.

"The Sicilians," says he, "are extremely animated in conversation, and their action, for the most, is so just and expressive of their sentiments, that even without hearing what is said, one may easily comprehend the subject of their discourse. We used to think

think the French and Neapolitans were great adepts in this art, but they are vastly outdone by the Sicilians, both in the variety and justness of their gesticulation. The origin of this custom they carry so far back as the time of the earliest tyrants of Syracuse; who, to prevent conspiracies, had forbid their subjects, under the most severe penalties, to be seen in parties talking together. This obliged them to invent a method of communicating their sentiments by dumb-shew, which they pretend has been transmitted from generation to generation ever since."

It is probable that the Pantomime art was never carried to so great a degree of perfection, as in Augustus Cæsar's time, when Pylades and Bathyllus appeared upon the stage. The chief excellence of the first was in the tragic dance, the second in the comic.—These two celebrated dancers were endued with such amazing faculties, and bodily powers,

powers, that, without the help of words, they could perform whole plays by gesture and step alone.

Lucian was so great an advocate for the art in question, that he wrote a treatise in praise of the exercise. (Lucian. Dialog. de Saltatione.) In this work he observes, that it had been approved of by the greatest men in all ages; that Homer makes use of the word *Dancer*, as an honourable appellation for Merion, one of his heroes, whose excellence in the art was well known, not only to the Grecians, his countrymen, but to the Trojans, his enemies: for the Trojans, he adds, were able to distinguish him from the other Grecian chiefs in the field of battle, by that superior agility and gracefulness of motion, which he had acquired from long practice in the dance.—That Pyrrhus gained more reputation by inventing the dance which is called after his name, than by all his other actions.—

tions.—That the Lacedæmonians, the bravest people in all Greece, always advanced towards the enemy in cadence to the pipe; that they were taught to dance as well as to fight; that their military and gymnastic exercises always terminated in dancing; that one of the songs which they were accustomed to sing during the dance, contained the principles of the art, and began with these words, "Advance your foot, and dance better."—That in Thessaly their civil and military chiefs were called their chief dancers, and were required to excel in the art.—That the religious ceremonies, both of the Greeks and Barbarians, were accompanied by Dancing.—That Proteus, who could, according to ancient fable, assume every shape, attitude, and character, was, in fact, no other than an excellent dancer.—That Homer calls sleep, love, music and dancing, the sweetest and most perfect of all human enjoyments; but that he dignifies the latter alone with

with the epithet of the *blameless*—the *blameless dance*.—That grace and elegance of motion appeared to be of such consequence to the wise Socrates, that he thought it necessary in his old age to learn Dancing.—That Dancing is an imitative art, and that an acquaintance with almost every art and every science, is necessary to its perfection.—That as Dancing is an imitative art, the dancer, like the rhetorician, must chiefly aim at perspicuity, which is then fully attained, when the spectator can, without the aid of an interpreter, read the expression of the dancer in all his motions, and comprehend every part of the subject represented by the dance. That this was very attainable, appears to have been the case, from the story of Demetrius, the Cynic Philosopher, who had long affirmed that Dancing consisted in a set of motions fantastical and unmeaning; that the dancer possessed no powers of imitation; and that he owed his empire over the senses,

to

to the splendor of his dress, and the accompaniment of the music. A famous dancer of that age at length convinced him of his error; for, ordering the music on a sudden to stop, he began, in dumb-shew, to represent the loves of Mars and Venus; the jealousy of Vulcan; the revenge he took upon the amorous pair, &c. &c.; and rendered every turn of passion, and variety of circumstance, in that long story, so lively, and so evident to the apprehension of the Philosopher, that he cried out in the public theatre, "I understand you—I hear you—Your hands and gestures speak a language perfectly intelligible to me."

After this, Lucian observes, That the floods of tears which were frequently shed at the public theatre, upon the dancers appearance in a mournful subject, were undeniable proofs of the energy and perfect power of imitation that resided in the dance.

That the greatest versatility of genius, and the most extensive knowledge of nature, were requisite for the dancer, who was to appear in every character, and to exhibit every affection and passion of the human mind. How well the great masters of the art succeeded in a task so difficult, appears from the astonishment of the Barbarian, who, upon seeing a dancer represent five different characters in the compass of one dance, cried out, "O Prodigy! many souls hast thou in one body!"—That the Romans, with reason, called a dancer by the name of *Pantomime*, which signifies *universal imitator*.—That all the fine arts were comprised in that of Dancing, and concurred towards its perfection and embellishment.— That Dancing was accompanied with the pomp of dress and scenery, and with all the charms of vocal and instrumental music; that it gave play to the tragic and comic powers, and called forth every ingenious exertion both

both of mind and body; but that its chief praise and excellence consisted in the decorum and moral tendency of the entertainment.—That the spectators never failed to return wiser and better from the representations of the dancer.—That Timocrates, upon being present, for the first time, at an entertainment of Dancing, cried out, "What an exquisite enjoyment is this, which I have so long sacrificed to the false pride of Philosophy!"

Then Lucian, after enumerating the intellectual accomplishments requisite for the dancer, makes some attempts towards ascertaining the standard of beauty and proportion upon which his dancer should be modelled; and gives some instances of the extreme sensibility of the people of Antioch, upon any deviation from that important article.—When, says he, a very little man once appeared upon their stage, in order to dance in

the character of Hector, they all cried out, with one voice, "Here is Astyanax, the son, but where is Hector, the father?"—When a very tall man appeared in the character of Capaneus, at the assault of the Theban wall, they roared out, "Step up the wall, you have no need of a scaling ladder."—On occasion of a fat man's appearance, they intreated him to tread lightly, and spare the flooring of the stage.—And when a very slender fellow began to cut capers, they cried out, "Well done for a man in a consumption."

Lucian next touches upon some of the errors to which the dancer is liable; and particularly mentions that of over-acting his part, as appeared in the case of a dancer of some reputation, who, in representing the fury of Ajax, went so far beyond the decorum and principles of his art, as, in some measure, to outdo the very extravagance of madness

madness itself. In the height of his transport, he beat and severely wounded some of the assistants upon the theatre; and although he communicated his frenzy to the mob, and drew their loudest applause, he failed not to give disgust to every person of true discernment. When he came to his sober senses, he began to see the impropriety he had been guilty of; and upon being requested by some of his blind admirers to appear again in the same character, he answered, "It is enough for a man, once in his life time, to have run mad." The person who, upon his refusal, succeeded him in the character of Ajax, added to his mortification; for, by keeping within the bounds prescribed by taste and reason, he did justice to his part, and united every suffrage in his favour.

Lucian advises his friend to be frequently present at the theatrical representations of the dancer; and concludes his dialogues with

saying, that Dancing works all the wonders ascribed to the Caduceus of Mercury, being able, at the same time, both to soothe and to animate the soul.

Lucian is not the only Greek author that has written in favour of Dancing; Aristotle, Athenæus, Xenophon, Plutarch, and many more, have done the like. The attachment of the ancients, the Greeks and Romans in particular, to this amusement, was almost general. All ranks of people were fond of the exercise; even those who were too old to join in the dance, delighted, at least, to be spectators of it. Every country had some dances peculiar to itself, and which were characteristic of the manners of the people. They had of them adapted to all purposes, whether religious, military, or amusive; for their festivals and games, which were very numerous, were rendered interesting by songs and dances, composed in honour of their

their deities. Their military schools were much improved by the practice of the dance, and all their public and private amusements were enlivened by the exercise.

Socrates accounted Dancing one of the serious disciplines; and so far esteemed it as an exercise conducive to health, and necessary to give grace to the motions of the body, that, in his old age, he was not ashamed to learn it, and was frequently in the gymnasia of that exercise. He was once so much charmed with Aspasia's dancing, that he could not resist accompanying her in the dance. "You laugh," says Socrates to his friends, "because I pretend to dance like young people. You think me then ridiculous to wish for the benefit of exercise, as necessary to the health of the body, as to the elegance of its deportment?—Am I to be blamed for diminishing the corpulent state of my body a little, by dancing?—You do not

know, perhaps, that Clarmidas, who is now present, caught me this morning, in the very act of dancing, at my own house?" "It is true," says Clarmidas, "and I was so much astonished, that I apprehended your brain was disordered; but when I heard your reasons, I was so well satisfied with them, that the first thing I did, at my return, was to imitate you."

Diogenes Laertius takes notice of the Philosopher, Aristippus, having danced before Dionysius at a banquet; as did Aristides also. Scipio Africanus, in like manner, entertained company at his house with dancing. But as a proof of the antiquity of this custom, Homer assures us, that Dancing and Music were, from the most ancient times, diversions at entertainments. Plato, in his Commonwealth, has many passages in commendation of Dancing; and would even have schools for the exercise of it maintained at the public charge.

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The authorities I have given are, I think, sufficient to convince any one, that the ancients did not think Dancing a mean and trivial attainment, unworthy of cultivation; on the contrary, experience had taught them to set a just value on it: for whether they considered it in a sacred, a military, or in an amusive light, it still was the object of their attention.

SKETCH

SKETCH III.

Dancing—its requisite Qualities.

MAN is compounded of various bodily powers, and mental faculties; and Dancing is nothing more than the regular use of these powers, harmoniously adapted, and subordinate to time and measure; and consists, chiefly, of *Position, Attitude, Gesture, Grace, Expression, Contrast,* and *Figure*—all which derive their principles from nature.

Position is the foundation, or basis, upon which the principles of the art of Dancing are

are founded; for without good Position, action, however animated it may be, can never thoroughly please.

Of the other requisite qualities, *Expression* may take the lead; for it is Expression which conveys to our senses the passions and emotions of the mind, by visible action and gesticulation. The eyes, the countenance, and every correspondent power, must all unite to constitute its force. "Expression (says Sir John Gallini) is the life and soul of action."

The ingenious author of an Essay upon Prints, speaking of Expression, says, "It implies a just representation of *Passion* and of *Character:* of Passion, by exhibiting every emotion of the mind, as outwardly discovered by any peculiarity of gesture, or of the extension and contraction of the features: of Character, by representing the different manners

manners of men, as arising from their particular tempers, or professions."

Grace consits of fitness of parts, and good attitude, and is not far akin to Expression; both being alike subject to the dictates of the mind.

The most valuable attendant on Grace is *Contrast*, which, in its most pleasing form, is always accompanied by *Ease:* and though it is the property of Contrast always to set one part of the body in opposition to the other, yet (like light and shade in painting) they add force to, and give relief to, each other.

It is an assemblage of these leading qualities, and the variety of *Figure*, which constitute the just, the pleasing performance. When they are happily united, their effects are wonderful. What was it that rendered the

the ancient Pantomimes so famous, but their perfect knowledge and use of those powers? Lucian relates, as has been observed, many remarkable circumstances of their great abilities: among the rest, he tells us, that Nero had a Greek who could represent the principal passages of the heathen mythology, with so much justness and energy of action, that the spectators could scarce believe it to be a deception. A foreign Prince, who was on a visit to Nero, seeing him represent the labour of Hercules, was so much struck with his performance, that he intreated the Emperor to let him take the man home with him. Nero expressing some surprise at his request, "There are," says the Prince, "bordering upon my country, a barbarous people, who could never be brought to understand our language, I think this man might serve as an interpreter, to convey our meaning to them." Now, it can never be supposed that a man, endued with mere mechanical motion, could

could impose upon the senses, in the manner here related.—No!—He who aims at perfection, particularly in Ballet, or Historical Dancing, must have a soul susceptible of all the passions which the various characters he has to represent naturally require. Even in our common practice, unless sentiment and motion go hand in hand, we can never thoroughly please.

But most of the qualities I have mentioned, are not confined to Dancing alone; on the contrary, they are equally necessary in the senate, the pulpit, the bar, on the stage, and, I may add, in every circumstance of life wherein our passions and affections are interested. A person cannot even present himself with a good grace, but through their united influence.

SKETCH

SKETCH IV.

Thoughts on the Utility of the Dancing taught in our Schools; but, particularly, in relation to the Minuet.

THAT my readers may not expect more than I intend to undertake, I shall beg leave to premise, that I do not mean to enter upon a long discussion of the various dances now taught in our schools, My chief aim is, to give my sentiments on the advantages arising to youth, from their being well instructed in the *Minuet*; a dance essentially necessary for them to learn, on account of its utility, as

a foundation for the superstructure of those graces which distinguish people of fashion, and good breeding, from others whose education has been neglected, or their manners perverted by bad teachers.

