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THE SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE

(REVISED EDITION)

Jean Milligan



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The Scottish Country Dance

by

Jean C. Milligan

Scottish Country Dance Society .

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The above Society was formed in November, 1923, with the following objects—

1. To practise and preserve Country Dances as danced in Scotland
2. To collect old books, manuscripts, and pictures illustrative of Country Dances
3. To publish, from time to time, descriptions of Country Dances, with diagrams and music in simple form, at a moderate price

The Annual Subscription is 5/—, and may be forwarded with application for membership to the Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Y. STEWART,
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The Scottish By Country Dance JEAN C. MILLIGAN

While the knowledge and love of National Music and Song are widely spread in Scotland, how little comparatively is known of that other great Scottish heritage—the Scottish Country Dance. Scottish people are naturally dancers, a fact realised by any one who has experience in teaching dancing, and also proved by the fact that the Scottish Country Dance is alive and a part to this day of the social life of every country town and village.

One of the most important points of difference between the Scottish Country Dance and the National Dances of most other countries is that the Country Dances of Scotland were, until quite recently, the dances of every class of the community. The number and variety of these dances are surprising. Every district has its own special dances, while there are a great number common to all. In every part of the country “Petronella,” “Triumph,” “The Circassian Circle,” and many others are well known and danced. Other dances common to all parts have different names in different districts: thus we have “The Duke of Perth” in some parts of Perthshire, “Broun’s Reel” in other parts, and in Ayrshire and the south of Scotland “Clean Pease Strae”—all these names denoting the same dance.

The names, too, often give an indication of the district from which a dance originally comes; e.g., “The Flowers of Edinburgh,” “Roxburgh Castle,” “Rothsay Country Dance,” &c.

As with any other possession which is gradually being forgotten and sinking into decay, these dances are losing their fineness and beauty and are becoming influenced by

other less admirable types of dancing. It is the especial object, therefore, of all who are endeavouring to revive these Scottish National Dances to bring them back in their most beautiful and refined form, and to preserve in them those national traits which were their outstanding characteristics when they were danced originally. To dance these dances correctly requires excellent technique and rhythm, spirit, dignity, and elegance, combined with a joyful abandon which is yet controlled by the national reserve of the Scottish people. There is nothing indolent or spiritless about these dances. They are, on the contrary, a real test of skill, vigour, and endurance.

Scottish Country Dances are usually danced in lines. The sets are arranged lengthwise, couples facing, the women having their right side to the top of the room. Some of the dances are performed in a circle round the room, each set consisting of two couples facing each other, partners standing side by side. In all these dances the central idea is progression—in the lengthwise dance to reach the bottom of the set, and in the round dance to dance with a new couple each time until you again meet your original *vis-à-vis*.

Scottish Country Dancing may be divided roughly into three types. In the first the top couple, after performing the dance once, finish at the bottom of the set. Examples of this type are "Cumberland Reel," "Strip the Willow," "Triumph," "Foula Reel." The second type are those in which the progression is made one place at a time and in which two couples are required for the performance of the figure. The progression may be done in many ways, but the *poussette* is the most usual. The great number of the better known dances are in this class, as "Petronella," "The Nut," "Rory o' More," but it also includes dances such as "Glasgow Highlanders," "Haughs o' Cromdale," "Bob o' Fettercairn," &c. For the third type three couples are needed to perform the dance although the progression is still one place at a time. This class includes

the dances of more distinct Highland flavour where progression is made through "set and turn corners" and "reel of three." Still here also we find the *poussette* as in "The Flowers of Edinburgh," "The Punchbowl," and "I'll mak ye fain to follow me."

One of the greatest difficulties in teaching these dances is to make the progression clear, and this dividing into types is helpful. In the first class a new couple begins each time the dance is repeated. In the second a new couple begins at every second repetition of the dance, and in the last, at every third repetition of the dance. What must also be impressed upon the dancers is the fact that when a top couple have begun to dance they continue without pause until they reach the bottom, and when there they then begin to work upwards to their original places through the movement downward of the other couples. Herein lies *the secret of the good team work* essential to the success of these dances—"Be ready for your turn either in continuous movement downward as the first couple or by helpful movement up to allow the leading couple to get below you."

In reviving these dances we must make it our object to revive them in their best form, and to do this it is absolutely essential to set a standard of form and technique. In this booklet I will endeavour to explain, as fully and as clearly as possible, the standard which the Scottish Country Dance Society is desirous of making universal throughout Scotland.

