

**Theory of French Boxing by Leboucher (of Rouen)**  
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**Brussels, 1844**

Translated by P.T. Crawley, 2017 (NB images are from the 1856 edition)

**Foreword**

Combat with the cestus between Greeks was one of the recreations of this people of heroes.

Since these times recalled where, in the ceremonial circuses, the gladiators slaying one another to the greatest satisfaction of the public; wrestling practices, softened by civilisation, were, from generation to generation, propagated just like in our days.

Nothing is more natural, because we can again cite the passions of the Orient for gymnastics and invoke the harsh discipline adopted by the Sovereigns of the North, to perpetuate the strength of a race of men almost as vigorous as themselves; but we raise up to recommend exercises of the body recognised as powerful and hygienic methods of the two most formidable nations of the world, France and England.

In England lords are given to boxing as much as the man of the docks.

The English, more democratic than us, accord at first skill, comprised with indispensable addition to the education of the youth marching toward virility, as a legitimate means of defence in all aspects of life. In their homes, to inspire to train in strength and skill, weights, massive and adapted, are found arranged in study rooms, alongside Homer, Virgil and the commentaries of Caesar: among them a gradual and reasoned gymnasium makes a diversion from the most serious of the Classics.

This idea fixes the intimate connection which must exist between the moral strength and physique of military victory which favours a grave and reflective people.

The French, less systematic, however know the necessity of an applied combination of all aspects of strength; they have brought together all the limbs as their agents; for them the arms, legs, feet, hips and the head are also elements of resistance.

In our theory English boxing holds a level of usefulness in the double rapport in the attack and riposte. Several blows from American wrestling are equally found reproduced in this precis of the principles of French skill and English boxing; that is to say that in our method, the sole one of its type which has appeared at present, we have united all the conscious teachings worthy of attention, taking care to exclude the old, trivial savate, which was more telegraphy than dangerous in reality.

Here we espouse the wise and reasoned use of arms and legs.

A man of the world, well-seasoned in our lessons, can stand up to, with firm foot, all the quarrelsome sorts of the lower classes who often put upon him, for the sole reason of insult, a good hold, outside of distinguished practice and unaware of he who they offend. With the aid of our demonstration the insulted will exit the struggle without being disfigured and without his clothing being shredded.

Our means of defence are the result of long and profound study on force and skill. By our lessons skill replaces strength, which is known to develop by resistance. Independent of the confidence which is inspired in a man, it gives him grace and turns.

Men of above ordinary height are more made for an attack with a half-lunge, they can parry with a simple retreat of the body; but observation demonstrates that men of small stature compensate for this disadvantage by their speed and agility. This disproportion is very important to calculate in French wrestling.

Certain men, by their conformation, are more apt to use their legs, others more accustomed in their use of arms. In our system, we summarise principles attached to the development of weak and unskilled limbs, thus to render the body more supple and capable of being used in all the wrestling exercises.

The greatest number of men arrive at the age of maturity espousing the frivolous and futile study of French boxing which, according to them, is only applicable for study by youth. This is an error: persons of forty and even fifty are coming to follow our lessons, some out of desire, others under doctor's orders; and the most satisfying results are those who triumph over their prejudice and their antipathy. Matured intelligence and the development of complete vigour are the incontestable elements of such success.

Young men have a real advantage to follow our lessons in French boxing. This exercise, the most useful and healthy that one can do of the hygienic canon, gives power to their nerves and their muscles; they acquire from this the suppleness wanted of youth and, at the same time, this strength which, so far, need not be reserved for an age of virility.

### **Chapter 1 Of the guard**

There exists in French boxing two guards: one the true guard, the other the false guard.

One can never place oneself in true or false guard other than after having examined the position of one's adversary.

One says "true guard" when the champions find themselves placed with regards to one another and both have the right leg or left leg forward.

The "false guard" is thus named when one of the combatants has the right leg forward and the other their left leg (see figures 1 and 2).



## **2 On stepping**

There exists in French boxing two methods of stepping towards one's adversary, just as there equally exists two for retreating. The first is made by changing guard forward to step towards the man, such that to retreat one changes guard to the rear.

To change guard forward, reckoning that one guards to the right, one will advance the left leg forward, by pivoting on the right leg to find oneself placed in the left guard.

To retreat the lead leg passes to the rear, taking the position of the lead leg, which will change the guard.

In the new method, the second means to advance or retreat is more favourably used.

Make to replace the lead leg with the rear leg, while maintaining the inline position of the body. This precept contrary to the principle of arms.

To retreat the lead leg replaces the rear leg, while observing a distance of two paces.

With the aid of this method one can, according to circumstances, develop or retrain the step to arrive in range of his adversary.

## **3 Reason for which one says, "True guard"**

Right leg forward, a man who wishes to stay on the defensive has many means of advantage to choose the false guard.

When placed in true guard one can redoubt the rear leg of his adversary, waiting for the low kick launched by the latter will always only just reach the fleshy parts or the calf.