I have also to observe, that I do not propose to lay down rules for the attainment and practice of this and other similar dances; as it is not for me to undertake what no one has yet attempted. It might not, indeed, be a very difficult matter to describe the mechanical motions of the feet, so as to give a tolerable idea of the step; but there is a certain *je ne sais quoi* in the management of the body, and expression of the countenance, which, to attempt to delineate, with a view to satisfy the *judgment*, would prove as futile as the most laboured treatise on the combination of musical sounds would be to satisfy the *ear*. But there are some pointed traits in a just and elegant performance of the Minuet,

nuet, as well as in all other school dances, which ought to be attended to with precision: such as a well set Head, an expressive modesty in the Eye, and a diversity of Countenance; the inflexions of the Neck, which should be free and easy; the Shoulders well drawn back, and a full Chest; a graceful and dignified carriage of the Body; a gentle commanding flexibility of the Joints in sinking and rising; the good position, and proportionate distance of the Feet, in all their motions; a free, yet nervous, play of the Instep. These, together with a graceful management of the Arms, and manner of giving the Hands, are the outlines of a portrait, which require little more than the aid of an able artist to complete.

Indeed few are to be met with who are endued with all the properties necessary to the perfection of Dancing, nor can this be looked for. We see some who have a cor-

reft step, but are wanting in many of the other material characteristics looked for in a good dancer. Others have a natural gracefulness in the management of the body, which, if aided by the spontaneous operations of the mind, seldom fail to cause the spectators to overlook defects, which, otherwise, might not pass unnoticed, in respect to the motions of the feet.

But independent of the advantages already set forth, arising from the practise of Dancing to youth, it may be considered as a salutary amusement, conducive to health, by promoting a free circulation of the blood. As an exercise, it is sure to give great agility and suppleness to the limbs, observable in the active exertions of almost every one who has been much in the practice of it: "So that we see (as Sir John Gallini observes) it at once unites in itself the three great ends of bodily improvement, of diversion, and

and of healthy exercise. As to this last, especially," says he, "it has this advantage, its being susceptible, at pleasure, of every modification of being carried from the gentlest degree of motion, up to that of the most violent activity."

Along with other requisites to complete a good dancer, I took notice of the expression of the Eyes and Countenance, and the management of the Arms and Hands, as necessary to give effect to the motions of the body; and, indeed, without their aid, nothing truly pleasing can can be produced. Quintilian, after recommending Dancing as necessary to the formation of an orator, is of opinion, that the practice of those expressive graces, which characterise a good dancer, will, insensibly, steal into his manner, and give a pleasing effect to all his motions. He seems to have formed very just notions of the expressive faculties of the Countenance.

He observes, that it has great force and power in all that we do: "For," says he, "by this is discovered when we are suppliant, when compassionate, when minacious, when kind, when cruel, when sorrowful, when merry. In this we are lifted up, and cast down; on this men depend, and they behold and view before speaking.—By this we perceive pride, humility, love, hatred, envy, disdain; and thus the Countenance may not improperly be termed *the index of the passions of the mind.*" In speaking of the Hands, he says, "It is a difficult matter to say what a number of motions the Hands have; without which, all action would be marred and tame, since these motions are almost as various as the words we speak: for the other parts may be said to help a man when he speaks; but the Hands, as I may say, speak for themselves. "Do we not by the Hands," says he, "desire a thing?—Do we not by these promise, call, dismiss, threaten,

threaten, act the suppliant, or express our abomination or abhorrence, our fears?—By these do we not ask questions, deny, shew our joy, grief, confession, doubt, patience, moderation, plenty, number and time?—Do not the same Hands provoke, forbid, make supplication, approve, admire, and express shame?—Do they not, in shewing of persons and places, supply the place of adverbs and pronouns; insomuch, that, in so great a variety or diversity of the tongues of all nations, this seems to remain the universal language common to all?"

From this author's remarks we may infer, that nothing contributes more to give significance and effect to gesticulation, than an agreeable versatility of Countenance, and a right management of the Arms and Hands: for what pleasure can any one feel in seeing theatrical dancers, who are deficient in these essential qualifications?—And how insigni-

ficant are all their brilliant caperings, without the aid of their chief auxiliaries—the Arms and the Hands?

Great execution may, indeed, surprise, but without the other requisites just now mentioned, it can never thoroughly please. However, it must be acknowledged, that a facility in the execution of those reverberatory motions of the feet, and a diversity of shewy steps, are not only necessary, but ornamental, in this stile of dancing. All I mean to insinuate is, that they ought not to be looked upon as independent properties; for, if nothing more was to be looked for but great agility and execution, I have, more than once in my time, seen dancers at Sadler's Wells, who might have cut capers, and the like, with some of the best of their cotemporaries in our theatres.

There are other circumstances, besides what relate to Dancing, which demand our attention.

attention. The putting on, and taking off, the Hat, in a becoming manner; a graceful air in presenting a thing to any one. These are as true characteristic marks of good breeding, and point out the man of fashion with as much certainty as most things I know of. With respect to the motion of the Hand, in presenting a thing with a becoming air, it is, as I may say, making obeisance with the hand; and which, in its effect, is equal to the most deliberate bending either of the body or the knees, especially when accompanied by a small inclination of the head.

It is almost needless to take notice of what importance a graceful motion of the Arms are, in dancing the Minuet. They constitute one of its most pleasing varieties, when done with taste and judgment; and, therefore, ought to be attended to with more than ordinary precision.

It is, indeed, with regret, I have observed that, for many years past, the Minuet has, almost, totally fallen into disuse in our public assemblies; a circumstance I cannot otherwise account for, than by supposing it, in a great measure, owing to the gentlemen not keeping pace with the ladies, in the fashionable improvements of this dance. I know not if I may be thought singular in my opinion, but I certainly have remarked, that since the *pas-grave* has been so generally adopted in the Minuet, elegance and grace, instead of adding to, has, on the contrary, impaired its practice. Here, again, some blame may be attached to the gentlemen, who seldom pay the smallest attention to it after they leave school, perhaps at the early period of thirteen or fourteen years of age; while the ladies, on the contrary, continue to improve in it, till they are sixteen or seventeen, when they are introduced into the assemblies of fashion from the hands of their teachers.

teachers. How mortifying, then, must it be to them, when, after so much attention and practice, they find but few opportunities of displaying those captivating acquirements, in a *Duet*, formerly so popular, that it was always adopted as a *prelude* to the more sprightly dance! Whether these observations be just or not, it is not for me to say; but in this every one must agree, that there is a fluctuation in the *tide* of fashion, as well as in all other changes in the *ocean* of life, which can seldom be accounted for, or counteracted, and must, therefore, be complied with. A striking proof of this observation is seen in the rage which, for some time past, has prevailed in England, and elsewhere, for a very different mode of Dancing: what I allude to, are the national dances of the Scotch, especially their Reel. This dance, indeed, admits of so great a variety of natural and brilliant steps, as seldom fail to please.

SKETCH

SKETCH V.

Observations on the Scotch Reel, with a Description of the Fundamental Steps made use of in that Dance, and their appropriate Gaelic Names.

THE fondness the Highlanders have for this Quartett, or Trio, (for it is either one or the other) is unbounded; and so is their ambition to excell in it. This pleasing propensity, one would think, was born with them, from the early indications we sometimes see their children shew for this exercise. I have seen children of theirs, at five or six years of age, attempt, nay even execute,

cute, some of their steps so well, as almost to surpass belief. I once had the pleasure of seeing, in a remote part of the country, a Reel danced by a herd boy and two young girls, who surprised me much, especially the boy, who appeared to be about twelve years of age. He had a variety of well chosen steps, and executed them with so much justness and ease, as if he meant to set criticism at defiance. Circumstances like these plainly evince, that those qualities must either be inherent in the Highlanders, or that they must have an uncommon aptitude for imitation.

Our Colleges draw hither, every year, a number of students from the Western Isles, as well as from the Highlands, and the greater part of them excell in this dance; some of them, indeed, in so superior a degree, that I, myself, have thought them worthy of imitation. I mention these circumstances

stances with no other view, but as an introduction to what I am about to offer in relation to the steps most used in the Scotch Reels. To those who already know them, all I mean to say will be useless; but to others that have been wanting in opportunities of seeing this dance well performed, a description of the steps best adapted to those lively tunes, which have obtained the name of the dance to which they gave birth, may not, upon the whole, be unacceptable; especially as it is no uncommon thing, at Edinburgh, to see men of our profession who come there with no other view, but to acquire a knowledge of the proper steps made use of in that dance. It is not long since that two of them (father and son) came from London to Edinburgh, for no other purpose; and as they had their own carriage, it may be presumed they must have been men of some reputation in their profession. They made application to the most fashionable

able teacher of Dancing in that place, but as he was then too busy preparing for a ball, to be of much use to them himself, he recommended to them my partner, who happened to be then at Edinburgh. On his return, he told me that (their time as well as his own being limited) he attended them two or three times a day, during their stay there. I mention this circumstance, as a proof of what importance they thought a right knowledge of the dance in question might be to them, on their return to London.

Before I attempt to describe the principal steps made use of in Scotch Reels, it may be proper, first, to premise, that I have used my best endeavours to ascertain their Gaelic names, and have reason to think I have been successful in my enquiries. And here I am prompted by gratitude to acknowledge my obligations to a literary friend, (well versed in the Gaelic language) who has obligingly favoured

favoured me with the etymology of the terms, or adopted names, of the steps I am about to describe. These terms may be of use to the master, as they serve to distinguish the different steps from one another, and may induce a degree of speculation in the philologist.

Those who have acquired a little knowledge of Music, and are acquainted with Reel and Strathspey tunes, cannot but know that they are divided into two parts, each consisting of four bars, which severally contain four crotchets, or eight quavers; and that, in the generality of Strathspeys, the notes are, alternately, a dotted quaver, and a semiquaver; the bar frequently terminating in a crotchet.* This peculiar species

* It is curious to observe, that this division of time exactly corresponds with the measure which predominates in the heroic Stanzas of Ossian, and in many pieces of remote

of Music is, in many parts of the Highlands, preferred to the common Reel; on the contrary, the latter, by reason of its being the most lively tune of the two, is more generally made choice of in the dance.

I have further to remark, that for the purpose of distinguishing steps, many of which do not materially differ but in their number of motions, I make use of the previous terms *Minor*, *Single*, and *Double*. The first (Minor) is, when it requires two steps to one bar

mote antiquity, still repeated in the Highlands; of which *measure* the following lines, from a poem on Gray, exhibit a specimen:—

"Haste, ye Sister Pow'rs of Song,
"Hasten from the shady grove,
"Where the river rolls along,
"Sweetly to the voice of love."

It is probable the time of the Reel and Strathspey may have been regulated by the above mentioned circumstance. This is only delivered as a conjecture; the facts themselves are unquestionable.

bar of the tune; the second (Single) is, when one step is equal to a bar; and the third (Double) is, when it requires two bars to one step.

OF THE STEPS.

1. *Kemshóole,* * or Forward Step.—This is the common step for the *promenade,* or figure of the Reel. It is done by advancing the right foot forward, the left following it behind: in advancing the same foot a second time, you hop upon it, and one step is finished. You do the same motions after advancing the left foot, and so on alternately with each foot, during the first measure of the tune played twice over; but if you wish to vary the step, in repeating the measure, you may introduce a very lively one, by

* Or, according to its established orthography, *Cēum-siubhail,* from *Cēum* a step, and *siubhal,* to glide, to move, to go on with rapidity.

making a smart rise, or gentle spring, forward, upon the right foot, placing the left foot behind it: this you do four times, with this difference, that instead of going a fourth time behind with the left foot, you disengage it from the ground, adding a hop to the last spring. You finish the *promenade*, by doing the same step, beginning it with the left foot. To give the step its full effect, you should turn the body a little to the left, when you go forward with the right foot, and the contrary way when you advance the left.

2. Minor *Kemkóssy*, † Setting or Footing Step.—This is an easy familiar step, much used by the English in their Country dances. You have only to place the right foot behind the left, sink and hop upon it, then do the same with the left foot behind the right.

2. Single

† *Cèum-coisiche*, from *Cèum*, a step, and *Coiseachadh*, to foot it, or ply the feet.

