

THE COTILLON—SOCIETY'S COLLECTIBLE FAVORITE

HOW IT IS DANCED BY NEW YORK'S "SMART SET" SUCCESS CHIEFLY CONTINGENT UPON THE PERSONALITY OF THE LEADER WHOSE POSITION IS FAR FROM BEING A SINECURE



A BILLE OF 1851

A COTILLON AT THE TUILERIES DURING THE SECOND EMPIRE

AN UP-TO-DATE ACCOMPLISHMENT



MR. WASHINGTON WHITEHOUSE



MR. ELISHA DYER JR.



MR. CRAIG WADSWORTH



MR. MONSON MORRIS

FASHION is content with the cotillon, and its reign this season is supreme. Smart and brilliant beyond description, the cotillon in New York is the happiest form of entertainment that society has undertaken, and is always welcomed by men and women who are bored with the usual monotonous round of greater formality. Every now and then some one tries to eclipse the cotillon, offering a passing fad or something more up to date in a frolic for the ultra fashionable, but New York is conventional in habit and nothing ever really goes as a substitute. Nothing else offers such simple and attractive opportunities for the payment of social debts, and furnishes at the same time so much diversion for every one, excepting only the poor leader, who must be satisfied with glory as his compensation.

There have been changes and adaptations with the times, always reducing the element of personal effort and increasing the expense, and nothing is in the long run so popular as the cotillon, which is given season after season with the same popular leaders, as long as they will serve, and always with trappings of increasing magnificence.

A dinner can be successfully given to but a small number, a ball is too slow, and only the very large houses have ball-rooms that will accommodate at one time all the people a woman of the fashionable set must ask. There is always Sherry's, or the Waldorf, or the Denham's, but the owners of private ballrooms find the cotillon a profitable season with their cotillon.

Such a good opportunity to show beautiful interiors to their friends that they prefer, of course, their own houses when it is possible.

There is the additional advantage in dancing the cotillon of giving to a larger number a chance to dance in comfort. The usual dinner dance or ball ends with the cotillon—the older guests first, the young married set, and the debutantes taking possession of the floor after midnight. The day is long past when social debts are liquidated by an invitation to a jam and crush and a cup of tea, or to an evening party, with another crush that makes dancing impossible and the young man or woman who stands on the credit side of the account is lucky to be asked to one of the cotillons given by a hostess of the smart set. Nothing is spared to make it as splendid as labor and money and Yankee ingenuity can achieve.

"The epitome of private dancing" is an old dancing master calls it; the ideal way to sociability, the very last sort of gaiety a bachelor gives up, the first to which a debutante looks eagerly forward. It is the most diverting, most exhilarating and most popular form of entertainment in metropolitan society, and the whole country follows.

Grandmother's Time.

Sixty years ago the cotillon was introduced into New York, but it really meant all the square dances. Then the "Lancers" came in, and in order to distinguish the cotillon it was called the German, until a very short time ago, when, the square dances having become unfashionable, the old French name came back.

A quarter of a century past a young man engaged the company of a young woman a fortnight ahead and presented her with a message on the night of the cotillon, which consisted of intricate figures and trifling favors. Nowadays the cotillon in New York has all the magnificence of a court ball, with dazzling display in decorations, supper, favors and in all the appointments.

Fancy a writer of early date describing the cotillon in a series of articles edited by the Duke of Beaufort, K. G., as properly speaking, more a game than a dance, more suitable for children than for grown men and women. It certainly is not a British pastime. There is something absurd in the thought of an Englishman clad in his full armor of evening dress and starched linen, going down on his knees before a lady and gravely wiping out his own image from a looking glass.

"The cotillon is a French dance," is the writer's crisp parting mot.

Politics and Jealousies.

No national convention contains more politics and wirepulling than is indulged in during a fashionable cotillon. It is always a little drama of human nature, with selfishness, ambition, diplomacy, intrigue and jealousies, with high hopes and corresponding heartaches. The day when personal attraction made the belle of the ball is gone, and the polite little game of beggar my social neighbor is so complex in its workings that there is small chance for any but those who are in position to bestow social favors.

The pretty girl, the clever girl, has little show with the rich girl who entertains, or the young woman who is a particular pet of the hostess, and social and monetary power is the open sesame to bellehip.

Cotillon favors that are sometimes of great intrinsic value create much rivalry, which is bitter if silent, and pain and humiliation are caused that do not pass with the evening's dance.

The personality, tact and good heartedness of the leader count for a good deal, and he can control the fate of a girl at a dance, to a very large extent, but even he cannot save the wallflower from her fate if the hostess has determined beforehand that she shall be relegated to the rear. As Mr. Alexander Hadden, a very popular cotillon leader, says: "You cannot always induce a man to dance with Miss Wallflower because she doesn't know any one. He will simply say, 'I'd like to dance you, my dear fellow, but I am in-

debted to so many that I shan't be able to get around to it.' If he is not so frank, he will be presented, but is likely to get no further."

