THE SLOW FOXTROT

IN the majority of the following questions and answers, a candidate would be expected to demonstrate the steps and details, as well as giving the verbal answers.

Q.—What is the time of the Slow Foxtrot?

A.—4/4. There are four beats in a bar of music.

Q.—What is the tempo of the Slow Foxtrot?

A.—About 32 to 34 bars to the minute.

Q.—In the rhythm of the Slow Foxtrot, which are the accented beats?

A.—The first and the third.

Q.—What are the two fundamental basic steps in this dance?

A.—The Walk and the Three-step.

Q.—How many beats does each Walk take?

A.—Two beats. Half a bar. Each walk is counted as a slow step.

Q.—How many beats does each Three-step take?

A.—Four beats. One bar.

Q.—How do you count a Three-step in quicks and slows?

A.—Quick, quick, slow, the quick steps taking one beat each and the slow step two beats.

Q.—Describe the Walk forward.

A.—Take a long gliding step straight from the hips, skimming your foot lightly along the floor. When you are out to your full stretch, you should be on the heel of your front foot: immediately lower on to the flat foot. Your back foot should now be on the toes before it is released to move forward. With your weight forward, keep moving forward continuously the whole time but do not release your back foot hurriedly. The weight of the body is forward throughout, but from the point of view of the feet, it is, for each actual walking step—on the back foot, then central, then on the front foot.

Q.—In the Walk forward, when should you release your back heel?

A.—As soon as the front foot has moved forward about 5 or 6 inches.

Q.—Describe the Walk backward.

A.—Swing your leg well back from the hips going on to the toes when at your full stretch and keeping your weight on your front foot. As you continue, your weight should be carried between your feet so that you are supported by the ball of your back foot and the heel of your front foot. Your weight is then transferred on to the ball of your back foot. Pull your front foot back with pressure on the heel and do not lower the heel of your back foot until the other foot passes it. With your weight forward, keep moving backward continuously the whole time but do not release your front foot hurriedly.

The weight of the body is forward throughout, but from the point of view of the feet, it is, for each actual walking step—on the front foot, then central, then on the back foot.

Q.—Describe a Three-step.

A.—A Three-step is three steps taken forward or backward. They are natural length steps, but if measured the second step is a fraction shorter than the first or third. This is on account of the rise. Take your first step forward on to the heel immediately rising on to the ball of the foot. Take your second step forward on to the ball of the foot, lowering the heel as you step forward on to the heel on your third step. When doing a three-step backward, you step back on to the ball of the foot immediately rising. Take your second step back on to the toes of your foot, then lower the heel of your second step as you take your third step. To describe the rise in brief: Rise at the end of the first quick step and lower at the end of the second quick step.

Q.—Do your feet skim along the floor throughout the Slow Foxtrot?

A.—Yes, some part of your foot must be in contact with the floor the whole time.

Q.—Describe a Feather Step.

A.—A Feather Step is a walk forward on your right foot followed immediately by a three-step, going outside your partner on the two quick steps.

Q.—Is the walk forward with your right foot in the Feather the same length as an ordinary walk forward?

A.—No. It is a little longer.

Q.—How do you count the Feather Step in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Feather Step in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Feather Step takes one and a half bars.

Q.—On which steps of the Feather Step do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first and fourth steps as lady and as gentleman. (C.B.M.P. on the third step.)

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Feather Step.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to your right, and on the fourth step you straighten again. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Feather Step?

A.—Rise at the end of the first step and lower at the end of the third step.

Q.—Why does the rise in the Feather Step differ from the rise in the three-step?

A.—Because you step outside your partner and therefore it is more natural to rise one step earlier.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Feather Step.

A.—It is taken along the line of dance or diagonally to centre.

Q.—How do you count the Natural Turn in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow, slow, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Natural Turn in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Natural Turn takes two and a half bars.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the second step of the Natural Turn as man?

A.—Parallel and you should have made a third of a turn from your original position.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the second step of the Natural Turn as lady?