3. Single *Kemkóssy*, Setting or Footing Step.—You pass the right foot behind the left to the fifth position, making a gentle bound, or spring, with the left foot, to the second position; after passing the right foot again behind the left you make a hop upon it, extending the left toe. You do the same step, by passing the left foot twice behind the right, concluding, as before, with a hop. This step is generally done with each foot alternately, during the whole of the second measure of the tune.

4. Double *Kemkóssy*, Setting or Footing Step.—This step differs from the Single Kemkóssy only in its additional number of motions. You pass the foot four times behind the other, before you hop, which must always be upon the hindmost foot.

5. *Lematrást*, ‡ Cross Springs.—These are a series of *Sissonnes*. You spring forward

‡ From *Lèum*, a leap, a spring, and *Traad*, across.

ward with the right foot to the third or fifth position, making a hop upon the left foot; then spring backward with the right, and hop upon it. You do the same with the left foot, and so on, for two, four, or as many bars as the second part of the tune contains. This is a single step; to double it, you do the Springs, forward and backward, four times, before you change the foot.

6. *Seby-trast,* ‖ Chasing Steps, or Cross Slips.—This step is like the *Balotte*. You slip the right foot before the left; the left foot behind the right; the right again before the left, and hop upon it. You do the same, beginning with the left foot. This is a single step.

7. *Aisig-thrasd,* § Cross Passes.—This is a favourite step in many parts of the Highlands.

‖ From *Siabadh*, to slip, and *Trasd*, across.

§ From *Aiseag*, a pass, and *Trasd*, across.

lands. You spring a little to one side with the right foot, immediately passing the left across it; hop and cross it again, and one step is finished; you then spring a little to one side with the left foot, making the like passes with the right. This is a minor step; but it is often varied by passing the foot four times alternately behind and before, observing to make a hop previous to each pass, the first excepted, which must always be a spring, or bound: by these additional motions, it becomes a single step.

8. *Kem Badenoch*, a Minor Step.—You make a gentle spring to one side with the right foot, immediately placing the left behind it; then do a single *Entrechat*, that is, a cross *caper*, or leap, changing the situation of the feet, by which the right foot will be behind the left. You do the same, beginning with the left foot. By adding two cross leaps to three of these steps, it becomes a double step.

9. *Fosgladh*,* Open Step.—Slip the feet to the second position, then, with straight knees, make a smart spring upon the toes to the fifth position; slip the feet again to the second position, and do a like spring, observing to let the foot which was before in the first spring, be behind in the second. This is a minor step, and is generally repeated during the half, or the whole, measure of the tune.

10. *Cuartag*,† Turning Step.—You go to the second position with the right foot; hop upon it, and pass the left behind it; then hop, and pass the same foot before.—You repeat these alternate passes after each hop you make in going about to the right. Some go twice round, concluding the last circumvolution with two single cross capers. These

* An opening.

† From *Cuairt*, a round, a circumvolution.

These circumvolutions are equal to four bars, or one measure of the tune. Others go round to the right, and then to the left. These, also, occupy the same number of bars.

COMBINED OR MIXED STEPS.

These are an association of different steps, and which are necessary to add variety to the dance. For example: You may add two of the sixth step (Seby-trast) to two of the third (Single Kemkóssy.) This you may vary, by doing the first of these steps before, instead of behind; or you may add two of the second step (Minor Kemkóssy) to one single Kemkóssy. These steps may be transposed, so that the last shall take the place of the first. Again:—Two of the sixth step (Seby-trast) may be added to the fourth step, (Double Kemkóssy) in going to either side.

Another

Another variety, much practised, is to spring backward with the right foot instead of forward, as in the fifth step, and hop upon the left; then spring forward, and again hop upon the same foot, and add to these two springs, one single Kemkóssy, passing the right foot behind the left. You do the same step, beginning it with the left foot. In short, without particularising any other combinations, I shall only add, that you have it in your power to change, divide, add to, or invert, the different steps described, in whatever way you think best adapted to the tune, or most pleasing to yourself.

SKETCH

SKETCH VI.

Of Dancing in General.

In the Encyclopædia are many quotations from Sir John Gallini's ingenious publications on the art of Dancing. Among the number, are the following observations on the modern practice of this art; which, as they are founded on long established *theoretic* rules, I am not vain enough to think myself qualified either to add to, or improve; and therefore, as the Encyclopædia may not be in the hands of every one who may peruse these Sketches, this consideration has induced me to give the following transcript at large.

"Dan-

"Dancing," says he, "is generally on a theatre, or in a saloon, or room. At the theatre there are three or four parts to be considered:—1. The nearest front to the spectators; 2 and 3. The two sides or wings; 4. The furthest front from the spectators.

"In a saloon, or room the place in which are the spectators decides the appellation respectively to them of right and left. The dancer should place himself in as advantageous a point of view to them as possible.

"In the dance itself there are to be distinguished the attitude of the body, the figure, the positions, the bends, the risings or leaps, the steps, the cabriole, the fallings, the slides, the turns of the body, the cadences.

"The *Attitude* of the body requires the presenting one's self in the most graceful manner to the company.

"The

"The *Figure* is to follow the track prescribed to the steps in the dance.

"The *Position* is that of the varied attitudes, which must be at once striking and easy; as also of the different exertions of the legs and feet in dancing.

"The *Bends* are inflexions of the knees, of the body, of the head, or the arms.

"The *Risings* are the contrast to the bends, the extension of the knee. One of these two motions necessarily precedes the other.

"The *Step* is the motion by the foot, or feet, from one place to another.

"The *Leap* is executed by springing up into the air: it begins with a bend, and proceeds with a quick extension of the legs, so that both feet quit the ground.

"The

" The *Cabriole* is the crossing, or cutting of capers, during the leap, before the return of the feet to the ground.

" The *Falling* is the return of the feet to the ground, by the natural gravitation of the body.

" The *Slide* is the action of moving the foot along the ground, without quitting it.

" The *Turn* is the motion of the body towards either side, or quite round.

" The *Cadence* is the knowledge of the different measures, and of the times of movevent the most marked in the music.

" The *Track* is the line marked by the dance: it may be either straight or curve, and is susceptible of all the inflections correspondent to the various designs of the composer. There are the right, the diametral line, the circular line, and the oblique line.

The

The *right* line is that which goes lengthwise, reckoning from one end of the room towards the other.—The *diametral* line is across the room, from one side to the other. The *circular* line is waving, or undulatory, from one place to another.—The *oblique* line proceeds obliquely from one quarter of the room towards another. Each of these lines may directly, or separately, form the dancers track, diversified with steps and positions.

" The *Regular* figure is when two or more dancers move in contrary directions; that is to say, that when one moves towards the right, the other moves to the left. The *Irregular* line is when the couples figuring together are both on the same side.

" Commonly the man gives the right hand to the lady, in the beginning or ending of the dance, as we see in the *Minuet*, *Louvre*, &c.

" When

" When a greater number of dancers figure together, they are to execute the figure agreeably to the composition of the dance, with special attention to keep an eye constantly on the partner. When, in any given dance, the dancers have danced for some time in the same place, the *Track* is only to be considered as the conductor of the *Steps*, but not of the *Figure*; but when the dance continues, without being confined to the same place, then the Track must be considered as the conductor both of the Steps and of the Figure.

" Now, to observe the Figure, the dancer must have placed himself at the beginning of the track upon which he is to dance, and comprehend the Figure, before he himself begins it. He is to remark and conceive whether the Figure is right, diametral, circular, or oblique; if it is progressive or retrogressive, or towards the right or left.—

He

He should have the air played or sung to him, to understand the movement. Where the tracks cross one another, the steps of each of the couples must leave a sufficient distance between them, not to confuse the Figure.

" There are commonly reckoned ten kinds of positions, which are divided into *true* and *false*, five each. There are three principal parts of the foot to be observed—the toes, the heel, and the ancle.

" The true positions are when the two feet are in a certain uniform regularity, the toes turned equally outwards. The false are divided into regular and irregular. They differ from the true, in that the toes are either both turned inwards, or if the toes of one foot are turned outwards, the others are turned inward.

" In the first of the true positions, the heels of the two feet are close together, so that they touch, the toes being turned out.—In the second, the two feet are open in the same line, so that the distance between the two heels is precisely the length of one foot. In the third, the heel of one foot is brought to the ancle of the other, or seems to lock in with it.—In the fourth, the two feet are the one before the other, a foot's length distance between the two heels, which are on the same line.—In the fifth, the two feet are across, the one before the other, so that the heel of one foot is directly opposite to the toes of the other.

" In the first of the false positions, the toes of both feet are turned inwards, so that they touch, the heels being open.—The second is, when the feet are asunder at a foot's distance between the toes of each, which are turned inward, the heels being on a line.—The

The third is, when the toes of one foot are turned outwards, the other inwards, so that the two feet form a parallel.—The fourth is, when the toes of the two feet are turned inwards; but the toes of one foot are brought nearer the ancle of the other.—The fifth is, when the toes of the two feet are turned inwards; but the heel of one foot is opposite to the toes of the other.

"There are mixed positions, composed of the true and false, in combination, which admit of such an infinite variety, and are, in their nature, so unsusceptible of description by words, that it is only the sight of the performance that can give any tolerable idea of them.

"Of the Bends of the Knee," he observes, "there are two kinds; the one *simple*, the other *forced*. The simple bend is an inflexion of the knees without moving the

heel, and is executed with the foot flat to the ground.—The forced bend is made on the toes with more force, and lower.

"Much is to be observed on the head of *Steps*.—First, not to make any movement before having put the body in an upright posture, firm on the haunches.

"Begin with the inflexion of the knee and thigh; advance one leg forward, with the whole foot on the ground, laying the stress of the body on the advanced leg.

"There are some who begin the step by the point of the toes; but that has an air of theatrical affectation. Nothing can be more noble than a graceful ease and dignity of step. The quantity of steps used in Dancing are almost innumerable; they are, nevertheless, reducible under five denominations, which may serve well enough to give a general idea of

of the different movements that may be made by the leg, viz. the direct step; the open step; the circular step; the twisted step; and the cut step.

"The *Direct* step is when the foot goes upon a right line, either forwards or backwards.

"The *Open* step is when the legs open. Of this step there are three kinds: one when they open outwards; another when describing a kind of circle, they form an inkneed figure; a third, when they open sideways: this is a sort of right step, because the figure is in a right line.

"The *Round* step is when the foot, in its motion, makes a circular figure, either inwards or outwards.

"The *Twisted* step, or *pas tortille*, is when the foot, in its motion, turns in and

out. There are three kinds of this step; one forwards, another backwards, the third sidelong.

"The *Cut* step is when one leg or foot comes to strike against the other. There are also three sorts of this step; backward, forward, and sidelong.

"The steps may be accompanied with bendings, risings, leaps, cabrioles, fallings, slidings, the foot in the air, the tip-toe, the rest on the heel, quarter turns, half turns, three quarter turns, and whole turns.

"There may be practised three kinds of bends or sinkings, in the steps, viz. bending before the step proceeds, in the act of slipping, and at the last of the steps.

"The beginning, or initial sink-pace, is at the first setting off, on advancing the leg.

"The

"The bend in the act of stepping continues the march, or walk.

"The final sink-pace closes the march.

"The rising is just the reverse of the bend, or sink-pace, which shall have preceded it.

"Some great masters in the art of Dancing, having observed that Music, which is inseparable from it, was capable of being preserved and conveyed by the musical characters, imagined, by analogy, that the like advantage could be procured to the composition of dances. Upon this plan, they attempted what is called the *Chorography*, an art which they suppose was either utterly unknown to the ancients, or not transmitted to us from them.

"It may, indeed, be easily allowed, that the track, or figure of a dance, may be determined by written or engraved lines; but

those lines will necessarily appear so perplexing, so intricate, so difficult, if not impossible, to seize, in their various relations, that they are only fit to disgust and discourage, without the possibility of their conveying a satisfactory or retainable instruction. Thence it is, that the article of Chorography, in the French Encyclopædia, is universally exploded as unintelligible and useless, though nothing more than an elementary indication of the art, and an explanation, such as it is, of some of the technical terms of it."

These observations respecting Chorography appear to me so arbitrary, and the difficulties pointed at so much exaggerated, that I must beg leave to say, I cannot acquiesce in them; and I shall give my reason, for forming a contrary opinion, in the following Sketch.

SKETCH

SKETCH VII.

Criticism on the neglect of Chorography.

