

**THE CHALIF TEXT BOOK OF  
DANCING, VOL. I: THE  
FUNDAMENTAL POSITIONS  
AND EXERCISES**

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The Chalif text book of dancing, Vol. I: The fundamental positions and exercises by Louis H. Chalif

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*Louis H. Chalif*

# THE CHALIF TEXT BOOK OF DANCING

BY

LOUIS H. CHALIF

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Vol. I.

The Fundamental Positions and Exercises

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by

Louis H. Chabé

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## FOREWORD

IN RUSSIA they have well proved the value of dancing, not only in their ballet, but for all men and women, as a means of bringing not happiness alone, but strength, ease and gracefulness, good carriage and good manners, expressiveness and individuality throughout a lengthened life. America and the other countries have in the last decade done much in realizing these benefits of the dance. They have accomplished this through the leading teachers of the day, who are masters of the craft, and by going beyond the ball-room, into the higher branches of the art. From a dancing which consisted of a mere gliding of the feet in a few different manners, they have gone on to an art in which every part of the body—head, shoulders, arms, torso, legs and feet—becomes the medium of expression and art. It is such dancing only that can pass on grace and fire to the ball-room, and bless a nation.

It can, we should say, if honestly and thoroughly taught, and this requires practice *exercises*, as much as does music. Concentration upon a few points at a time, studying or doing those over and over again, until successively each one is learned, this is the universal method of study in every well-organized science or art. That it



has not been so completely followed in dancing has been due, in part we believe, to the great lack of text books of classical dancing, in which the subject could be set forth, thoroughly organized. This is the *raison d'être*, and let us hope the justification of the present volume, which describes the elemental positions and exercises of classical dancing.

These elements represent the experience and selection of the world, and especially of the Russian national ballet schools, where this lore has been more treasured and perfected than elsewhere. We have made many changes in this material, to adapt it to new conditions. Let us hope that our nearly life-time's occupation with the art has enabled us to make the changes wisely, and even here and there to carry the art of Teaching Dancing to a higher point than it had there as yet reached.

We have hoped that this treatise can be useful to three sorts of people. The first, the teacher, may find in it exercises of great value for his own technique and his pupil's training; and if he belong to the numerous body who have studied in our school, he will have a reminder against forgetting any detail or arrangement of the exercises he has learned under us. The second class, the professional dancer, will find here most of those

## FOREWORD

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exercises which are the chief means, and an indispensable means, for acquiring technique. And finally, the earnest student of the art who is unable to work under any of the good teachers, may find here, we hope, as much of the basis of dancing as can be taught by language.

In closing, we would express our great appreciation and thanks to Miss Elizabeth Gilfillan and Mr. S. Columb Gilfillan, who zealously aided us to bring this work into the world. Now committing it to the friendly criticism of the profession, and to its work of creating more good dancers, we remain with devoted interest yours,

LOUIS H. CHALIF.

New York,  
April 25, 1914.

## NOTES ON FRENCH PRONUNCIATION AND GRAMMAR

The approximate pronunciation of the French names of the exercises has been indicated by English spelling, with the following special letters:

à is to be pronounced like a in "cat."

*e* (italic) is like e in "the boy."

**N** (small capital) stands for the French "nasal n," which can be produced by attempting to pronounce n without touching the tongue to the roof of the mouth.

The past participial form (in -é) of an exercise name is preferred to the infinitive (in -er) except where the foot is not raised from the floor. The two forms are pronounced alike, unless a following vowel cause the sounding of the final consonant.

Plurals are formed by adding s (= z if pronounced) to the participle or noun and all *adjectives* modifying this, but not a word already ending in s. Thus: 1 grand pas de bourrée; 3 grands pas de bourrée.