

**A TREATISE ON THE USE AND PECULIAR
ADVANTAGES OF DANCING AND
EXERCISES, CONSIDERED AS A MEANS
OF REFINEMENT AND PHYSICAL
DEVELOPMENT, WITH GENERAL
REMARKS**

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A treatise on the use and peculiar advantages of dancing and exercises, considered as a means of refinement and physical development, with general remarks by Francis Mason

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BY
FRANCIS MASON.



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PREFACE.

IN submitting the following pages to my Patrons and Pupils, I have endeavoured, as succinctly as possible, to state the principles of my teaching, which I wish to be well understood by those who are intrusted to my instruction, that my lesson may partake rather of a practical exemplification of my teaching than of time devoted to inculcating what I will call first principles and foundation, from which I anticipate a satisfactory result. To my Patrons it will afford at least a knowledge of my theory and intentions.

Experience has taught me that something was wanted to assist my Pupils, and this purpose, it is hoped, will now have been attained.

With the deepest consideration of my obligations, I remain

Their obedient servant,

FRANCIS MASON.

37, GREEN STREET, GROSVENOR SQUARE,
May, 1854.

ADVANTAGES OF DANCING AND EXERCISES.

ON the earliest dawn of civilisation in every society, from the barbarous nations of antiquity down to the various races which seem to have sprung into existence under the auspices of modern discovery, Dancing has invariably exercised an influence over, and been recognised as essential to, the better development of the human frame. Not only is it to be regarded as an instrument of social amusement, or as tending to the exhibition of muscular power, but its agency is

to be sought deeper, in its influence in concert with the mind.

It is to the robust exercises, the athletic displays of physical power, which are the delight of all nations in their infancy, that we are to look for the origin of this noble and invigorating art; and its universal adoption affords the best evidence of its adaptability to the wants and necessities, as well as to the pleasures of mankind. As an adjunct to the gorgeous displays by which the priests of antiquity sought to captivate the imagination and enthral the mind of nations, in every climate, from the subtle Greek to the submissive Hindoo, Dancing invariably maintained the same station which it is still found to hold in the religious ceremonies of the aborigines of the Western Continent, as

well as amongst the Islanders of the Southern Ocean and the sable denizens of the African coast.

“We have the Pyrrhic dance as yet!”—

and it is a dance, like those practised at the Olympic Games, calculated to excite to martial achievements, as the “War Dance” of the painted Indian is still the preliminary to the stirring incidents of active warfare. It is, however, only in the progress of civilisation that the art may be considered as having assumed that position, as an accessory to the refinement of the manners of mankind, which it now occupies; and it is to such influence that it is proposed to direct attention in the following pages.

It is so difficult to separate Dancing