To do this I shall divide the subject into five parts—(1) technique and steps; (2) formations; (3) spirit; (4) musical stimulus; (5) hints on teaching the dances.

1. **TECHNIQUE.**—Unlike the steps of most national dances the steps of the Scottish Dances are not simple free movements requiring little foot training or correctness of technique. Scottish steps are intricate and must be done with neatness and precision. As in Highland step dancing, the toe must be carefully pointed and the knees turned well out.

In reel or jig time the steps used are—*skip change of step*, *pas de basque*, and *slip step*, while nine-eight jig time requires a *running step*. In strathspey time the steps are *change of step and hop*, *Common Schottische*, and, when required, *Highland Schottische* or other full strathspey setting steps as used in the "Foursome Reel." Each of those steps is used for a definite purpose, and when describing them in detail I shall explain when they should be employed.

Skip change of step is the step used for all movements of progression—

Advance and retire.

Cast off.

Down the middle and up.

Allemande (reel time).

Turn with one hand, &c.

When done to reel time music this step should be done as follows:—The right foot is brought forward with the knee as straight as possible and the toe well pointed, while a little hop is taken on the left foot. Step then on to the right foot, bring the left foot in below the right foot—instep pressed to right heel—then take another step forward on the right foot. Now hop on the right, bringing through the left foot, and so on. In this step the lifted foot should clear the ground by a few inches, but should never be raised in the air. In teaching this step it is good to practise first the change of step without hop until the intermediate position—i.e., second foot well below heel of leading foot—is fully understood, then add the word "lift," and the step becomes "lift, step, together, step." Now add the little spring and the step is complete.

Pas de basque or setting step is used for setting to partners, for turning with two hands, in fact for movement covering only a small space. The exception to this rule is the *poussette* where progression is made by the *pas de basque* step. The step consists of three distinct beats and a carrying round of the foot on four. These three beats

should be distinctly heard when practising the step. In teaching the step a definite sideways movement is allowed, but the finished performance should take place almost on the spot. Here is the form of the movement. Step to the right with the right foot. Place the left in front so that the left heel is slightly over the right instep, putting the weight on to the left foot and slightly lifting the right behind. Now step back on to the right foot and at the same time quickly flick the left foot to the side with straight knee and ankle, then carry the left foot round to repeat the step to the left. The rhythm of the step which begins on the fourth beat of the bar is "and, right, left, right, and, left, right, left," or "four, one, two, three, four, one, two, three." Now rise on the toes and add the spring, gradually lessening the sideways movement. In this step the knees must be well turned out, the spring controlled and smooth, and the *jeté*, or finishing flick of the foot, used to carry the foot round to begin the step to the other side. The *jeté* must be done very carefully, and as it is the really characteristically Scottish part of the step, should never be omitted. At the same time it must not be exaggerated or made too noticeable. In the ballroom it becomes almost a circular movement and helps to keep the step on the same spot.

Slipping Step is used, in reel time, in all circles, and is done on the toes. It consists of taking a step in the direction in which the circle is moving, with the nearest foot, and the bringing up of the other foot to touch heels. This step must be done very cleanly without scraping or shuffling. It is in fact two movements—"step, together; step, together."

Running step is just a simple easy run, weight kept upright over the feet and with no exaggerated lifting of the heels.

Change of step and hop in strathspey time, is the equivalent of *skip change of step* in reel time, and is used for the same purposes. It however takes the place of *slipping step*

in all circles. The different rhythm of the music dictates the different rhythm of the step, and this step is "step, together, step and a hop." The change of step has the same form as in the reel step, but the hop is quite different. Here the knee is bent and the leg carried forward to finish perfectly straight in front. A good way in which to practise this hop is to drag the foot through on the point of the toe and gradually straighten the knee. There should be no jerk in this step, but a smooth hop with a gradual straightening of the raised knee ready to place the foot on the floor for the repetition of the step.

Common Schottische step takes the place of the *pas de basque* step as strathspey setting step. The step is done as follows:—Step to the right with the right foot, bring the left foot behind so that the right heel presses on the left instep. Step again to the right and hop on that foot, lifting the left foot so that the sole or edge of the left foot rests just below the calf of the right leg. This should be done on the toes, and when the foot is lifted in the hop care must be taken that it does not protrude on the other side of the hopping leg. When set twice occurs this step may be used twice, *i.e.*, right, left, right, left, or any full strathspey step, *e.g.*, *Highland Schottische step*.