When champions find themselves approaching one another, at the distance prescribed for the guard, it comes about sometimes that the low lick strikes on the outside of the ankle, a painful spot that can put one out of the fight; thus, when in false guard the same low kick can break the shin below the kneecap. Delivered either to the right or to the left this blow is named the low kick.

#### **4 False guard**

Placed in false guard either to the right or to the left, redoubtable kicks are delivered by the rear leg, reaching out such that they arrive as wanted at all the vulnerable parts of the body.

The low kick is delivered to the inside of the ankle and the shin. This blow is very serious; it often fractures the bone.

Directed higher it reaches the male member, the abdomen or the chest, the ordinary limit of players; however, one often encounters men with long and delicate legs and very tall men who can easily arrive to strike at the face.

In this false guard, a kick with the lead leg can have no dangerous effect unless it is directed to the ribs.

We have shown further up the danger of delivering blows to the outside (figure number 3).



#### **5 Description and manner of delivering all blows**

There exists several methods to deliver punches.

The method for delivering punching while stepping is that which is taught first to pupils. The unique principle for delivering these blows is to be in false guard:

Left arm forward, bent at the crook, the fist nervously contracted and placed at eye height, to be able to see the adversary from top to bottom; lean slightly to the left, a method which facilitates the parry with a prompt and vigorous blow against an attack made to the outside, body half-turned, right arm at chest height, thus to parry with vivacity the adversary's kick, directed at the male member or the chest.

#### **6 Principle of punch with the right arm while stepping**

To deliver a punch with the right hand one must retire the elbow quickly, holding the fist at the height of the right temple, advance the right leg a distance of two paces while pivoting on the toe of the left foot, to find oneself in the guard to the right.

Observe that the toes must always be a little turned to the inside.

At the same time that the movement is done one must develop the right arm with promptness and strength, to strike the adversary in the chest or face.

The release of the right arm is seconded by the united force of the shoulder, kidneys and ankles to render a most terrible shock.

Although the commotion inflicted to the body is violent one must always conserve indispensable balance to resist the parry.

This attack on the step is delivered equally as an attack or a riposte.

### **7 Principle of punch with left arm while stepping**

So that pupils are well seasoned with our theoretical explanations we repeat the principles for striking a punch with the left arm which is analysed the same way as for delivering a punch with the right arm, while in the false guard to the left.

In place in false guard to the right, the right arm placed at eye height, the fist tilted in a way to see his adversary from top to bottom, left arm across the pit of the stomach.

One must retire the left elbow to the rear, fist at the height of and near the left temple, advance the left leg by two paces, develop with force the left arm to deliver either to the chest or the face, a vigorous blow at his adversary.

Do not neglect to observe exactly the distance which separates you from him.

A poorly calculated extension will leave you exposed to a riposte for which you will not have kept the desired balance.

#### *Observation on punches delivered while stepping*

This is an unchangeable principle for punches as above.

One must always set aside the lead arm of the adversary with the arm which is in front, such that the rear arm is found able to develop without obstacle to deliver its punch.

In the case where one does not have this prudence the adversary can stop hit you as you step, by stiffening spontaneously the wrist of his lead arm.

The blow will however be more terrible than one which has been presented to the front without the opposition of a parry.

This method of protection is called "Evade the lead arm"

### **8 How to parry a punch from the adversary placed in false guard**

The adversary in false guard to the left strikes with the right arm while seeking always to set aside with the left arm the right fist which threatens the face.

To obtain a parry of the punch delivered to the face by the adversary one must pass the right leg to the rear, while observing the distance which he

has moved forward while changing guard, and at the same time, raise briskly the left arm above and on the left side of the head, to obtain a parry.

One names this parry “Grip while changing guard”, then on finds oneself in the left guard, from right guard which on was in before.

It will be the same if the adversary, placed in the false guard to the right, delivers his punch with the left arm, to seek then to take a set aside with his right arm. One must, thus, pass the left leg to the rear and raise the right arm with vigour, to follow the left arm which wants to strike (see figure 4)



The parry will change if the blow is directed to the chest.

One must in this case strike vigorously on the forearm, thus to thump the blow downwards, so that for a parry of a punch directed at the face, the arm which parries strikes on the forearm. Thus, to render the most violent commotion one must bend on the haunches at the same time as the arm parries; this method will remove easily all ripostes in general.

### **9 How to pass the leg while striking a punch, after a parry takes the attack delivered by a stepping adversary**

The adversary, while stepping, delivers with his right arm a punch to the face; take a parry with the left arm by catching it to the ribs and the arm; then one retires the right elbow to the rear to riposte with force to the face.

At the same time one passes rapidly the right leg behind the right ankle of the adversary.

The punch will make the man recoil backwards and the leg which opposes to the rear of his own will force him to fall (see figure 5).



For this blow, one must unite the force of the arm which strikes to the face with that of the leg which makes the trip, for those two movements well combined determine the fall.

One executes this attack to both legs. The method to avoid the passing of the leg is the same as for parrying a punch on the step; it is enough to change guard.