Speaking of cotillon leader, Mr. Hadden says: "I find most success in the simplest figures, for people do not like to be bothered. And there is so much to do nowadays that no one wants to make hard work of play. I never know what the figures are to be until I know who are the people and the size of the company and room. If there is a chill in the atmosphere, something must be done to break the ice, and sometimes a rousing figure that puts every one out of breath is the best way to do it."

Famous Cotillons in New York.

At the beautiful affairs given this season by Mrs. Astor, Mrs. John Jacob Astor, Mr. Whitney, Mrs. Sloane, Mrs. Clarence Mackay and Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, notably Mr. Whitney's, some interesting figures were danced, every effort being used to have novelties, with all the accessories in elaborate and sometimes picturesque detail.

Mrs. Astor delighted her young women guests with embossed letter bags, embroidered in steel; miniatures in gilt frames, flower fans, wreaths of roses attached to walking sticks bound in white satin, and a gay assortment of trophies that went to ornament dressing tables and boudoirs at home. The men were given German beer steins and a lot of fetching trifles, among which were top hats and strings, which the men immediately set spinning on the waxed floor, to the amusement of the women.

Mrs. Fish struck a sporting note in many of the figures and favors, at her cotillon riding crops being one set of favors that was immensely popular. She had besides gilt belts and pencils, Louis XVI bonbonnières, picture frames and desk clocks set in rhinestones, flower bangles and Louis XVI walking sticks.

At Mr. Whitney's housewarming, which was one of the superb entertainments of this season, the cotillon introduced several figures that made the evening one of the jolliest of the winter. Men rode in on hobby horses, others in balloons of colored paper, from which they broke loose when chosen by fair partners.

The "screen figure," with a woman behind each screen, over which she showed a fan, has been a very diverting one, but society goes back with enthusiasm to the "grand change," the basket and all the jolly figures of the dancing of early school days.

Professor T. George Dodworth, whose uncle, John Dodworth, taught dancing and deportment to the children of fashionable families in New York sixty years ago, compiled a list of 250 cotillon figures, and many of the best society leaders have come from his school, or have had private coaching and points from him.

Society's Favorite Leader.

A cotillon leader must be a drawing-room hero, who is of necessity past master in generalship, in tact, quickness of wit, good nature and self-control. Even then he isn't half appreciated except by the man who falls next to his laurels and tries to live up to them. It is possible for the dancers to make his lines easy or hard by attention to his signals and directions and by entering into the spirit of his plans.

The relations are something like those of general and soldiers, and long association is a decided gain in enjoyment to each. In New York the smart cotillons are led by the more or less "old guard," which is composed of men who for many seasons have been in great demand—Craig Wadsworth, Elisha Dyer Jr., Worthington Whitehouse, Alexander M. Hadden, Harry Lehr, J. Montgomery Strong, Monson Morris, Schuyler Schietlein, Frederic Ashton de Peyster, Phoenix Ingram, Frederic S. Woodruff, Arthur Slade, Artemus Ward Jr. and F. Raymond Lefferts.

Thomas Coleston Kinney and Arthur Wiley are favorites with the members of Wednesday cotillons; Edward B. Ripson led the "Cinderella" dances this season, and John D. Rockefeller Jr. led the attractive series of dances given at Dodworth's.

These favorite leaders go on and on, racking their brains for new ideas, keeping in mind the people to whom they are indebted, in which they share a duty with the other men—trying to make everybody happy, and including everybody in the fun. A record of three cotillons in a week, and though Mr. Hadden finds it hard to lead as often as he is demanded, with all the philanthropic work he does for love of it, society still pursues him and insists that he "lead on."

Favors and Flowers.

Though comfortable fortunes are spent in favors, adding thus the incentive of rich prizes, and in decorations, refreshments and service—running into \$15,000 or more in some instances—a few hundred dollars can be made to count in the smartest of the smart set—and the affair will be pretty and provide great fun. It is quite possible to include enough flowers of the less expensive kinds, with a liberal use of palms, to decorate a room charmingly, and in the small dancing clubs this is a particular advantage, for the cost to each member is trifling.

Flowers are not always used lavishly, even by those who can best afford it. Mrs. John Jacob Astor loves bouquets of roses, and places them in just such a manner that their beauty is seen to best advantage. Mrs. Astor, to be sure, sometimes makes her ballroom look like a real rose garden, and makes brilliant spots with glowing azaleas and other flowers of brilliant color, but I have seen charming effects in some of the drawing rooms at comparatively trifling cost.