In *Highland Schottische* the right foot is pointed with well stretched knee to the side, then lifted behind the hopping leg, stretched again, but this time to the direction of the toe and then lifted again. *Common Schottische* is then done to the right.

In all Scottish Dancing particular attention must be given to deportment. The foot work requires much practice—Flexible ankles, beautifully pointed toes, well turned out knees are all essential—but unless combined with the proper deportment they lose much of their beauty and value. The correct deportment is very upright. No movement of the body is made with the steps. The shoulders are held facing the front and the head is high. The whole without being stiff is extremely controlled and dignified.

Deportment must receive careful attention not only when actually dancing, but also and even more so, when standing waiting to dance. Here slackness of deportment can frequently spoil the appearance of an otherwise good set of dancers.

I strongly advise practice of steps being done before the actual performance of the dance. Then individual attention and correction can be given without interfering with the movement and spirit of the dance.

Always criticise your technique by the ballroom standard; what would look out of place or exaggerated there is wrong. Too much spring, too much elaboration of step, any movement which stands out and catches the eye must be eliminated. It is important that little ones should be taught every detail of the steps, and perfect finish and more spring asked of them, for as they grow older these can be gradually smoothed down to the elegance and ease which can be got only when the fundamentals have been well taught.

2. FORMATIONS.—There are certain recognised formations common to many Scottish Country Dances which are referred to by name in the Scottish Country Dance Society's Books. These will be carefully described here. Others which are unusual are given a special description in the book with the dance.

Down the middle and up is done with four skip change of steps down the middle of the dance and four up again. The same number of change of step and hops are used in strathspey time. I will in future refer to these steps as progression steps. The first man leads his partner with the right hand both going down and up. The hand should be held just below the woman's shoulder line and the man should definitely lead his partner. In this formation both dancers begin with the right foot.

Cast off means turning outward and going down outside the set. This may be done to the bottom of the set or down one, two, or three couples. Again the progressive step is

used and the step begins with the right foot. The man turns left about and the woman right about and go down behind their own line. This movement is followed either by a *cast up* when the leading couple turn outward again, the man this time by his right and the woman by her left, and return to their places outside the set as before. If the instructions say "cast off and lead up," this means that after casting off the required number of places the first couple come up the centre of the dance giving right hands. Setting to partners may precede this movement but does not alter its form. When casting off is done round one or more couples these dancers must assist the leading couple and make space for them by stepping up. The method of *stepping up* in reel time is by three little steps in rhythm to the last two bars of music used for the casting off. Step slightly up and forward with the foot nearest the top of the dance, bring the other foot across in front, step slightly up and back into line with the first foot, then bring the feet together. This is done rhythmically on the toes—"step, across, step, together." The same step is done downwards as the first couple cast up.

In strathspey time an ordinary "step and together" is taken in rhythm to the music. Steps of this kind should not be taken when the casting off takes the form of a chase, as in "Flowers of Edinburgh," as it spoils the picture. Cast off may be preceded by *turn partners* when the cast off is again done on their own sides of the dance, or by *cross over* when the cast off is done on the opposite side.

Hands round.—This means a circle of four people going round to the left with eight *skipping steps* or four *strathspey steps*. *Back again* is back to places with the same steps to the right. The hands should be held a little lower than shoulder level, the elbows slightly bent to give control for turning to come back. The weight must be immediately above the feet with no forward lean of the body which faces the centre of the circle. This may be done with three couples and is then called *six hands round*.

Four hands across.—In this formation two couples give right hands across to form a wheel, first man joins with second woman and first woman with second man. Four progression steps are done, and if the instructions say "and back" the left hands are given and the same steps done to place. This may be done with three couples and is called *six hands across*. In both these formations the instructions may say "half way round" which means that the four bars of music must only take the dancers into opposite places, *i.e.*, the first man into the second woman's place and the first woman into the second man's and *vice versa*. This takes very careful dancing to keep the formation shapely and to use all the steps before reaching the new position. There must therefore be no rush into the position, but (in slow time) one step forward to give hands, two to go round and the fourth to fall back into the new place, or in slipping (reel time) five to join and go nearly round to place and three to fall back to places. As usual this formation, *i.e.*, hands across, is begun with the right foot. It avoids confusion if in giving the hands across the first woman's hand is given above her partner's.