CHOROGRAPHY, or the art of writing down dances by characters, was, for a series of years, adopted by the most celebrated professors of the art of Dancing throughout Europe; and who, indeed, prided themselves on their knowledge of so useful an invention. And I cannot help thinking it a most ridiculous circumstance to discontinue any particular branch of an art, without substituting, in its place, a better contrivance. The neglect

glect of this art is the more to be regretted, on account of its being so well calculated to disseminate an uniform practice of every new or fashionable dance. This circumstance alone, one should think, might have induced its retainment. And I am truly sorry to find Sir John Gallini among those who discourage the use of this art: and although no one can have a higher opinion of his talents and abilities than myself, yet, in this one article, however unpleasant it is to me, I must differ from him. It is true, I have experienced his friendship, but every one knows that friendship and sentiment do not always coalesce. His polite attention to me in London, I am proud to acknowledge, and do not esteem him the less because our sentiments, in this one particular, do not coincide.

Chorography, or, as Mr. Weaver terms it, Orchesography, (or the art of writing down dances in such intelligible characters, as to demonstrate

demonstrate, in a most plain and simple manner, every step, and every motion, the feet are capable of performing) was first published in France by M. Feuillet, and afterwards translated into English by Mr. Weaver.—This book contains complete tables of most of the steps used in Dancing, together with their proper characters, which are so judiciously contrived, as to lead you, progressively, from the simplest motions, up to the most active, or executive steps: and however unintelligible they may appear at first sight, I would undertake to make any one, that has been taught Dancing, comprehend many of the rudimental, or leading characters, in less than half an hour.

One *momentous* argument made use of in the Encyclopædia, against the practice of this art, the reader must have taken notice of; what I allude to, is its not having been allowed a place in the French Encyclopædia; but when

when it is considered that this could not have been done but at a considerable expence, it would have been rather surprising, than otherwise, it it had been admitted; especially as it would have required nearly one hundred engraved quarto plates to have made the whole perfectly intelligible—at least there is fully that number in Weaver's Orchesography.— This circumstance alone, one should think, might have deterred the publishers of the Encyclopædia from admitting it.

Another remark the reader must also have noticed. It is said, "That the track or figure of a dance may be determined by written or engraved lines, but that those will necessarily appear perplexing," &c.: but let any one look at the Louvre, the Rigadoon, or any other dances that are wrote in score, and it will plainly appear, that all the tracks are perfectly distinct; insomuch, that none of

of the characters marked upon one track, interferes in the least with those belonging to another. And to shew how easily this may be done, only suppose you have a prescribed track to advance upon, and that a retrograde movement is to follow. This, indeed, cannot be done on the same track, and keep the characters from running into one another: so that, in this case, it is necessary to draw a track, or line, parallel to, and at a small distance from the other, and attach the two lines together at the top by small dots, to denote their connections.

Many similar circumstances occur, especially in double dances wrote out in score.—For example:—When two lines cross each other, which is often the case, care must be taken to keep that part of the line which is crossed, free from characters, for the purpose of leaving room enough for those that are marked upon the other line. By this artifice,

fice, all confusion is avoided. In short, few of the difficulties objected to, but may be obviated as easily as those I have already taken notice of.

The only circumstance that I think objectionable, in respect to this art, is the multiplicity of characters, or rather changes, in the position of the same characters used in the *Entrechats*, and all other lofty steps in Stage Dancing. But even these might be easily simplified by new or abridged characters, to denote how often the feet are to cross each other, whilst they are off the ground; or how often any other kind of motions must be made in such like vaulting steps; and this might be the more easily accomplished, by reason that there is not so great a variety of distinct reverberatory motions of the feet in those sort of steps, as to make this more difficult to the dancer, than the characters in a physician's prescription is to an apothecary; who

who is at no loss to proportion the weight or quantity of his drugs, by observing how many zig-zag scratches of the doctor's pen is in the recipe.

Unfortunately for this art, men of genius, however well qualified for such an undertaking, have never attempted to improve or simplify it, since it was first introduced in France by M. Feuillet. If this had been done, many objections which now subsist, might have been obviated: for every one must allow, that no art or science was ever brought to perfection at first. One man invents a thing; others improve it; so that it is by progressive degrees, it arrives at perfection.

But, not to insist farther on the possibility of adapting more appropriate characters for dances of this kind, I rather wish to give up the point, than be thought obstinately bent on

on defending an old practice. Yet I cannot totally give up the idea, that, in regard to such dances as are calculated for more private exhibitions, writing and publishing any thing new in this way, would, as formerly, be very acceptable; and it is chiefly this circumstance that interests me in the revival of this practice; for in respect to any pecuniary advantage that might accrue to myself, from its again taking place, I totally disavow, by reason that I have, in a manner, given up the most fatiguing part of my business, and have now little more to do than to act as a superintendant.

That dances, such as I am speaking of, were formerly published, I may venture to say yearly, by the most celebrated masters, as well in England as in France, is unquestionable; nor can it be doubted but that they must have found their advantage in such publications. I was informed by a Mr. Des-

trade,

trade, who had been well acquainted with two eminent masters, (whose dances are in the hands of many) viz. Mr. Labbé and Mr. Isaac: the latter was the author of that long popular dance, the Rigadoon. These two masters, he added, acknowledged to him that, from long experience, they had found it to be a most profitable pursuit: so that interest alone, one should think, might have induced the continuance of this practice. And what an advantage must this have been, and still might be, to masters at a distance from Paris or London, to have dances conveyed to them with as much ease as they could have a new song? Sir John Gallini acknowledges that the Louvre, &c. are taught the same way in every country.—Must the professors of the art of Dancing, then, have come, as it were, from the Antipodes to have learned it, or any other similar dance? Surely not! What then must it be attributed to, that the generality of masters

in foreign parts, were made acquainted with the fashionable dances in vogue, either in England or in France, but to the art in question?

Before I quit this subject, I must observe, that many more great masters, than those I have named, have favoured the public with dances in score; particularly Dupré and Marcel, whom Sir John Gallini speaks of with a great degree of enthusiasm, in his Treatise on the art of Dancing; also, Gardell, author of the Minuet de la Cour; which dance, in the usual characters, I have by me. Now, as those great performers and teachers of Dancing did not disdain the art in question, what reasonable objection can others make for their neglect of it? It cannot be supposed, nor will it be granted, that men, in former times, had greater abilities for the study of Chorography, than those of a more recent date. The neglect of it then must surely

surely arise from some latent cause they are unwilling to account for. It cannot, surely, be the difficulty of attaining a competent knowledge of it, that startles them; (I mean so far only as relate to such easy familiar dances as are commonly taught in our schools) and yet there are individuals who are apt to make bugbears of shadows!—But as I am sensible it would be a vain attempt to argue against prejudice, I shall pursue the subject no farther, than barely to beg of those, whose opinions do not correspond with my own, to *think sensibly* and *reasonably*; if not, let others *think* for them, and I doubt not, but a majority will be of my opinion.

SKETCH VIII.

Theoretic Hints to the Young Teachers of Dancing.

One particular circumstance, relative to the Theory of Dancing, I will venture to suggest to the young teachers of the art; and which, in my opinion, it is necessary for them to be made acquainted with: but should my ideas not meet the approbation of men of real knowledge and experience in the profession, I shall most readily submit the point to their better judgment, and stand corrected. That to which I allude, is the distinction which ought to be made between *Movement* and *Motion*. The first, in our

art, may not improperly be termed a compound, the other a simple action: for, to make a movement perfectly to correspond with the tune, all the lower joints, the hips, the knees, the ancles, and the instep, must lend their aid to make it complete: whereas a simple motion, though a useful dependent, is, comparatively, of itself, of small importance.

To explain the distinction, we will have recourse to the Minuet step. As the tune it is adapted to is triple time, which has three crotchets in a bar, on this account the step suited to it will generally require an equal number of motions correspondent to those three notes; consequently it requires three motions to one movement; and as the Minuet step is composed of two movements, it, of course, requires two bars of the tune to one entire step. The tune itself generally has an initial or preparatory note; the Minuet

Minuet step, in like manner, has its preparatory motion, or sink, which must always be subordinate to the initial note of the music. For example: The initial sink, according to this rule, is made previous to the first motion, which is a slide forward with the right foot, making a rise as it advances to the fourth position. The second motion is performed by raising the heel of the left foot from the ground, and bringing it gently up to the right heel, by which motion you are again in the first position. The third motion, being a sink, finishes the first movement, and becomes an initial or introductory motion to the second movement. It may be easily comprehended, that these three motions perfectly correspond with the three crotchets, which make one bar of the tune.

The second movement begins, like the first, with a slide forward with the left foot to the fourth position. This motion, together with two simple paces forward upon the

toes, make the second movement. Here let it be observed, that the last pace must be accompanied with a sink; and, therefore, it may not improperly be called a compound motion, it being similar to a divided note in music, such as a Minim, which is equal to two crotchets.

In common time, which has four crotchets in a bar, this compound motion (tho' it may often occur in other parts of the step) generally accompanies the last note of the bar, as has already been observed; but if the step is a Borée, which has only three motions, the sink, as a fourth motion, becomes an independent one. In six-eights, or jig time, there are generally two movements in a bar; and this will, according to the above remark, require two compound motions. What I have said, in respect to the initial note of the Minuet, also holds good in Psalmody, and in most of our songs.

SKETCH

SKETCH IX.

Analogy between Dancing and Reading, Music and Painting, in many of their requisite Qualities.

I AM now about to hazard an idea, which, I doubt, will, by many, be thought a very whimsical one; but, when it is considered that there are but few people in the world who are entirely free from whimsies of one kind or other, it is not to be supposed that Providence has been more favourable to me, in regard to the foibles incident to humanity, than to the rest of mankind. That to which this preamble leads, is an attempt I am going to make, and will endeavour to prove, that

that there is an analogy between Dancing and Reading, in many of its properties.—The idea, at any rate, is *novel*, and may induce a degree of speculation in the mind of the curious. But to bring forward some of the circumstances which favour this opinion.

Every one must allow, that the use of Steps are as indispensably necessary in Dancing, as Words are in Reading and Speaking, and that a variety in both are, in a certain degree, equally necessary.

It requires an association of Vowels and Consonants, more or less, towards the completion of Words; in like manner, it requires a combination of Positions and Motions towards the perfection of Steps.

In Dancing, there are five fundamental or true Positions; in Reading, and the Alphabet, are the same number of perfect Vowels.

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In Dancing, a sixth Position may be introduced with as great propriety as the sixth Vowel; i. e. the *y* in Reading: for every one knows that this letter only becomes a vowel in certain cases, as after a consonant, &c.; so that the idea of introducing a sixth position in Dancing, though it may, at first view, be thought an innovation, yet when it is considered that as its station is between the second and fourth positions, it may, I think, with great propriety, be taken into the catalogue of positions, by reason of its use in all oblique directions: for the five true positions can do no more than direct you forward, sideway, backward, and assist you in turning about; so that, independent of its use in many steps, the figure without it would be too much limited to be pleasing.

With respect to Reading, or Recitation, however well the Words may be pronounced, if not accompanied by a proper modulation,

lation, and a harmonious variation of Voice, their effects on the mind must be but limited; for a monotony in either case is always displeasing. Much the same properties are required in Dancing: for the Steps, however well executed and varied, if they are not aided by a justness of Action, Expression and Grace, they fail in their effect.

I have one remark more to make, which is, that the Bars in written Dances, as well as the Bars in Music, have a similarity to the Points in Reading; and that each may be compared to the stages in the progress of a journey, for they are both equally necessary in their different appointments.

Whether the above observations are just or not, it is not for me to say. All I have to add is, that the analogy might be extended to other sciences besides those I have mentioned; particularly to Music and Painting,

ing, in many of their relative qualities: but, as I rather wish to be thought wanting in *matter*, than be censured for being too *prolix*, I shall only observe, that, independent of the relative qualities deduced from analogy, in regard to Music and Dancing, in particular, it cannot be denied that, in other respects, they are so intimately connected, that, without the aid of the former, the latter, however well performed, would be totally devoid of effect. For what is it but the pleasing combination of agreeable sounds, that stimulates and gives energy to all the dancers motions? From this circumstance it is obvious, that a tolerable proficiency in the practical part of Music, is indispensably necessary to every one of our profession, who is at all ambitious to excell, whether as public performers, or teachers of the art. In the latter case, they should study to acquire a *pointed* expressive manner of playing, as, by this, they can hardly fail to seize,

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as it were, their pupil's ear, and improve it. That this faculty is susceptible of great improvement, is certain. I have had repeated instances of it among my young pupils; many of whom, at the beginning of their practice, seemed totally devoid of an ear for Music; yet, in the end, have been capable of adapting the Step to the Music, with critical exactness.