Mr. Whitney's splendid treasure house, magnificent in its own decorations, is never ornamented with extravagant floral display, and at Mrs. Clarence Mackay's dance and cotillon, given at the Waldorf this winter, only American Beauties and an amazing variety of lovely things, golf and hunting and yachting supply designs for many of the prettiest favors and add a picturesque touch.

The charm of the cotillon does not pass with the season in town, but all through the spring and summer it will be danced wherever society is. At Aiken, Palm Beach, at Lakewood, Atlantic City, at the country clubs and country houses, at the opening of the season at the White Sulphur Springs and kindred resorts—in short, wherever society gathers the cotillon is in full swing until the heat of summer at Newport, Lenox or Bar Harbor forbids it. Morning Germans were the "ragony" at White Sulphur a few years ago, but the athletic notion fills the head of the girl of to-day and the cotillon does only for variety.

Fortunes Spent in Flowers.

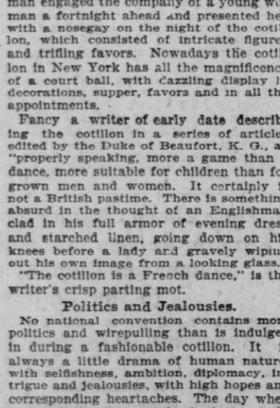
In the season all the wealth of private conservatories and florists' shops are transferred to the houses of millionaires, and the cotillon is sometimes danced under canopies and arches of flowers, the cost of which is enormous—whole orange trees, with their fruit; rose bushes, forced and transplanted. All the staple flowers hold their own, with branches of flowering shrubs that carry the poetry of the old fashioned garden with them.

WAR OF THE ROSES—WALTZ.



Place a table on which are equal quantities of red and white roses at one end of ballroom. Eight couples dance. At signal from leader all go to table, each lady taking a red rose and each gentleman a white rose. Ladies gather in center of room, join right hands held high together forming a bouquet of red roses. Men march in circle twice around ladies, meet partners, turn the ladies to the outside. Gentlemen join hands, forming bouquet of white roses; ladies march twice around in circle outside group, meet partners, bow and all dance.

FAVOR FIGURE—TWO-STEP.



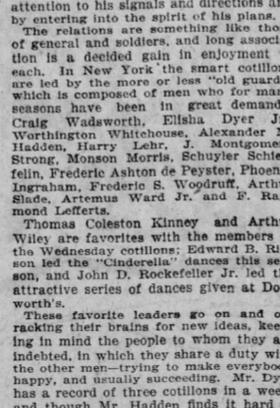
Leader selects twelve gentlemen, each of whom invites a lady to dance. At signal two lines are formed viz-a-viz on opposite sides of room, each gentleman having a favor. Men join hands, forming chain which starts at head of ladies' line, and moves in serpentine figure under raised hands of ladies to lower end of line. The chain of men turns and goes forward, until the line is in the original position, each man facing his partner, to whom he kneels and presents the favor. All dance. The order of this figure may be reversed.

BASKETBALL—WALTZ.



Place a basket on the floor at the upper end of the ballroom. Four couples dance. At signal each lady invites a gentleman, each gentleman invites another lady. Form two lines at opposite end of ballroom, eight gentlemen in one line, in front, and seven ladies in a line a few feet back. Each gentleman is provided with a ball. Ladies clap hands for signal, and gentlemen race to basket, toss in ball and race back, each quickly taking hold of a lady. One gentleman will be without a partner. A fool's cap is placed on his head by the leader, and he stands in the center of the floor while all waltz around him.

WINDMILL—TWO-STEP.



Sixteen couples get up, dance, and at signal from leader take positions described in diagram I. Lines A and C go forward in procession, exchanging places, ladies marching inside, gentlemen outside. Then B and D change in the same manner, each two wings repeat to places. All lines forward to center, meeting as in diagram II, gentlemen at heads of lines and ladies at heads of lines crossing hands in center, joining the four wings of the windmill. Move twice around, ladies turn and bow to partners. All dance.

HERE ARE SOME COTILLON FIGURES.

In addition to the figures designed by Professor Marwig, some of the more familiar ones used by Mr. Dodworth have been very popular. The military figure is as follows: Eight couples dance, and at a signal each selects another partner and they form a double line in the middle of the room, all facing one way. The lines part in fours, gentlemen and ladies locking arms of a generation past, to dance the first lady and gentleman of each section locking arms. This joins each two sections into one, four ladies and four gentlemen being now in each line. All face the head of the room and go forward. Lines part, ladies and gentlemen going different ways, down two sides of the room. At a signal from the leader all face the center, the two lines advancing. Take partners and all waltz.

Another figure, which Mr. Dodworth calls "The Covered Way," is very jolly, and may be danced by any number of couples, who form two lines, partners facing. Gentlemen join hands and hold them high. Ladies join hands and pass in a serpentine line in and out under the arches. When the end of the line is reached the ladies in line enter the archway and move along until each reaches her partner. All dance.