Advance and retire may be done across the dance to partner as in "Rory o' More" or to *vis-à-vis* as in "Prince of Orange," or up and down the room as in "Eight Men of Moidart." This movement consists of two progressive steps forward and two backward. In the second step forward the foot is brought up behind to begin the first step back.

Right and left is a chain which takes the dancers across the set and back again. If partners are standing side by side then the chain is done by first man giving his hand to second woman while the first woman does the same to second man. They change places and turn to meet their own partners, to whom they give left hands changing places with them. They have now gone half way round and facing their *vis-à-vis* again they repeat the same movements back to original places. This movement may be done taking two

steps to each hand or one according to the number of bars of music given. *Right and left* may be done beginning across the dance with partner, then the two men giving left hands and the two women doing the same, and so again to places.

Cross over means changing places with partner or with *vis-à-vis*. Again progressive steps are used, two or four according to the music, and the right hand is joined in passing. The giving of the hand is not compulsory, but it helps to keep the set in good shape and guides inexperienced dancers.

Ladies' chain may be done when the women are standing beside their partners or beside the opposite men, when half ladies' chain is used to get back beside their own partners. The women, joining right hands, take two progressive steps across to the opposite men who meet them with left hands and turn round with two steps. This is half ladies' chain, and the same movement is repeated to get back to their original places. The man must be ready with his left hand to meet the woman and turn her so that she is properly placed to cross again with her right hand.

Poussette is the most common method of progression: its name comes from the French "pousser," to push, and that to a certain extent describes the movements of the man in this formation. In poussette the leading couple are moving towards the bottom of the dance their movement being assisted by the moving up of the couple below them. Movement down is done on the man's side of the dance, movement up on the woman's. Generally poussette is preceded by *down the middle and up* so as the first couple come up they finish slightly to the man's side of the dance. As they pass him the second man goes over to his partner who takes a step forward to meet him. Both couples join hands with their partners and begin the movement which is done with eight *pas de basque* steps. The first step is taken away from the centre of the set and now the men, pulling their partners with the right hand, take a quarter turn. This brings

them in line with the rest of the dancers. Now both couples take a step in the direction they want to go, *i.e.*, first couple down, second couple up. Then comes another quarter turn, again pulling with the right hand. This takes them across the dance again. The fifth step takes them into the centre of the dance, on the sixth they do a half turn, still pulling with the right, to their own sides of the dance, and on seven and eight they fall back into line, having changed places. The *pas de basque* step is used here for progression, which is an exception to the rule, and the man begins the step on his left foot which is also an exception. Words which help in the teaching of this formation are—Away from the centre—turn—up or down—turn—into the centre—turn about—fall back—fall back. These words may be said in the rhythm of the *pas de basque* step, one of which is done to each command. The hands should be held just below shoulder level with the elbows bent and held into the sides. The more definitely up and down or across the dance this formation is done the more beautiful it is and the more easy it is to keep within the confines of your own set and thus not intrude into the set immediately behind you.

Set and turn corners.—In *set and turn corners* the first couple are standing back to back in the middle of the dance—the first man facing the third woman and the first woman facing the second man. These are their first or right-hand corners, if they turn towards the left the first man will face the second woman and the first woman the third man, or their second corners. Whatsoever formation precedes this *set and turn corners* the last two steps of it are used by the first man to place his partner before her first corner. The first man does two *pas de basque* steps to the third woman who does two *pas de basque* steps to him (this is setting). Then joining both hands with her he turns her right round with two *pas de basque* steps and leaves her in her place while he faces the second woman. He repeats this with the second woman. Meanwhile the

first woman is doing the same with the second and then with the third man. At the end of this formation the first couple finish between the two corners, *i.e.*, the first man between the second and third women. If the next figure is a *reel of three*, the man is facing down with his left shoulder towards his first corner and the first woman facing up towards her first corner. They now proceed to cut the *reel of three*, passing first corner with the left shoulder, who passing on gives right shoulder to the second corner who is waiting to enter the figure. The *reel of three* is a perfect eight, one dancer always cutting between the other two in the centre of the figure until the dancers are back as they were at the beginning of the reel, the corners in their own places, and the first man and woman standing between them.

