

# ON WITH THE WALTZ, BUT LET IT BE PROPER.



*A Popular Waltzing Attitude Said To Be Both Easy and Elegant.*

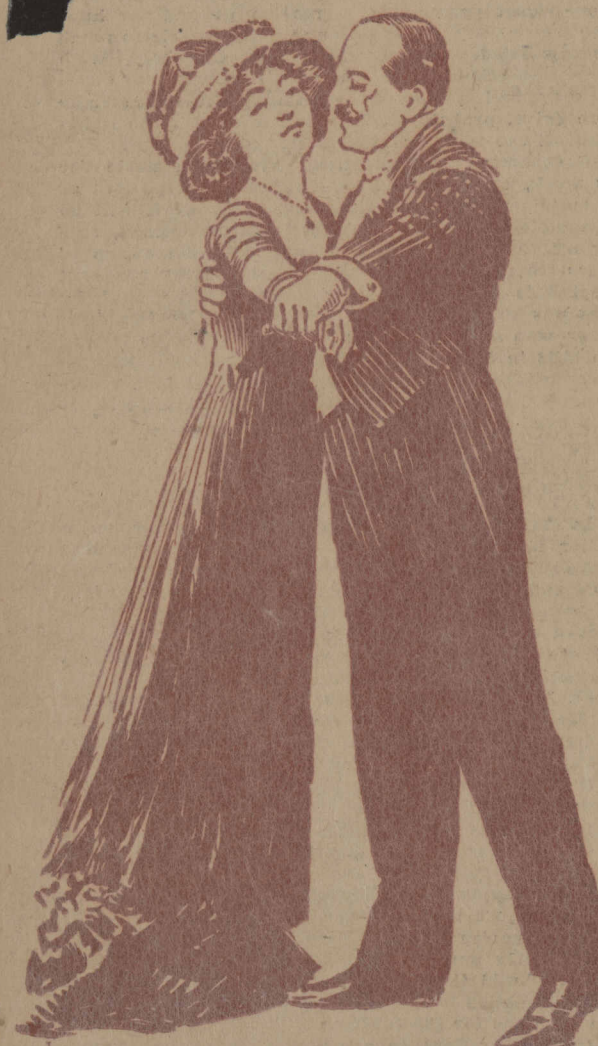
**P**OLISHED floors; music that dreams and sighs; jewels that flash and flowers that breathe out their languorous fragrance on the warm air of the ball room, all are necessary in order that the full enjoyment may be derived from waltzing. They are not, however, all that have to do with the popular dance or make it perfect. It has developed that to waltzing, like to everything else worth while, there is a science, and, according to "Georgie" Mahrer, acknowledged in London to be the world's champion waltzer, it is one which should be closely observed in order that the dancing be rendered entirely comfortable as well as sinuously graceful.

On the stage the most perfect waltzing is found. A study has been made of the waltz by the actors supposed to participate in it and all rules concerning it have been carefully observed. Waltzing which may be classed as miscellaneous is to be found in the ball rooms where society folk dance the hours away. Here there is waltzing that is correct and waltzing that is incorrect; waltzing that is graceful and waltzing that is stiff probably through too labored attempts of dignity. It is in the cheap dance halls—along the Bowery, for instance, that the dregs of the waltz are to be found. In these places the dance is stripped of all that is graceful or appealing and becomes merely a rowdyish gambol—a desecration of the waltz proper.

## Lookers On at Least Appreciative.

No matter how beautifully she may be gowned or how graceful she may be, a woman never looks at her best if forced into an inelegant position while waltzing, according to Champion Mahrer. The second illustration depicts a couple at the start of a dance, in about as uncouth and ludicrous a position as could be imagined. According to Mr. Mahrer, "It may look funny, but it doesn't feel funny."

Judging from the illustration the man is endeavoring to see just how far he can reach. He does well if this is his purpose, for his arm practically surrounds the waist of his fair partner. With a little more effort it is possible that he might link the ends of his fingers in her front buckle and thus be more sure of her. His left hand has grasped the outstretched fingers of her right hand, and with labored art he has forced a crook into her elbow and has brought her forearm into a perpendicular position. The condition of cramp during a dance where this position is held through any well be imagined.



*A Popular Pose Which Is Rather Elegant and Quite Up to Date.*

WORLD'S CHAMPION EXPONENT  
OF POPULAR DANCE ILLUSTRATES  
ITS CORRECT POSES



*The Gentleman Should Never Grip the Lady's Hand in This Fashion.*



*An Attitude Men Dancers Should Avoid.*

Then there is the position which is known among teachers who fight it as "the iron grip." Entering a ball room where this style of dancing is favored, an uninitiated person might be excused for thinking he had stumbled on some sort of a family reunion set to music. Clapsed tightly in each other's arms couples are circling the room. Each individual couple, one might think, had been separated through ages innumerable, and had just, through the medium of the social event in progress, managed to again come together. Having been reunited, evidently they have no idea of ever again releasing each other and so they dance on in the "iron grip."