An extremely pretty effect is made by using flags of all nations, which are projected in pairs. One of each pair is selected, and these are distributed among the ladies. The corresponding flags are given to the gentlemen. Those receiving flags immediately rise, and each searches for the one having the corresponding flag, form two lines, facing, with top ends of corresponding flags joined, forming an archway.

The first couple will pass down between the lines, taking their places at the other end, placing flags in former position immediately; each couple in turn doing the same until all have passed down. A general waltz follows. This figure is made additionally patriotic by having the orchestra play a few bars of "The Star-spangled Banner" at the appearance of the American flag. A pretty idea is that of introducing picturesque and becoming favors which the dancers can wear—pocket squares of delicately tinted tissue paper, trimmed with flowers, and fantastic parasols, made of crepe or tissue paper, which are bewitching when gracefully handled by pretty girls in light frocks.

But, given a little thought and study, any cotillon leader can think out a dozen figures to suit the company he is to entertain.

HERE ARE SOME COTILLON FIGURES.

Two cotillons are indelible in my memory, one given at an army post, with thousands of snowballs used for green, half white, on the long branches as they grew, and another in the Berkshire Hills, where mountain laurel, in red and white, with its dark waxen leaves, was used in gorgeous bouquets, with old fashioned honeysuckle trained along the walls and over the oak rafters.

Southern moss, the gray kind that festoons the live oak trees of the far South, is to be had at small price, and makes a graceful, fantastic trimming, which suggests the use of magnolias, orange blossoms and Cape Jasmine (Gardenia) for favors, and two or three figures to carry out the idea of Dixie in burlesque.

In the matter of favors the variety is absolutely without limit. In that, as in any other detail, a cotillon may be as extravagant or as unexpensive, as stately, as sentimental or as absurd as the host chooses. The shop windows and show-cases suggest dozens and dozens of favors, and the cotillon leader who is a gentleman, whose lines have not fallen in pleasant places, engaged in making favors for a living, and who are fertile in ideas and materials.

Children's cotillons are always a success, for tots love the game, and exercise, and the ecstatically happy over the favors. The children's cotillons at summer resorts have always been popular, and have been the especial fad of a generation past, to dance the cotillon and later took their children in hand, is fertile in original ideas for figures, which he designs to suit the season, place and company.

During the hours he spends in street cars and in going about from shop to theater rehearsal to a drawing room class his thoughts are always busy in his art, and the cotillon figures he evolves are myriad. Professor Marwig thinks simply an essential, and his figures are all practical, and as unexpensive, as stately, as sentimental or as absurd as the host chooses. The shop windows and show-cases suggest dozens and dozens of favors, and the cotillon leader who is a gentleman, whose lines have not fallen in pleasant places, engaged in making favors for a living, and who are fertile in ideas and materials.

Children's cotillons are always a success, for tots love the game, and exercise, and the ecstatically happy over the favors. The children's cotillons at summer resorts have always been popular, and have been the especial fad of a generation past, to dance the cotillon and later took their children in hand, is fertile in original ideas for figures, which he designs to suit the season, place and company.

HERE ARE SOME COTILLON FIGURES.

During the hours he spends in street cars and in going about from shop to theater rehearsal to a drawing room class his thoughts are always busy in his art, and the cotillon figures he evolves are myriad. Professor Marwig thinks simply an essential, and his figures are all practical, and as unexpensive, as stately, as sentimental or as absurd as the host chooses. The shop windows and show-cases suggest dozens and dozens of favors, and the cotillon leader who is a gentleman, whose lines have not fallen in pleasant places, engaged in making favors for a living, and who are fertile in ideas and materials.

Children's cotillons are always a success, for tots love the game, and exercise, and the ecstatically happy over the favors. The children's cotillons at summer resorts have always been popular, and have been the especial fad of a generation past, to dance the cotillon and later took their children in hand, is fertile in original ideas for figures, which he designs to suit the season, place and company.

During the hours he spends in street cars and in going about from shop to theater rehearsal to a drawing room class his thoughts are always busy in his art, and the cotillon figures he evolves are myriad. Professor Marwig thinks simply an essential, and his figures are all practical, and as unexpensive, as stately, as sentimental or as absurd as the host chooses. The shop windows and show-cases suggest dozens and dozens of favors, and the cotillon leader who is a gentleman, whose lines have not fallen in pleasant places, engaged in making favors for a living, and who are fertile in ideas and materials.

Children's cotillons are always a success, for tots love the game, and exercise, and the ecstatically happy over the favors. The children's cotillons at summer resorts have always been popular, and have been the especial fad of a generation past, to dance the cotillon and later took their children in hand, is fertile in original ideas for figures, which he designs to suit the season, place and company.