This is done with six progression steps leaving two for the first couple to cross over, passing right shoulders, to their own sides of the dance one place down. If an eight is drawn on the floor and the dancers are told to follow it exactly, the reel is easily grasped, for it is a straight forward following round with no extra turns or twists as in the *reel of four* or the "English Hey." If the *set and turn corners* is followed by setting and turning partners the first couple *set and turn corners* as before, but this time finish facing each other across the dance between their own corners. They set to each other, advance and turn with both hands, and fall back to their own sides of the dance one place down. This should all be done if possible with *pas de basque* steps; in fact the whole formation of *set and turn corners* is more correct in my opinion if done with this step, although it is allowable to do the turning with *skip change of step*, and many people prefer that method. In strathspey time progression step is used for the turnings. *Reel of three* is cut with the right shoulder first, except when preceded by *set and turn corners*, when the left shoulder is always given, as in turning the second corner the first loop of the figure of eight has been made.

Allemande is another method of progression which is done with two couples. It is almost invariably preceded by *down the middle and up*. As the first couple come up to the top the first man lifts his partner's right hand over her head, and holding it behind just free from her neck, joins left hands with her in front. As the first couple pass, the second couple place themselves behind in the same position. They all now take eight progression steps to change places, moving out to the right on the first step, then gradually moving round to the left until on the fourth step the first couple are turning into the middle, the first woman on the man's side of the dance, with the second couple just behind and above them. On the fifth step the men turn their partners into the middle of the dance, the first couple below the second couple. On the sixth the men turn their partners under their right arms, then on the seventh and eighth all fall back into line. If *set and turn corners* follows the first man uses the last two steps to lead his partner into place for corners.

Reel of four.—In a lengthwise set the *reel of four* is generally danced in a line of four across the dance, the middle dancers standing back to back. The figure is then begun by the dancers who face each other passing by the right shoulder, then passing the person met in the middle by the left shoulder, while those going to the outside move round by the right to face the middle of the dance. If dancers would remember to keep the left shoulder for the middle of the dance, and follow the curve at the ends of the figure with the right shoulder, which will then be given a second time, the formation is simple, *i.e.*, there will be two passes with the right shoulder after passing with the left in the middle before the left is given again.

In all these formations great attention must be paid to phrasing. Each movement takes a definite number of bars of music for its performance and if every beat of this music is not used correctly it not only spoils the rhythm and flow of the dance, but spoils the clear picture which should

be made by each formation. Study carefully the directions as to the number of bars used for each figure and follow them exactly.

3. SPIRIT.—As the Scottish Country Dance is primarily a ballroom dance the spirit shown in it is pleasant friendly intercourse with a partner. There is no solo work in these dances: all steps are done to or with a partner or *vis-à-vis*. Care should be taken to encourage this feeling of shared performance. Team work is essential to the success of these dances, and the interest and attention of those of the team who are not actually dancing must be maintained throughout the performance. Lines must be kept straight and correctly spaced; as the set was arranged at the beginning so should it be at the end of the dance. Helpful steps up and down, entries into the dance properly timed, hands ready for the leading couple when needed—all these make for good team work, and should be done with ease and spontaneity.

Much liveliness of spirit and sometimes a touch of the dramatic are necessary in Scottish Country Dancing, but do not make the mistake of trying to get the latter through mechanical means. Just realise the "story" told by the dance and the correct interpretation will come naturally. Liveliness is obtained also by understanding the dance, and is greatly helped by the music; but again, do not fall into the common error of imagining that speed is liveliness. Liveliness is a thing of the spirit and comes from within, not from without. Speed is apt to hurry movement and blur the outline of the dance and spoil the finish of the technique.

The matter of speed is dictated to a great extent by age. Little children need a quicker *tempo*, as they cannot get the control necessary for the slower time without concentration and effort, which naturally results in loss of natural enjoyment or spirit. Older people enjoy these dances at a fairly slow *tempo*, as they have not the physical strength

required for these energetic dances at quick time. It is better in most cases to keep the time down and make it suit all rather than a few, and at the same time obtain through the slower *tempo* the elegance and beauty of movement which is so truly Scottish Country Dancing.