## Mistake the Man Often Makes.

The arm of the man waltzer should be about the waist, not crowded up under the arm. This last is, according to Mr. Mahrer, a mistake that many male dancers make. It is one which is exceedingly uncomfortable for the woman so encircled and is not the most graceful for either concerned. It has been given as a reason for this that men are "such awkward brutes" and do not know how to manage their arms.

The habit of gripping hands, according to Mr. Mahrer, is always bad. No matter how correct the waltzing may be aside from this, the entire effect is spoiled by the sight of hands clasped until the knuckles are white. It gives an appearance of strenuousness and hard labor being conscientiously performed. When the hands are clasped it should be lightly—as a mere incident of the dance. The principal feature of the waltz is supposed to be the waltz itself and all physical contact is merely something supplementary and to be treated in the most indifferent sort of manner.

There is a certain pose which is often adopted by the man who is over-gallant. He takes it when he is dancing with a woman who wears a trailing gown, which the chances are she will have some trouble in managing. He encircles her waist in the approved manner with his right arm, and so far everything is lovely.



*This, According to the Champion Waltzer, Is the Proper Pose.*

Then he commits the breach, not through discourtesy or boorishness or anything else of the kind, but through a mistaken attempt at kindness, consideration and gallantry. He grasps the tail of his partner's gown and holds it up for her during the dance. While to the woman who does not know this may seem to be the extreme of elegance, to the woman who is accustomed to all the niceties and proprieties it is the height of ill manners and the chances are that she will resent it as such, and if she does not call the man to account will firmly refuse to again place herself in a position which has proved to be such an embarrassing one to her.

## Proper Method to Hold Partner.

According to the "world's champion," the man should stand with his right arm lightly about the waist of his partner. His left hand should rest lightly on his shoulder, with the fingers loosely outstretched, never clenched. The head of the man should hold lightly the right side of the woman and their arms should be

extended outwards at an easy angle—not rigid, nor yet too much curved. The man should stand with his left foot slightly back; the woman with her right foot forward. The first move of the man should be backward. It is a breach against all the rules of waltzing for the man to push his partner backward.

The woman should be held slightly to one side. She should be guided through the dance—never propelled. It is the fault of many men that they push and pull and use sheer physical force where suggestion—the mere pressure of hand or arm would have done as well. When the former is the case there is always a feeling of weariness after the waltz. This manner of "leading" is the reason for the profusely perspiring personages one finds so often laboring over the ball room floors.

## "Hopping Method" Teaches Grace.

"But some women are so hard to lead," some men protest when told that they should be less strenuous

in their efforts at guiding during a waltz. In this case, of course there is no doubt but that more exertion is required than when such is not the case.

One dancing teacher who has won almost phenomenal success always insists on first teaching his pupils what he calls the "hopping method." He teaches them to spring from their knees as they waltz. "Bounce like a rubber ball!" he demands. "Stop trying to glide! Don't try to give an imitation of an animated stick. The glide will come all in good time and when it does come it will be a graceful, sinuous one. Try to get it now and you will never know how to dance." And so he keeps his pupils at the "hopping method" until they have "limbered up," sway easily and are light on their feet. Then he starts them at the glide.

In order that the waltz be absolutely correct in every particular, comfortable shoes should be worn. Where the feet are cramped and pinched there can be no freedom or grace. Any one who has tried to even walk in an uncomfortable shoe knows how irritable it makes one feel and how unfit for any duty. When tight shoes are worn in the ball room the strain is far greater than when used for ordinary wear. Keeping one's balance on a polished floor demands a certain amount of extra pressure and this increases whatever irritation or discomfort may have been felt, and makes the dancer ill at ease. Tight and uncomfortable shoes are the cause of many a woman's being "hard to lead." If she were comfortably booted the chances are that she would be a good dancer. But in her uncomfortable state she holds herself tense and awkward and fails to dance as she really knows how and as she likes to do.

The basic principle of waltz is restfulness. It is the only really graceful way of motion, and a general rhythm and sway that make it the most delightful of all dances. "Bounce like a rubber ball!" says Mr. Mahrer, "and you will never know how to dance."

*The Lady Should Never Be Forced into So Inelegant a Position.*



*This Also Is Bad Form*