A.—Practically together, having turned on your left heel and dropped your weight on to your right heel. This is known as a heel turn.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the fifth step of the Natural Turn as man?

A.—Parallel and about four inches apart. This is a heel turn and is known as the Heel Pull.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the fifth step of the Natural Turn as lady?

A.—Parallel and about fourteen inches apart.

Q.—How much do you turn on the complete Natural Turn?

A.—Just over three-quarters of a turn; half a turn up to the end of the three-step, and just over a quarter of a turn on the last part.

Q.—On which steps of the Natural Turn do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first, fourth, and sixth steps as lady and as gentleman.

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Natural Turn.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to the right; on the fourth step you are straight; on the fifth step you sway to the left, holding it as you take the sixth step—straightening as your weight goes on to it. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Natural Turn?

A.—Rise at the end of the second step and lower at the end of the third step.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Natural Turn.

A.—Begin facing the line of dance: take the fourth step straight back into the line of dance; finish facing diagonally to centre.

Q.—How do you count the Reverse Turn in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow, quick, quick, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Reverse Turn in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Reverse Turn takes two and a half bars.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the second step of the Reverse Turn as man?

A.—Parallel, and you should have made approximately a quarter of a turn from your original position.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the second step of the Reverse Turn as lady?

A.—Together, having turned on your right heel and

dropped your weight on to your left heel. This is known as a heel turn.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the fifth step of the Reverse Turn as man?

A.—Parallel and about twelve inches apart with the left foot an inch or two in advance.

Q.—What position are your feet in on the fifth step of the Reverse Turn as lady?

A.—Parallel and about twelve inches apart with the right foot an inch or two in the rear.

Q.—How much do you turn on the complete Reverse Turn?

A.—Approximately three-quarters of a turn. Just over a quarter of a turn up to the end of the three-step, and just over a quarter of a turn on the last part.

Q.—On which steps of the Reverse Turn do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first, fourth, and seventh steps as lady and as gentleman. (C.B.M.P. on the sixth step.)

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Reverse Turn.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to your left; on the fourth step you are straight, on the fifth and sixth steps you sway slightly to your right, and on the seventh step you are straight again. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Reverse Turn?

A.—Rise at the end of the second step and lower at the end of the third step. Rise again at the end of the fourth step and lower at the end of the sixth step.

On the first part the rise is the same as in a three-step, and on the last part the same as in a Feather Step (on account of stepping outside your partner).

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Reverse Turn.

A.—Begin facing diagonally to centre: take the fourth step straight back into the line of dance; finish facing diagonally to wall.

Q.—How do you count the Reverse Wave in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow, quick, quick, slow,

slow, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Reverse Wave in bars?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Reverse Wave takes three and a half bars.

Q.—What is it that makes you "wave" in this step?

A.—The contrary body movement on the fourth step.

Q.—On which steps of the Reverse Wave do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first, fourth, seventh, and ninth steps as lady and as gentleman.

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Reverse Wave.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to the left; on the fourth step you are straight; on the fifth and sixth steps you sway slightly to the right; on the seventh step you are straight; on the eighth step you sway to the left, holding it as you take the ninth step—straightening as your weight goes on to it. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Reverse Wave?

A.—Rise at the end of the second step and lower at the end of the third step. Rise again at the end of the fifth step and lower at the end of the sixth step.

Q.—How much would you turn on the first four steps of the Reverse Wave in comparison with the first four steps of the Reverse Turn?

A.—On the first four steps of the Reverse Turn, you should, by the fourth step, have your back to the line of dance. In the Reverse Wave you should not turn so much; the fourth step should be taken so that you have your back diagonally to the wall. The reason for the latter is to avoid curving your wave into the middle of the ballroom.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Reverse Wave.

A.—Begin, either facing the line of dance or diagonally to centre; take the fourth step back with your back diagonally to the wall; take the seventh step straight back into the line of dance;

finish facing diagonally to centre.

Q.—How do you count the Change of Direction in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Change of Direction in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step. The Change of Direction takes one bar.

Q.—On which step of the Change of Direction do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the second step as lady and as gentleman.