I shall conclude this Sketch with the following short remarks relative to the analogy which subsists between Dancing and Painting; by which it will plainly appear, that the two arts are founded upon the same principles. For example:—The Painter, as well as the Dancer, should be particularly nice in the choice of their attitudes. They should both be endued with equal genius and capacity for expressing the various passions they mean to represent. They should, also, be equally attentive to all that relates to *grace*, *station*, and *contrast*.

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But, not to weary my readers with too many analogical remarks, I shall refer those I have already made, respecting Music and Dancing, in particular, to the discussion of connoisseurs in those two fine arts, to whose opinions I will most readily yield my own.

SKETCH

SKETCH X.

Observations upon Walking.

WALKING is that faculty in man, given him by nature, for the purpose of translating his body from one place to another, by an alternate motion of the feet, in whatever direction he means to pursue.

To render this faculty perfectly convenient to him, Providence has wisely contrived to make those motions easy and natural, by having formed the lower extremities of the human machine of different members, or parts, knit and articulated together in so

convenient and pliable a manner, as, by the aid of their auxiliary muscles, to admit of an easy motion. On the contrary, were not the members in question thus articulated, we should find much trouble and inconvenience in every movement we make; as it is from the flexibility and structure of these joints, that a natural and agreeable motion is obtained: for were there no joints below the hips, we should move like men walking upon stilts, describing a curve line with each foot, every step we take. This is, in part, the case with a man that has a wooden leg.

A graceful manner of walking is a property every one should endeavour to acquire: for at no time does the human figure appear to greater advantage, than whilst it is thus employed. To see any one advance or pass in review before us, whose carriage of the body, and movement of the limbs, are graceful and easy, who can help being prepossessed

possessed in favour of such a one? This qualification appears natural to some, when, in fact, it is little more than acquired or artificial property, which requires more or less cultivation in every one.

As a foundation for the attainment of this important qualification, an early application to the practice of Dancing, must, surely, tend greatly to its improvement; for this reason, that most of the rules laid down by good masters, for the practice of the one, are, in many respects, correspondent to those of the other.

Common mechanical, or ambulatory motion, is as well known to the peasant, as to the man of fashion; but to walk gracefully, is the result of much observation and experience: for it is not enough that we advance each foot in a proper direction, with well turned knees and toes; there is a graceful

dignity in the management of the body, that (if I may be allowed to say) adds sentiment to motion, and commands respect.

Among other requisites to give force to these qualities, the body should be erect without stiffness; the head upright, yet easy, always a little inclined, or turned to one side or the other; a gentle well contrasted swing of the arms (particularly in a man) cannot be dispensed with, without deviating from the rules that nature prescribes; for it must be observed, that this contrasted motion of each arm, with its opposite foot, act as pendulums to facilitate the motion of the body. These are all prominent qualities, and ought to be regarded as separate parts of one harmonious whole.

How different, in their effects, are these properties, when compared with many bad habits that prevail among mankind! One, in

in particular, I cannot resist cautioning every one to avoid, is that of *Affectation;* a vice, which, in its nature, is so far incompatible with true grace, that, wherever it exists, instead of adding air and improvement to the carriage of the body, by aiming at too great refinement, it totally defeats its own purpose. It is a noxious weed that generally thrives best in a shallow, or uncultivated soil; on that account, it ought not to be suffered to sprout up spontaneously in an elegant parterre.

These observations all hold good, as well in Dancing as in Walking, and are equally requisite in both. For what is Dancing, (especially the Minuet) but qualified motion adapted to time and measure? It is a pleasing exercise of bodily powers; and of the finer qualities of grace, taste and expression, which, altogether, called forth into action, have a most fascinating effect, whether in public or private circles of fashion.

We see some, on the other hand, who affect a carelessness in their outward deportment, disdaining all restraint in their carriage and gait; but surely people of this cast of mind ought not to be set up as models for general imitation: for by too great a neglect of either the natural or acquired graces, and by their contempt of too nice punctilios, they may be in danger of degenerating into an ungainly rusticity of manner, every where reprobated by people of true discernment.

Mankind, indeed, differ so much from one another in their manner of walking, that it is no uncommon thing for us to know our acquaintance at a distance, by their gait.—This diversity of manner renders general rules of small importance; nor would the most descriptive powers convey to the mind a just idea of graceful motion. The best thing to do, in this case, is to notice those, of either sex, who are remarkable for the elegance

elegance of their carriage, and manner of walking, and to take them as models for our imitation: for (according to a well known saying) "example is often better than precept."

There is a natural and (if I may be allowed to say) instinctive motion of the feet, which is used by every one, without their being sensible of it. What I mean is, after advancing one foot, (suppose it to be the right) the heel of the left foot must be raised from the ground. This motion of the heel, with a small exertion of the muscles, act as a lever to impel the body forward upon the right foot, by which means another station is attained. The left foot next advancing, in like manner, a progressive motion, of from one foot to the other, is produced.

To walk steadily, and with as little agitation of the body as possible, are circumstan-

ces of no small moment. For what can be more disagreeable than the habit which many have, of waddling like so many ducks?—Broad set men, especially those that are *arqués*, or bow-legged, are more subject to this uncouth manner of walking, than others of a more slender make: at the same time it must be observed, that every one has more or less of it, occasioned by the necessity they are under of transferring the center of gravity, alternately, from one foot to the other. As a proof of this assertion, do but look at two objects at a distance from each other, and in a direct line from where you stand, so that the one may eclipse the other from your view; then, though you do your utmost to move your body forward, precisely in the same right line, you will find you cannot effect it; for you will see, by turns, the most distant of the two at one time on the right, and, at another, on the left of that which is nearest to you; so that this serpentine

tine, or zig-zag motion of the body, being natural to every one, it cannot be deemed a fault, so long as it does not become too apparent.

One thing not always attended to, even by many professors of the art of Dancing, and which tends more to perfect good walking than one would at first imagine—I mean the proper regulation of the knees; for on this depends the right position of the toes: for, whichever way the knees are turned, the toes will, unavoidably, follow the same direction, by reason of the joints below the hips; which are so formed, as to admit of little other motion than flexion and extension.

I know not of any natural defect that gives a man a more disagreeable appearance, either in walking or in dancing, than his being *jarreti*, or knock-kneed; and the misfortune is,

is, there is no cure for this evil in adults.—A person thus formed, his haunches are straight, and his thighs in contact with one another. The only improvement that can be made, in a case of this nature, is, to exercise the joints by sinking and rising with the knees as much turned outwards as possible. These motions, if any thing can, will relax the muscles that draw the thighs together, and may, in some degree, obviate this evil.

The defect of turning in the toes, is taken notice of in the Encyclopædia, as a thing natural to mankind, as being born with us.—"For if (as Mr. Noverre observes) we attend only to children, or the rustic inhabitants of villages, we shall see that they all turn their feet inwardly. The other position is purely invention; and as a proof, far from equivocal, of this fault being an imaginary one, is, that a painter would transgress

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as much against nature, as the rules of his art, were he to place the feet of his portrait in the situation of a dancer. It is plain, then, that to dance elegantly, walk gracefully, or address ourselves with ease and manliness, we must absolutely reverse the nature of things, and force our limbs, by artificial application, equally tedious and painful, to assume a very different situation from what they originally received.

"Such change, however necessary in this art, can only be accomplished by laying its foundation in the earliest stages of infancy, when every bone and muscle is in a state of pliability, and capable of receiving any direction which we chuse to give them.

"This difficulty of attaining the outward position of the limbs, is owing to our ignorance of the proper arts to be employed.—Most beginners persuade themselves that it is

is to be acquired by forcing the feet to turn outwards; and though these parts may readily take such a direction, from their suppleness, and being so easily moved at their articulations with the leg, yet this method is so far false, as it tends to displace the ancle bones, and, besides, has no effect upon either the knees or thighs."

When children are young, the defect of being knock-kneed may be greatly overcome, by making them stand with their feet and ancles touching each other, instead of turning out their toes. If their knees are much turned inward, they will find some difficulty in bringing them straight, whilst in this position; but once overcome this difficulty, and you are sure an improvement has commenced.

Others who have this fault in a less degree, will more easily stand with their feet and

and knees together. In this case, when it can be done without violence, put any thing that is soft between the knees, to separate them; and if this experiment is frequently repeated, a gradual improvement may be looked for.

I have only to add, that the best time for such practice is, soon after rising in a morning, when the joints are more loose in their articulation, than at any other time of the day.

The use of stocks may, upon the whole, be of service to young people, especially those that are pretty open at the knees; on the contrary, they are not so proper for others that are close, or inn-kneed, as they are apt to give an unnatural twist to the feet, and a protuberance to the inner ancles. A much more eligible method may be adopted, and which all good masters will recommend in

in preference to stocks; this is, as I observed before, the frequent exercise of the lower joints, by alternately sinking and rising, with very open knees. This exercise of the joints must, in time, very much relax the muscles which draw the knees together; and, in proportion to the degree they are affected, the knees will be more or less at liberty to take a proper direction.

I have often placed a square table so near the wall, as barely to allow room enough for a boy to perform the like motions, and have found this expedient to answer better than what the French call the *tourne-hanche*; a machine greatly exploded, on account of its tendency to distort, rather than improve, the position of the knees, thighs, and haunches. This substitute for that machine allows of more liberty to the play of the joints, by reason that it is easily removed, at a greater or less distance from the wall, to accord with circumstances.

I have only to remark, that great care should be taken, that whoever makes use of this expedient, should be sure to have his breech well kept in, and not to have his knees too much confined, or overstrained, though the inside of them touch the table every time he sinks or rises.

SKETCH

SKETCH XI.

Useful Hints to the Professors of the Art of Dancing.

THERE is a certain propriety of conduct, behaviour and address, which is necessary to be observed by men in every station and profession in life; and which is oft times of more real use to them, than superior talents. These, as it were, stand forth to solicit the notice and favour of mankind, and seldom but with success.

A man that is truly ambitious of public favour, will attentively pursue every neces-

sary attainment, which may distinguish him from others of his own profession. He will not think it enough that he is master of the rules and principles of his art; he ought to be sensible that more than this is required to complete his character. A good address, an easy deportment, a polite, a natural, and graceful manner, are qualities which stand universally confessed; and these he will assiduously study to attain. He will, of all things, take care not to give into the unnatural and affected airs of the pedant, nor will he imitate the false refinements of the fop; on the contrary, he will, as it were, form his *model* from *nature*, and he will improve it by a judicious imitation of the *graces*, as they present themselves to his view. Thus he will acquire an ease and freedom in his manner, which may be productive of very happy consequences to him, in his intercourse with mankind.

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There is one very common circumstance, which every one ought carefully to guard against; it is, what cannot be too often repeated, that of *Affectation*. This folly generally proceeds from false imitation, and is sure to caricature every grace it means to display: but for all that, it has its votaries everywhere, and among people too, who ought least to be suspected of paying homage to its shrine; I mean those of our own profession, who, I am sorry to say, but too frequently overact their part.

Sir John Gallini, who is, himself, as free from this ill-judged propensity as any one I know of, observes, that "Those false refinements, that finical affected air, so justly reproached in the generality of teachers, a master should correct in himself, before he can well give lessons, for avoiding them, to his pupils; as, in truth, they are but wretched substitutes for the true grounds and prin-

ciples of the art; in which nothing is more strongly inculcated, than the total neglect of them, and the reliance on the engaging and noble simplicity of nature."

But a stiff and formal carriage is equally as bad as too finical a one; for nothing, surely, can be more ridiculous, than to see a person move along at his utmost stretch of height, and as if the proportion of each step, and the turn of each foot, was chalked out to him. Such a one, as well as the character above noticed, may, I think, be justly pronounced devoid of the true principles of the art he pretends to teach.

I cannot pass by another peculiarity which some of our profession vainly affect—it is a passion for *Dress*. As this foible is apt, also, to give impressions much to their disadvantage, I sincerely wish they could be prevailed upon to leave it off; for, indeed,

I see no end it can serve, but to point them out as objects of ridicule, and put them on a level with the ass in the fable, that valued itself on the richness of its housings! In short, any thing rather than gaudy cloaths; for these, at best, are but the trappings of folly, and will never recommend a man to the esteem of people of sense.

SKETCH XII.

