

It was the period when aesthetes and philosophers in Germany and England were developing the theory of empathy, when Isadora Duncan was throwing off the shackles of dead conventions and restoring the dance to the ranks of creative art, when in Russia Stanislavsky was seeking for realism in the actor's art and Fokine for expressiveness in the dancer's. If all this was going back to nature, it was not a retrograde step in time or progress, but a return to operative principles from which there had been serious deflections, a return from abstractions to reality.

It would be a brave soul who would maintain that the need for getting back to basic things has diminished in the intervening years, and it would be a fairly myopic one who would deny that great progress has been made toward meeting the need. The folk-dance presents one illuminating example, for where it was merely being recorded to save it from extinction forty years ago, today it is being danced actively by whole strata of the population for whom it is not alone a restoration but a revelation.

It is a healthy thing to release the social dance from a total pre-occupation with sex. Though the courtship dance has an ancient and honorable function, there are other functions for dancing, as well. Our modern life in which we are constantly being thrown with crowds has bred an unhealthy defensiveness against social foregatherings; we have met each other so much en masse under conditions of stress and rivalry that we have set up a kind of compensatory habit of isolationism that has kept us from knowing each other as fellows and neighbors. We can make good use of those large