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OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 24th June 1960. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: A. Rothlisberger, L. J. Faivre, A. Bruschi, A. C. Staehelin, W. Flory, G. Ashley, H. Schmid, O. Rohn.

REMINISCENCES

Disastrous consequences of my first ball.

By ST.

Undoubtedly one of the first exciting events in one's life is the one when one begins to walk; most of us can hardly remember this happening, but perhaps in later years we have heard from our parents or relations with what joy they watched those first steps. It might, of course, be an insignificant event to the world at large, but in the intimate circle of the family it is nevertheless a great and momentous event. Grandparents, uncles and aunts, as well as acquaintances, are promptly informed, and photographs of the "babe" are taken from all angles and exhibited at every conceivable opportunity.

Another event, obviously taking place at a much later stage, but which is equally exciting, and also connected with a pair of legs, is dancing. I do not remember those far-gone days when I first "doddled" along, but I have since been told that on that occasion I promptly fell down the staircase, hitting my tender and innocent little head on each particular step, which undoubtedly must have had, in later years, its consequences! In fact, an old aunt of mine would have it that I have never been the same since; but as I do not remember how I felt previously to this accident, I thought it was a particularly nasty thing to say and henceforth I took a violent dislike to her.

One thing, however, I can vividly remember, and that is my first ball, as it was connected with some disastrous consequences.

At one time I attended, together with my brothers and sister, a dancing-class in my home town; this class was presided over by an Italian dancing-master. I can still see him, in his brown velvet jacket; he was of small stature and his face was adorned with a ruddy-coloured pointed beard. He used to carry a small stick, of which he made rather free use, hitting the legs of his pupils when they refused to move in accordance with the rhythm of the music. Maestro Spaghetti, as we called him, had a peculiar habit; he would disappear from time to time, and slanderous tongues would have it that he went round the corner "to have one". For some unknown reason he used to pounce upon me each time he returned from his mysterious errand; leading me furiously round the room, he would shout "One, two, three, one, two, three", tickling my legs with his nasty stick, but I was far more interested in finding out what stimulant he took, than in the valse tune played, and I *did* find out, it gave me a profound shock — the great Maestro drank common or garden "Schnapps"; had he "fortified" himself with a more dignified beverage I could have forgiven him, but vulgar "Schnapps" — it was too bad!

Otherwise, everything was most prim and proper, the young ladies sat most sedately along the wall, facing the young gentlemen sitting opposite them. There were perfect ballroom manners *de rigueur*; each time one of the ladies was asked for a dance, a neat bow was made, and afterwards she was politely conducted back "whence she came", and another bow concluded the ceremony; none of the rough ball-room manners which are unfortunately so prevalent nowadays.