Observations on the Defects of the Body; from whence they proceed; together with several Expedients proposed for correcting or preventing their progress in Youth; also, some previous Anatomical Remarks.*

I COME now to the most material part of this undertaking, which is, to point out the common defects of the human body, and to offer some hints for preventing or correcting them,

* The author does not wish to advise any one to take the following expedients upon trust; he rather wishes that those who mean to make trial of any one of them they are not acquainted with, first to take the advice of any of their medical friends, who, it must be supposed, are the best judges with respect to the relative connections of the several parts of the human body; and, he flatters himself, they will, upon the whole, favour his suggestions with their approbation.

them. But, before I do this, it may not be improper, first, to take a view of those parts, or members of the body, which, in the course of this treatise, may come under our consideration. A general idea of their situation, connection and use, may not only enable us, with some degree of certainty, to account for the common deformities incident to the human body, but it may, also, be of singular use to us, when we attempt to correct any of them. For, when any part, or member of a machine, the work of human art, is out of order, it is surely necessary that the artist who undertakes to repair it, should be acquainted with the purpose and use of the several parts of the machine, before he undertakes to rectify what is wrong in it. If this is not the case, he may do more harm than good.

In examining the anatomy of the human body, we find a long chain of moveable bones,

bones, which extend from the top of the neck, along the back, downwards. They are twenty-four in number; seven belonging to the neck, twelve to the back, and five to the loins. They are called the vertebræ, or spine. These bones are wonderfully joined, and articulated, by strong ligaments, which keep them together. They have, for their basis, the os sacrum, a large immoveable bone, to which the hip bone and the haunches, &c. are united. They rest one upon the other, growing gradually more slender, from their basis, upwards. Upon this flexible column the head is placed, to which, also, is attached the ribs and the haunches; and these, again, serve to unite the different parts of the body. It is from the number of bones, which compose the spine, that the body is capable of performing such a variety of motions. When they are well set, and rise one above the other, in a natural and regular manner, the body will be

be straight; but when they are otherwise, it must, of course, be deformed. So that, when we see any one that is hump-backed, or, in any other way, crooked in the body, we may be very certain that the spine has, by some means or other, acquired a wrong cast.

The sternum, or breast bone, is attached to the ribs, and rises higher in women than it generally does in men. When it is round and full, it adds a gracefulness to the body; on the contrary, when it is flat and even, it has a contrary effect.

Above the breast are two bones which extend from below the fore part of the neck, the one to the right, the other to the left. They are called the clavicles, or collar bones. In young people, but particularly in infancy, these bones are very tender and pliant; insomuch, that they may, with some attention

attention and trouble, be modelled almost to what shape one pleases. When they are pretty straight, and well extended, the shoulders will fall backwards, and have an agreeable shape; but when they are much crooked, the shoulders must appear forward, and the chest narrow. These bones are articulated at one end with the sternum, and at the other with the scapula, or shoulder blades, which they uphold. The shoulder blades are two broad bones, somewhat of a triangular form. Their use is, to give breadth and strength to the shoulders. From these bones many muscles that sustain and move the arms, take their origin. There is a sinus, or cavity, in the neck of the shoulder blade.—This cavity receives the head of the humerus, or arm bone, which is round and large, so that these are to one another as a ball and socket. This kind of articulation is, of all others, the most perfect, as it admits of every motion. Indeed the cavity of the shoulder

blade

blade is rather flat than otherwise; but, to make up for this deficiency, and for the greater security of the arm, it is invested with a cartilaginous or gristly substance, which fastens the arm bone, and prevents it from being too easily dislocated.

The articulation of the thigh bone, and the hip, is similar to that of the arm and the shoulder blade, and their operations are, in general, the same. They move backwards, forwards, to either side, and circularly.—Now, were their operations more limited, we should find some inconveniency in almost every thing we do. With respect to the articulation at the hip, it seems evidently designed by nature for facilitating ambulatory motion: for whether we move forward, backward, to the right, to the left, or turn about, all these different movements have their origin from the junction of the thigh and hip. For as the knee and the ancle admit

mit of little other motion than flexion and extension, they can only be considered as auxiliaries to the joint in question, especially when we walk about.

Though it is not every one's good fortune to be naturally formed to please, yet all have it, more or less, in their power to improve what is amiss in their make. A head badly set; shoulders too forward, or not equal to one another; a crookedness in the waist; toes inverted, and many other imperfections, if early care is taken, may be prevented, or, by proper methods, greatly improved.—These blemishes are commonly more early acquired than people generally apprehend. They often have their origin from the first stages of our existence; owing, frequently, to the injudicious management of children in their infancy. Indeed, to the honour of the present age, many bad practices have been exploded. Among the number are, swathing

ing and girding them like so many Egyptian mummies. To this day, we often see that little care is taken in putting children into their cradles, which is of much greater consequence, both to their health and shape, than people may at first imagine. For if a child be too much confined, or overheated by many cloaths, it will be fretful, and shew every testimony of disapprobation which the dictates of nature prompt it to. And how far the frequent exertions it makes, to disengage itself from its fetters, may contribute to give its body a wry cast, or to injure its health, I leave to the gentlemen of the faculty to determine.

Some nurses have an abominable custom of carrying children constantly on one arm, which has a very dangerous tendency to make them crooked. For, when a child begins to take notice of the objects which surround it, it will naturally turn to that which strikes

strikes its fancy most; consequently, if it is always accustomed to rest upon one arm, its body must acquire a wrong cast.

I knew two brothers that were a good deal deformed, and both in the same way, owing, doubtless, to their having been wrong carried about. They both had the same dry nurse, who, unfortunately for them, had a weakness in her right arm, so that she had used them both to her left. The consequence was, the left knee of each of them was very much turned inwards, and their right shoulders were so much higher than their left, that it gave them a very disagreeable appearance. Another thing remarkable was, they were both left handed, which could be imputed to no other cause, than their having had the use of the left hand more than the right. Their parents had afterwards other children, who were free from those deformities, owing, doubtless, to the care they took in the choice of nurses.

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Many, too, are fond of seeing children attempt to stand, or walk, before their little limbs have got strength enough to support the weight of the body. It is commonly owing to this bad practice, that children get into a waddling way of walking. When children begin to run about, they then become more immediately the objects of their parents attention. A mother, in particular, as having generally more opportunities than a father to discover external defects, when a child has any, should observe, with the utmost circumspection, every motion and turn of the body; and, what is very material too, she should not be wanting in attention to its manner of standing; for on this circumstance depends, in a great measure, the good or bad dispositions of the body. If, for example, a child gets into a habit of standing more upon one foot than it does upon the other, that side of its waist to which it inclines, will bend inwards, and the opposite shoulder

shoulder will be higher than the other: so that, if early care is not taken to prevent this bad habit, a child must, in time, even supposing it to be naturally well made, acquire a wry shape. To remedy this evil, the mother, or the person who has the chief superintendence of the child, should make him stand, as much as possible, upon the foot he is least inclined to rest upon: and, if he is even allowed to hop pretty much about upon it, this will be found no despicable expedient. Now and then, when he is standing in the manner proposed, (suppose it should be upon his left foot) persuade him to try how far he can reach up the wall with his right hand; telling him, at the same time, it is a sure way to make him grow fast: for nothing is more pleasing to a child, than to be impressed with this belief. By frequent exertions of this nature, the contracted side of its body must be lengthened, and the shoulder which was highest, will fall in

proportion as the other takes a contrary direction.

It may easily be perceived by any one, that when a child is either standing or hopping about upon one foot, the other remains inactive: hence it follows, that the weight which the disengaged foot ought to bear, throws the centre of gravity entirely upon the other foot.

Other methods may be adopted, which may greatly tend to obviate this evil propensity. The following are not unworthy the reader's attention:—

When a child either raises or depresses one shoulder too much, some sort of burden should be put upon the shoulder that is lowest. This weight will oblige him to raise it up, and, at the same time, it will make him depress the other: for the shoulder that carries a burden is always higher than that which is not loaded: and hence the

the central line of the whole weight, both of the body and the burden, passes through the leg which sustains the weight. If this was not the case, the body would, unavoidably, fall: but here nature has provided against this inconvenience, by making an equal part of the weight of the body to be thrown to the side opposite to that upon which the burden is laid. This plainly shews the error of those who, to oblige a child to keep down his shoulder, if it be too high, put some weighty thing upon it, imagining that this weight will make him depress it, while, on the contrary, it is sure to make him raise it higher. (See Orthopædia.)

The above circumstances (according to Leonard da Vinci) all correspond with the mechanism of nature; without which, the equilibrium could not be preserved.

A child that has the bad habit in question, is never more ready to shew it, than when

he is learning to read; therefore, it is highly proper that his master should make him stand in such a position, as may render it inconvenient to him to indulge this propensity: and this may be easily done; as, for example, if it is his left foot which he stands most upon, he should be placed with his right side to his master, and this will make him rest his body upon his right foot, without his thinking about it. Another method is, to make him carry any weighty thing in his hand, or, rather, under the arm of that side to which he inclines, and this will, naturally, make him lean to the contrary side, more or less, in proportion to the weight he carries. Only observe a servant girl carrying a pail of water in either hand, and you will be convinced of the propriety of this scheme. A similar method may be used when a child leans either too much forward, or too much backward, and the same effect will be produced: for nature will maintain her right, in preserving an equilibrium in all her operations.

SKETCH

SKETCH XIII.

Of the Chest and Shoulders.

As nothing adds more to the grace of the body, than a well formed chest, so no pains ought to be spared that may promote so material an advantage.

No method, as yet devised, tends so much to raise the chest, as confining or forcing the shoulders backwards: therefore every possible means ought to be used that is likely to answer this great end. But then this ought to be done with judgment, or else the shape of the child may be injured by it: for, if one shoulder, by being too much confined,

becomes lower than the other, this may, in time, give it a crooked cast. Backboards, as they are now constructed, are certainly of great use to children in general, as they not only draw the shoulders back, but they force in the scapula, or shoulder blades, and, in time, may lengthen the clavicles, or collar bones. These all tend greatly to raise and give a fullness to the chest; for, as I have already observed, all these bones adhere to one another; consequently you can hardly make the smallest alteration in the station of any one of them, without, in some degree, affecting the whole. Now, as all these bones are held together by their several cartilages and muscles, the cartilages will be compressed, and the muscles which draw the shoulders forward, by being relaxed, will, in time, cease to act with their usual force.

There are other expedients, besides backboards, to give a good set to the shoulders, especially

especially when children are young. One, in particular, which may be put in practice at all times, I will venture to recommend: but, that my readers may be convinced of the probability of its answering the end proposed, let any of them only try the experiment themselves, and, I am persuaded, they will be convinced of its utility. The method is this:—Let a young lady take hold of her stays, or bodice, with her fingers, as near to her shoulders as possible, and, with as much force as she is capable of, endeavour to draw back her arms. This practice, if frequently repeated, if but for a minute or two at a time, will gradually lengthen the clavicles, and, consequently, the shoulders will have a better fall, the chest will become more round and full, and the head will be more erect. It would not be amiss, was she to stand with her back to the wall, when she is thus employed—this will keep her from leaning backwards.

Many other simple methods may be fallen upon, which are pretty similar in their effects. Among the number, are the two following, which, I have been told, were much recommended by the celebrated Marcel, whom Lord Chesterfield mentions with more than ordinary praise, in his Letters to his Son. The first is, to let a child hold a stick across its breast, with its arms stretched out at their full length. This small effort, if frequently repeated, will be found to answer the end proposed. The other is, a kind of back-board made to reach nearly from one shoulder to the other. It must be lengthened by two projecting sticks, one from each end of the board; these must pass under the arm-pits, and, when thus placed, a young lady has it greatly in her power to force her shoulders backwards.

Some eminent masters have a method of forcing down the shoulders, which has a great

great effect. It is this:—Place your pupil with her back to you; take hold of her arms, and turn them till the elbows are a little inwards, then raise her arms, and bring them down with a pretty smart jerk, but rather gently at first, till habit makes it easy to her, which it will do in a short time. This abrupt motion of the arms, if frequently repeated, will, in time, relax the muscles which confine, or draw the shoulders forward, and must even affect those ligaments which assist in uniting the arms with the scapula and the clavicles.