4. MUSICAL STIMULUS.—Not until we see a company of dancers endeavouring to perform a spirited dance to poor and spiritless music do we realise the immense importance of the musical stimulus. National Dancing has the tremendous advantage of having its own fine national tunes—music which seems to play itself and to which it is impossible to keep one's feet still. But, unfortunately, even this seemingly unspoilable music can be spoiled. Those who cannot enter into the spirit of the dance and let that spirit flow through their fingers into the music cannot really play for dancing. No folk tune is flat; it is full of risings and fallings, and as the dance varies its steps so should the music vary its lights and shades. As in the case of the dancers so in the case of the musicians, if the players do not feel the lilt and swing of the music, and do not appreciate the spirit of it, how can they play the melody so as to stimulate the dancers? It is, therefore, a matter of great importance to choose for an accompanist one who is not only technically a good and correct performer, but one who can enter into the spirit of both music and dance.

HINTS ON TEACHING THE DANCES.—When teaching Scottish Country Dancing concentrate on getting the right spirit—that is more essential than anything else. Technique is necessary, as is also attention to team work and detail, but while you are working for these do not get them at the cost of the happy social spirit of the dances. I advise practice of technique and formation quite apart from the dance. Teach them by themselves and make a real lesson of them, but when you give a dance let it be a thing by itself, a joyous spontaneous social movement. The dance

begins and ends with a bow and curtsy; the first is dictated by a chord of music, the second is the spontaneous and natural finish to the dance and no chord is required. This bow and curtsy should be simple and unaffected and the rhythm can be dictated by the words "And, down, up." Take a tiny step with the right foot, put the left foot behind bending both knees and keeping the head erect, then stretch up and bring the feet together—that is the curtsy. Take a little step to right, bend slightly from the waist still looking at partner, stretch up and put the feet together—that is the bow. Remember it is only polite to look at the person to whom you are making your bow or curtsy. The chord may be played in this rhythm as a help.

The woman holds her dress to lift it slightly from her feet. To get a pleasing position here lift both arms in front and holding them a little more than shoulder breadth apart drop them till they touch the skirt and lift it between finger and thumb by bending out the wrists. After practising this once or twice it is easy to lift the skirt naturally in the desired manner. The men hold their hands free. Begin all steps with the right foot unless the directions definitely state left foot, as in the man's part in the poussette.

Lead always with the right hand unless in exceptional cases, as in the "Triumph," where the second man leads the first woman down the middle with his left hand.

One hand is always given in progressive movements where skip change of step is used; with *pas de basque* step give two hands.

The arrangement of the set should be wide enough to permit of the whole movement of the dance taking place within its bounds. Three yards is about the minimum distance apart. Space between the dancers at the side should also be carefully arranged and sufficient room given for easy movement.

Always change the last skip change of step into two walk-

ing steps when the next step is to be done with the left foot. This applies to all four hands round where the circle moves first to the left and left foot is used, and also to the man when beginning the poussette.

And now I shall give some hints on the teaching of individual dances.

In the "Bumpkin" when the centre man is dancing the *reel of three* diagonally with, say, the right-hand woman in the front line and the left-hand woman in the back line, the dance looks much better if the reels at the side are done diagonally, parallel to the centre figure. If this is not done, the side reels must be kept very straight and flat at the sides to make a frame for the reel in the middle.

In "Delvine Side" when turning corners it is a good plan to phrase it as follows:—Two steps to turn first corner, two to leave her and proceed to second corner, two to turn her, and two to cross over.

In "Teviot Bridge" the poussette is unusual as it begins with the first couple on the woman's side of the dance. Try to finish the *ladies' chain* with the first couple above the second couple though on the wrong side. Now use the first two steps of the poussette to cross to the correct side, do a quarter turn on the third, progress up or down the dance, quarter turning at the same time on the fourth, and then the poussette becomes as usual.

In "Duke of Hamilton's Reel" if the first turning, *i.e.*, the first man turning the second woman and the first woman turning the second man, ends with the first woman standing beside the second man on his side of the dance, and the first man beside the second woman on her side, the turning of partners is easy for they have already changed places, *i.e.*, the first couple are in the second place though on the wrong side of the dance.

In conclusion, just a word to competitors in Musical Festivals.

Let happiness and pleasure, with the stimulus of gay music, give the spirit to the dance. Carry out with minute

correctness and steps and formations, giving much attention to team work and deportment and carefully avoiding accessory movements. Let the entry and exit be in character with the dance which belongs to the ballroom, and from this aspect criticise and polish your performance.

Pay great attention to phrasing. Every beat of the music must be danced, and to stand still when a step is clearly indicated in the instructions is as serious a fault as to leave out beats of the music or to lose the rhythm when playing a tune. Be careful to use the correct number of bars for each formation and do not begin the next figure with the music which belongs to the one you have just been dancing.

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