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Change of Direction.

A.—As you take the first step diagonally forward on to the inside of the R.F. you sway to the left; continue swaying to the left as the L.F. is brushed through, holding it as you take the second step forward with the L.F.—straightening as your weight goes on to it. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Do you rise in the Change of Direction?

A.—There is no rise.

Q.—How much do you turn in the Change of Direction?

A.—Approximately half a turn to the left.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Change of Direction.

A.—Begin, either facing the line of dance or diagonally to wall and finish approximately, facing the opposite way.

Q.—When would you use the Change of Direction?

A.—On a corner, or near the wall or if someone was in the way. It is used after the Reverse Turn or after the Feather Step.

Q.—How do you count the Impetus Turn in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Impetus Turn in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Impetus Turn takes one

and a half bars.

Q.—On which steps of the Impetus Turn do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first and the fourth steps as lady and as gentleman.

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Impetus Turn.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to the left, and on the fourth step you are straight again. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Impetus Turn?

A.—Rise at the end of the second step (the end of the heel turn for the gentleman) and lower at the end of the third step.

Q.—How much do you turn in an Impetus Turn?

A.—Approximately, just over three-quarters of a turn to the right.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Impetus Turn.

A.—Take the first step straight back with your back

to the line of dance; finish approximately facing the wall.

Q.—How do you count the Telemark in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Telemark in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Telemark takes one and a half bars.

Q.—On which steps of the Telemark do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first and fourth steps as lady and as gentleman.

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Telemark.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to the left, and on the fourth step you are straight again. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Telemark?

A.—Rise at the end of the second step and lower at

the end of the third step.

Q.—How much do you turn in a Telemark?

A.—Three-quarters of a turn to the left.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Telemark.

A.—Begin facing diagonally to centre: finish facing diagonally to wall.

Q.—How do you count the Open Telemark in slows and quicks?

A.—Slow, quick, quick, slow.

Q.—How do you count the Open Telemark in beats (bars)?

A.—Count two beats for each slow step and one beat for each quick step. The Open Telemark takes one and a half bars.

Q.—On which steps of the Open Telemark do you use contrary body movement?

A.—On the first and fourth steps as lady and as gentleman.

Q.—Describe the body sway in the Open Telemark.

A.—On the first step you are straight; on the second and third steps you sway slightly to the left, and on the fourth step you are straight again. The lady the opposite.

Q.—Where do you rise and lower in the Open Telemark?

A.—Rise at the end of the second step and lower at the end of the third step.

Q.—How much do you turn in an Open Telemark?

A.—Three-quarters of a turn to the left.

Q.—Describe the alignment of the Open Telemark.

A.—Begin facing diagonally to centre; finish facing approximately to the wall.

Q.—How would you construct the Slow Foxtrot?

A.—After the Feather Step do one of the following:

1. A three-step forward, R. L. R., turning on the last R. into the Natural Turn.

2. Turn on the last step of the Feather Step into the Reverse Turn or Reverse Wave.

3. The Change of Direction.

After the Natural Turn go straight into the Feather Step.

After the Reverse Turn do one of the following:

1. A three-step forward, R.L.R., turning on the last R. into the Natural Turn.

2. Turn on the last step of the Reverse Turn into the Reverse Wave.

3. The Change of Direction.

After the Reverse Wave go straight into the Feather Step.

After the Change of Direction do one of the following:

1. A Feather Step.

2. Turn on the last step of the Change of Direction into the Reverse Turn or Reverse Wave.

After the above has been mastered, the dancer should have no difficulty in introducing the more advanced figures such as the Telemark and Impetus Turn, etc.

As far as possible try to use right-handed and left-handed turns alternately: doing this will

make the dance much more effective.

According to a dancer's ability and experience, so he can add other figures but it is much better to make sure of these standardised figures and amalgamating them before attempting anything more advanced.

Perfect Slow Foxtrots played in the right time and tempo by Victor Silvester and his Ballroom Orchestra, are obtainable only on Parlophone Records