It would be superfluous to say any thing concerning the well known use of Dumb Bells: I shall, therefore, only observe, that I have invented a machine, which I will venture to recommend; being confident that it may be of great use to children, particularly before they are arrived at a proper time of life to wear backboards. Any one who may be

be inclined to try the effects of such a machine, must have a board made that will nearly extend from the point of one shoulder to the other, and about three inches broad. It must have a groove to receive two sliders, in the nature of a sliding scale, which ought to be made of steel. These sliders should be pretty broad and flat at the ends, and properly turned to fit, and take in the shoulders.

It is easy to conceive that a machine of this construction will answer for children of different ages, by reason of the additional length that can be given to it, by drawing out the sliders. It may not be improper to give a little curve to the board, on the side that touches the back; the other side, where the sliders are, should be flat: this will make it look light, and give the shoulders greater liberty to fall back. But, lest the child should find any pain, by reason of the sliders being made of steel, cover that part of them which takes

takes in the shoulders, with something that is soft, and they will be easy enough.

Such a machine as this may not only be of use in straightening the clavicles, and setting the shoulders right, but, like the back board, it will force in the shoulder blades, and raise the chest. Even the neck may be greatly improved by it; for no one can easily bend the neck forward, when the shoulders are in this situation. It will readily occur to any one, that a machine of this kind ought not to be used but for about a quarter of an hour, more or less, at a time; and that, while it is on, the hands should hang down; for, without this precaution, it will not keep its place.

SKETCH

SKETCH XIV.

Particular Causes of the Deformity of the Body.

CHILDREN are never more in danger of acquiring a wrong shape, than after they have been long confined to a sick bed, for then the bones are very loose in their articulations; and the muscles, from long disease, become feeble and weak. What Dr. Andry says, relative to this subject, is worthy of notice. (Orthopædia, volume 1. page 88.)*

"When

* The late Dr. John Gregory, Professor of Medicine in the College of Edinburgh, recommended this book to the author's notice; observing, at the same time, that

" When children," says he, " are recovering from a disease that has confined them long to their bed, the use of stitched stays, or, at least, of quilted bodice, is more necessary than upon any other occasion; because the body being weakened by the length of the disease, will very easily acquire an ill shape. Nay grown persons, themselves, ought, in such a case, to remember this precaution. The bones of the spine, when a person lies in bed, do not press upon one another, neither do they feel the weight of the head. Hence it happens, that when one

that although it was chiefly intended for the perusal of those who had a family of children, yet, as it contained many important hints respecting the external defects and bad habits to which youth are liable; on that account, he thought it worthy the attention of all teachers of Dancing. The author of these Sketches having formed the same opinion of this work, he therefore, to add weight to his own suggestions, has availed himself of Dr. Andry's observations, by making a few relative extracts from what he has wrote upon the subject now under consideration.

one is confined to bed for a long time together, these bones recede at a greater distance from one another, and, consequently, the body is thereby rendered longer. As this increase of length proceeds from thence, that the bones of the spine are not so exactly joined with one another, it necessarily follows that the spine must have less strength and firmness after one has just risen from a long illness; because, at that time, the vertebræ are not so firmly compacted with one another. Now the vertebræ being more loosely joined together, and the trunk become longer, the body must, during the time of recovery, (when the bones begin to press harder upon one another, by the weight of the head, and their own proper gravity, from their perpendicular situation when we stand or sit) I say, the body must be disposed to grow crooked at that time, so much the more, as its length is increased. Whence it is easy to see, that if one does not wear bodice,

dice, or something equivalent to them, to keep the body straight, it will be very apt to become crooked at that time."

It is obvious, from the above circumstances, that when a young person, in particular, is in a state of convalescence, and is able to sit up for a short time, great care ought to be taken to keep his body as upright as possible, so that the spine may not acquire a wry cast, which it might easily do, because at that time the vertebræ are not so firmly joined as when a person is in perfect health.

But young people, even when they are in good health, do not, naturally, attend to the posture most proper for them to sit in.—They generally think only how they may make themselves easy in that situation; and, therefore, the position they commonly adopt is improper. Some sit upon one hip; this shortens that side to which they recline.—

Others

Others sit with their bodies bent forwards, and this gives a roundness to the back.—Leaning against the back of a chair, particularly if the seat be broad, has the same effect. When they do this, the head naturally comes forward.

To prevent these bad habits in children, it is not enough that you caution them; you should accustom them to proper seats, particularly to such as are neither too high nor too low for them. A child either sitting with its feet from the ground, or on too low a seat, its back will be rounder than usual; therefore, these two extremes ought to be avoided. The best proportion for the height of the seat is near to the length of the leg.

As young ladies are never more inattentive to their manner of sitting upright, than when they are at their needle work, or at their book, their parents or their governesses

ought to be indefatigable in their attention to them, when they are thus employed.—Nothing can be more ungraceful, than to see a young lady stooping over her work, or her book, when it certainly would be much more easy for her to hold either the one or the other up at a proper distance from her eyes.

Few habits children are subject to take more from the grace of the body, than their advancing their bellies too much forward.—This custom, in my opinion, is of worse consequence to them than their leaning too much forward: for the former causes the child to hang its chin down towards the breast, whereas the latter has the contrary effect. However, this bad habit, if soon attended to, may be easily overcome, as we may judge from the small difficulty we find in stooping forward for a minute or two, to what it is to us to lean as long backwards.

Some

Some imagine that any weighty thing applied to the forepart of a child, will cause it to lean forward; but, as I said before, this must, naturally, have a quite contrary effect, as may be observed in those who carry burdens before them; whereas others who carry them on their backs, stoop forward, that they may preserve the equilibrium.

SKETCH XV.

Means proposed for preventing, or curing, the Deformities of the Neck.

No part of the human body is more generally attended to than the head. When it is well placed, and its motions are natural and easy, nothing adds more to the beauty of the body, nor commands greater attention.

When the head is properly placed, it is erect, neither inclining to one side or the other, backwards or forwards. It is placed, as has already been remarked, upon the vertebræ, or spine, upon which it moves as on an axis.

The vertebræ, the two first in particular, are admirably formed by nature for the various motions of the head, which moves backwards and forwards upon the first, and semicircularly upon the second.

When any of the muscles which draw the head to either side are contracted, whether from a bad habit of always inclining it one way, or from any disorder, the opposite muscles must, of course, be relaxed, and the head will stand awry. In like manner, when any of the muscles which draw the head backwards, or that bring it forwards, are forced to yield to the superior power of their antagonist muscles, the head must be either too far backwards, which, indeed, is not often the case, or else it must hang too much forward; in both which cases, no pains ought to be spared to rectify either the one or the other: for even the former may be carried to an extreme.

Some

Some imagine that a ribband round the neck, and strait fastened behind, is of use to a child that hangs down its head; but, for my own part, I am not of this opinion. I think it incircles the neck too near the clavicles, to be of any service at all. A much more eligible scheme would be, to give it a sort of shade, like what we sometimes see people wear who have sore eyes. This shade, if it descend a little below the eyes, must oblige the child to keep its head erect, whether it be sitting, standing, or running about.

When a young lady is come to that time of life that she may safely wear a steel collar, it may, in some cases, be of use to her, especially if she holds down her head very much; but at the same time that I am of this opinion, I cannot altogether approve of those that have hitherto been in use. I think they are apt to give a stiffness to the carriage

of the head, which is very disagreeable. To obviate this inconvenience, I have invented a flexible Collar, which, I flatter myself, will remove all objections to those kind of machines. This Collar differs little in appearance from the ordinary one, but it is greatly superior to it in its effects; for this obvious reason, that it not only yields to the pressure of the chin, but, by its elastic power, raises it up again; and as it follows the motions of the head, when it turns to either side, these circumstances, one should think, must give it a material advantage above the common one; which, from the inflexibility of its construction, has not, for some time past, been much in use. How far I may be right in regard to my notion of the one now under consideration, I will not pretend to say; being sensible that nothing is more common, than for men to form too flattering notions of what they themselves contrive or invent. How far this observation may be applicable

applicable to myself, will soon be evinced by the opinion which may be formed of such like collars, as I have, in part, described, when they are offered to the inspection of the public. In the mean time, I fain would flatter myself that, in some particular cases, as when young ladies are employed at their needle, or their book, they will be found useful.

One reason why breast collars have been so generally laid aside, for some years past, is, in a great measure, owing to the want of stays to fix them to. But this inconvenience may be easily overcome, by means of a thin semicircular plate across the breast, constructed after the manner and form of one of those japanned stocks wore by many of the soldiery: to the end of which plate must be attached two ribbands, one to pass under the right arm and over the left shoulder, the other the contrary way. These rib-

ribbands must again pass under the arms, and pinned, or tied behind; or they may be brought round the waist, and fixed before. It may be easily conceived, that such a plate as I have described, is no bad substitute for the want of stays.

But a more simple apparatus for supporting the collar may, by some, be preferred to the above, by reason that it can be easily prepared for use by any one: for you have only to take a ribband, and form a loop, or affix a flat socket to the middle of it, to hook the collar to; then tie the ribbands behind the neck, and they will uphold the collar as well as if it was supported by stays. But it will be found necessary to pin the loop, or socket, to the breast of the frock, to prevent it from shifting to either side. I have only to add, that something that is soft will be required to prevent the hook from being uneasy to the breast.

When

When a child holds his head too much to one side, it may not be amiss to place a book or any other thing upon it, that will easily fall off, and desire him to walk, so as not to let it fall to the ground. If the thing be put a little towards that side to which the head inclines, he will, naturally, bend his neck the other way; and, if this experiment is often repeated, suppose by way of play to him, it cannot fail, in time, of having a good effect. In cases of this nature, Dr. Andry recommends the application of some sort of emollient to relax the contracted muscles. This author proposes many methods for rectifying the defects of the neck; one of them is singular, and worth the reader's attention:—

"A girl," says he, "of ten years old, who had her neck crooked from the age of seven, the deformity coming upon her by degrees, without any manifest cause, was, unexpectedly, cured of it after this manner:—

Her

Her mother took her to a house to see a fire-work, and the windows of the house were situated in such a manner, that the fire could only be seen on one side, and this being the side opposite to the one which the child's head was turned to, the girl, who was extremely curious, made such violent efforts to turn her head to that side where the fire was, that it seemed to her as if one had been pulling her head from her shoulders. But her strong desire to satisfy her curiosity, made her neglect the pain; and every time she heard the explosions of the gunpowder, or the acclamations of the people, she redoubled the effort to see the shew. In short, she struggled so much, that, before the rejoicing was over, she could turn her neck either to the right or left, with very little pain, and the thing became easier to her every day."

After mentioning another similar circumstance, he observes, that "It is not always neces-

necessary to have fire-works, or such like shews, to accomplish this: a child may be placed in a coach, or chaise, in such a manner, as to render it difficult to see external objects, but by making an effort to turn its head the way you wish. Or you may place it at table, on that side of you that is most difficult for it to turn to when you speak to it. It might not be amiss to put something that you think is most likely to attract its attention, and tempt it to turn its head your way. Such small efforts as these, if frequently repeated, may, in the end, be attended with good effects."

Dr. Andry very justly observes, that "Nature must first operate internally by motions which are concealed from us; and, after this is done, discover her efforts outwardly. Observe how she acts in plants:—You see a little shrub set in a window, with its branches turned all to one side, how it turns

turns them to the other, after you change its situation. The whole shrub twists about, and is obedient to the air which attracts it to the other side. This change is not brought about by the effort of the hand, but by the invisible effort of nature operating within the plant. The very same thing happens in the human body.

"When the hand is employed to turn the head of the child to one side, it is only the effort of the hand that does the affair. But this force is foreign, and, consequently, not so effectual, because it is not seconded by any effort of the child. It is the effort of nature that ought to do all this. It is this internal and secret energy that gives the course to the animal spirits; while, on the contrary, when the hand performs the motion, the animal spirits of the child do not act, neither do the muscles contract of themselves, but the motion which you give them is quite passive

on

on their part, and, consequently, must be of very little service; for, in this case, all ought to come from within."

Dr. Andry's observations are, surely, very just, in respect to the operations of nature; but effects are sometimes produced by chance, which neither nature nor human design can accomplish. It could not, surely, be attributed to design, that the child was cured of the deformity of her neck, by being taken to see the fire-works, as related above! Nor could it be imputed to design, that a similar cure was effected; and which, knowing it to be a fact, I will relate:—

A little boy, son to a silk mercer in Durham, whose head inclined a good deal towards his left shoulder, was cured of this deformity from a surprise he got by a companion of his stealing behind him, unperceived, and giving him a smart slap on his right

right shoulder: this caused him to turn his head so suddenly about, and gave him so much pain, as to make him cry out, "You have broke my neck!" and immediately fell to the ground, doubtless, from the pain he felt, occasioned by the abrupt relaxation of the muscles which draw the neck to one side.

I have now gone through most of the deformities, defects, and bad habits which are common in youth, and which, generally, have their origin either in nature, neglect, or inattention; and, as I more than once have observed, if early care is not taken to check their progress, they will, in time, baffle all endeavours to eradicate them. Nature, it is true, can seldom be stopped in her progress, but bad habits may, surely, be checked, if not entirely overcome, by proper attention and care.

Having

Having come to the conclusion of these Sketches, I feel, as it may be supposed every man, at the age of Eighty-two, must feel, after a long journey; that is to say, somewhat weary, and inclined to take a little rest. I have only to add, that although I may have experienced some amusement in writing these pages, yet I believe it will be acknowledged by every one, that our most favourite amusements are apt to pall upon the senses, if we pursue them with too great avidity.—That I may not, therefore, presume to intrude farther on the patience of the reader, or interfere with his more interesting pursuits, I trust I may now be permitted, respectfully—to withdraw.

APPENDIX.

As Mr. WEAVER's highly valued Essay towards a History of Dancing (published in 1712) is much sought after, and but rarely to be met with in any of the booksellers shops in London or elsewhere, the author is, therefore, induced to make such extracts from this essay, as chiefly relate to Modern Dancing, and to give them a place in this publication.

Mr. Weaver, after having shewn the just value the antients set upon the art of Dancing, proceeds to give his opinion of the modern practice of it; and although some of

his observations are, in part, anticipated in the foregoing pages, yet the editor is of opinion that, upon the whole, the subsequent remarks have a claim to the notice of every one, whose intention it is to pursue this art as a profession.

" I believe," says he, " it is now expected that something should be said of Modern Dancing; which, although it has almost lost that excellence which recommended the Dancing of the antients, yet, as to its foundation and use, it claims an equal merit, since it is not without its art, excellence, and gracefulness. And although our modern Dancing comes infinitely short of the Representative dances of the Pantomimes, yet it is not (when justly performed) without its beauties, which please men of judgment, and lovers of imitation; nor is it without its advantages, as a qualification and an exercise. In these latter circumstances, I may say, it comes

comes up to, if it does not excel, that of the antients. But having already urged what I had to say on this head, in the chapter of Dancing in general, I shall proceed to some few particulars of this modern art, in which I shall confine myself to that Dancing now used in our nation, and begin with the Theatrical, or Opera Dancing.

" This sort of Dancing, which we generally call Stage Dancing, is divided into three parts, viz. Serious, Grotesque, and Scenical; all which seem to me at present to be made use of more for amusement than instruction; the performer generally consulting more how to please, than what is natural, fit, or proper: yet this fault is not, altogether, to be imputed to the master, or performer, but, rather, to the depraved taste of the spectators; and custom has so far prevailed, that the excellency of this art seems to be wholly laid aside, and to be degenerated into a ridi-

culous unskilful movement, which, to good judges, provokes disdain rather than mirth, and gain scorn rather than applause. I shall, therefore, endeavour to shew in what the excellency of this art does, or ought, to consist; the beauty of Imitation; with the pleasure and instruction produced from the harmony of the Composition and Motion. I doubt not, but masters of the stage will then endeavour more to represent, and perform, what is proper and just; and the spectator, by these observations instructed, will be more capable of judging what is valuable in this art, and more conducive to his amusement, by the restoring that imitation which was so eminent in the Dancing of the antients, and is so much wanting in this of the moderns.

" *Stage Dancing* was, at first, designed for imitation, to explain things conceived in the mind, by the gestures and motions of the body,

body, and plainly, and intelligibly, representing actions, manners, and passions; so that the spectator might perfectly understand the performer, by his motions, though he say not a word. Thus far the excellency of the art appears; but its beauties consist in the regulated motion of all parts, by forming the body, head, arms, and feet, into such positions, gestures and movements, as represent the aforesaid passions, manners, and actions: so that, in a skilful representation of any character, whether serious or grotesque, the spectator will not only be pleased and amused with the beauty of the performance, and symmetry of the movements, but will, also, be instructed by the positions, steps, and attitudes, so as to be able to judge of the design of the performer. And, without the help of an interpreter, a spectator shall, at distance, by the lively representation of a just character, be capable of understanding the subject of the story represented, and able

to distinguish the several passions, manners, or actions; as love, hatred, grief, joy, despair, hope, fear, anger, &c.; and others of a lesser degree, which may be called affections; as tranquility, grace, civility, gentleness, and the like; so there are not only different actions for these different passions and affections, but, also, variety of actions for each of these passions or affections; all which the dancer ought to know, and how to vary, as his judgment shall direct him, and to be elegant in his choice.

"The feet and steps, which seem to claim the greatest share towards the perfection of this art, will not, as I shall shew, appear so material a qualification towards the masterly performance of it, as the address of the body, and just and regular movements of the arms; neither is it so difficult to obtain an excellency in the former, as in the latter; for whereas the feet require only agility, and constant practice

practice, to arrive at the utmost perfection; the motions of the body and arms require a judgment, and knowledge in several arts, to qualify them for a just performance: for it is by the motion of the body and arms, that he must express the design, and form the imitation. For this address, and motion of the body, is not, as some are willing to believe, an air, or manner, natural to some; but it is a perfection acquired with judgment, and altogether artificial; and to arrive at this perfection, requires a long experience, gained from the instructions and observations of good masters; a constant practice, and diligent application, joined with a genius and disposition, very particular; and, indeed, whoever designs to be excellent in this art, must make it his chief aim and application.

"*Serious Dancing* differs from the common Dancing usually taught in our schools, as history painting differs from limning.—

For

For as the common Dancing has a peculiar softness, which would hardly be perceivable on the stage, so stage Dancing would have a rough and ridiculous air in a room, when on the stage it would appear soft, tender, and delightful. And although the steps of both are generally the same, yet they differ in the performance: notwithstanding, there are some steps peculiarly adapted to this sort of Dancing, viz. *capers* and *cross-capers* of all kinds; *pirouttes*, *batteries*, and, indeed, almost all steps from the ground.

" Tho' there are but few good performers in this sort of Dancing, yet is it, of all others, the easiest attained; and there goes but little towards the qualification of the master, or performer of it; but yet this difficulty attends it, that a man must excel in it, to be able to please. There are two movements in this kind of Dancing—the brisk and the grave. The brisk requires vigour, lightness,

ness, agility, quick springs, with a steadiness and command of the body: the grave (which is the most difficult) softness, easy bendings and risings, and address; and both must have air and firmness, with a graceful and regulated motion of all parts. But the most artful qualification, is a nice address in the management of those motions, that none of the gestures and dispositions of the body may be disagreeable to the spectators. This address seems difficult to be obtained, and in effect is so; and it is this address that ought to take up the thoughts of the performer, and in which he must shew his skill; nor will it, perhaps, be so easy a matter, as some may think, to attain a perfection in it. Let him, therefore, like Demosthenes, present himself before a large looking glass, and make a judgment of, and improve his motions, and endeavour to distinguish the proper from the improper.

"*Gro-*

" *Grotesque Dancing* is wholly calculated for the stage, and takes in the greatest part of Opera Dancing, and is much more difficult than the Serious, requiring the utmost skill of the performer. Yet this sort of Dancing seems, at first view, not to be so difficult, by reason there are so many pretenders to it, who palm themselves upon the town for masters. But men of judgment will easily perceive the difference between a just and skilful performance, and the ridiculous buffoonery of these artless ignorants. A master, or performer, in Grotesque Dancing, ought to be a person bred up to the profession, and thoroughly skilled in his business. As a master, he ought to be skilled in music, and particularly in that part relating to time; well read in history, antient and modern; with a taste for painting and poetry. He must be perfectly acquainted with all steps used in Dancing, and able to apply them properly to each character. In Historical

Historical Dances (which consist most in figure, and represent, by action, what was before sung or expressed in words) the master must take peculiar care to contrive his steps, and adapt his actions and humour, to the characters or sentiments he would represent or express, so as to resemble the person he would imitate, or passion he would excite. Let the number of his performers be as his subject requires; and although he be very well skilled in the fable, and the nature of the story to be exhibited, yet I think the author of the piece not improper to be consulted, and excellent hints may be taken from him, that may be of singular service, and very much assist him in his performance. Let his figure fill the stage; be just to his characters; pleasing, and full of variety. *Ridetur Chordâ qui semper oberrat eâdem.*—Hor. The habits, properties, and tunes, not the least of his care, but justly adapted to his characters. Let him be patient

tient in instructing, and be sure that his performers be perfect. As a performer, his perfection is to become what he performs; to be capable of representing all manner of passions, which passions have all their peculiar gestures; and that those gestures be just, distinguishing, and agreeable, in all parts, body, head, arms and legs; in a word, to be (if I may so say) all of a piece. Mr. Joseph Priest of Chelsea, I take to have been the greatest master of this kind of Dancing that has appeared on our stage. He has not given into those gross errors of the French masters who have been in England, and whose greatest endowments were, in having a confused chaos of steps, which they indifferently applied, without any design, to all characters. They cared not by what ridiculous, aukward, out of the way action, they gained applause; and judged of their mean performances, by the mistaken taste of the audience. I remember one of these

celebrated

celebrated French masters composed an Entry for four Furies, and the next week, the very same dance was performed, to represent the four Winds; with this only alteration, that the master himself, by dancing in the middle, made a fifth: the same mistake I have also seen in the four Seasons. I must confess they dressed well, but consulted finery before what was natural; insomuch, that I have seen sailors, clowns, chimney-sweepers, witches, and such like, performed in shoes laced and ribbanded, red-silk stockings, and sometimes cravat-strings. But enough of this.

"*Scenical Dancing* is a faint imitation of the Roman Pantomimes, and differs from the Grotesque, in that the last only represents persons, passions, and manners; and the former explains whole stories by action: and this was that surprising performance of the Pantomimes, the ruins of which remain still

still in Italy, but sunk and degenerated into pleasantry, and merry conceited representations of Harlequin, Scaramouch, Mezzelin, Pasquariel, &c.; being generally used for the introduction of a following, or explanation of a foregoing scene, which they demonstrated by action; but so intermixed with trick, that the design is quite lost in ridiculous grimace, and odd and unnatural actions. Yet are these modern Mimes inimitable; and though they have been aped by several in France, yet (as I have been informed by persons who have seen both the Italians and French) the French could never come up to their grimace, posture, motions, agility, suppleness of limbs, and distortion of their faces. Some endeavours towards performances in this kind have, in my time, been attempted on our English stage, and not without success; but want of experience in the master made him incline to, and copy the modern, rather than the antient Romans.

Romans. I could wish this kind of Dancing were now encouraged in England, since I am certain the English, in a little time, would at least arrive at so much perfection in this science, as, if not to come up to the performances of the antients, they would, without doubt, excel all that has been performed in this kind by the moderns.

"The Dancing so much esteemed among us, and so necessary a qualification for gentlemen and ladies, whether taught privately or publicly, I shall call Common Dancing, and in which the English do not only excel the ancients, but, also, all Europe, in the beauty of their address, the gentleness and agreeableness of their carriage, and a certain elegancy in every part. This common Dancing was not in this perfection twenty years ago, and we were as far surpassed in this particular movement then, as we excel them now: but for this, we are obliged to the

great improvements given this art by Mr. Isaac and Mr. Caverley, to whom is owing the beautiful perfections we see it in at this day: that inexpressible air, that agreeable turn, and elegant movement seen in the dancing of their scholars, is peculiar to them.

"*Country Dances* (which I take to be an imitation of the Palilia among the Romans, which were performed by shepherds round heaps of burning chaff, straw, or stubble, called Palea) is a Dancing, the peculiar growth of this nation, though now transplanted into almost all the courts of Europe; and is become, in the most august assemblies, the favourite amusement. This Dancing is a moderate and healthful exercise, a pleasant and innocent amusement, if modestly used, and performed at convenient times, and by suitable company."

Mr. Weaver next takes notice of his translation

lation of M. Feuillet's Orchesography, or the art of writing down Dances in Characters, (mentioned in Sketch 7th) and concludes his Essay with this observation, "That had these characters been known to the antients, we had not, at this time, been ignorant of those celebrated actions, and surprising performances, of the antient Pantomimes, which drew the eyes, and employed the pens, of so many of the old Greeks and Romans."

The End.

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