### **10 Slip without changing guard**

What if a man placed in false guard to the left wishes to set aside with his left arm your right arm to strike with his right fist? It is enough to retire the right arm to the rear, with speed, at the same time that one raises briskly the left arm above the head, to make a parry.

The adversary who advances the right leg previously placed to the rear, to deliver easily the blow which you have parried, is found at a convenient distance to receive your riposte of choice, to the chest or to the pit of the stomach.

This riposte of the right arm requires that the blow is developed with force by advancing the shoulder to give more power to the release of the wrist.

The slip is made equally with the left arm.

When the adversary, placed in false guard to the right, delivers a punch with the left arm he must retire quickly the left arm to the rear while taking a parry with the right arm, and riposte vigorously with a punch with the left arm. This blow is made in English boxing (see figure 6).



### **11 How to riposte a punch in place**

To deliver this blow, the rear leg does not shift.

Placed in true guard to the left if the adversary, while stepping, delivers his punch with the right arm (contrary to our principle in which we defend blows delivered to the outside) the lightest opposition of the left arm will obtain a parry and place at the same time a riposte with the right arm.

This riposte doubles the power with a lunge while stepping, which will make the adversary run himself onto the fist.

If the adversary strikes his punch with the left arm, while in true guard to the right, one must parry with the right arm and riposte with the left.

Skilled men must never strike outside; but it happens nearly always that inexperienced men try to double the force of the blow by raising the arm above the head, to let it fall back down like a hammer on an anvil. During this unskilled action, the upper part will be found to be uncovered, the adversary profits from the mistake in order to assure his advantage.

### **12 Time hits given with the punch**

The adversary placed in false guard to the right uses his left arm to deliver a punch while stepping; he must throw the left leg forward on the left side by carrying on this leg his bodyweight with confidence, then strike with the right arm at the moment where he sees you go to deliver a blow. This deviation forms a right-angle will deceive the true aim that was proposed by your adversary, who must strike in a direct line, full in the face, and will lack body, deceived by the movement of the set aside.

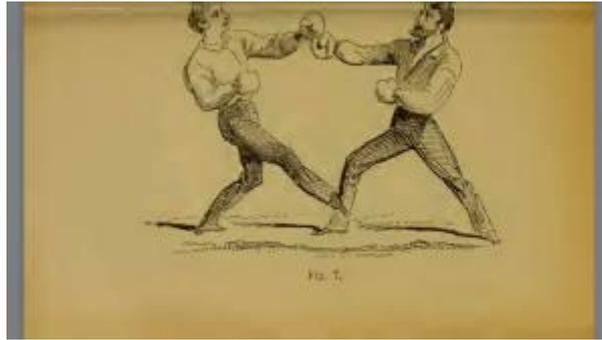
This blow is made equally with both arms: the adversary placed in false guard to the left, one throws the right leg to his right side, to shear the left leg at right-angles by then delivering a punch with the left arm. One is served also by this blow when an adversary wishes to lunge at you.

### **13 How to deliver a low kick, while in false guard to the right or left**

In false guard to the left or right, body grounded on both legs, equally bent, one must, to strike a low kick, release the shank with force forward, toe turned to the outside, so that the blow is delivered with the large part of the ball of the foot on the shin of the adversary.

In delivering this blow one must gather the bodyweight on the lead leg, so that the leg which executes can return to its point of departure without upsetting balance. This movement of retreat must be done as promptly as possible as there is a fear of a leg hold followed by a fall. These low kicks are delivered indiscriminately by both legs. Delivered in riposte they acquire double the force upon a punch delivered while stepping.

This change of guard to parry a punch requires one to be well seated on the shanks, to preserve the necessary balance at the moment one escapes the low kick. Without this precaution, one will fall backwards; also, one must always conserve an elasticity of the shanks which allows one to restrain or extend the development of a blow at will (see figure 7).



#### **14 How to gather up a low kick while in false guard**

An adversary placed in false guard to the left must, to reach the shin, strike a kick with the rear leg, which is the right.

In false guard to the right one must, to gather the foot at the moment where it arrives to strike, lower quickly the right arm placed forward, free at the same time the left leg to the rear and pin with the heel before the blow has bene struck. One must immediately see that the left hand seconds the right to raise the leg of the adversary, fairly high so that he will fall without any other means.

This leg hold is made equally in false guard to the left and the adversary in right guard (see figure 8).



While in true guard, if the adversary, contrary to our principle, strikes a kick to the outside, it will be enough to turn the palm of the hand to the outside to pin the heel and, as soon as the hold is taken, riposte with a punch using the rear arm to hasten the fall.

It is thus the right leg which must strike, and the left hand which pins. One must free the rear leg at the moment of the heel grip, thus to stop the head from falling forward, which will be dangerous in the case of failure, because in this posture the foot arrives full in the face; also, the hand which does not gather, must be in front of the face.

#### **15 How to stop the low kick**

The adversary placed in false guard to the left must strike with his rear leg which is the right, upon your right leg, to interrupt the low kick, present the right foot by offering the sole in opposition to the leg which delivers the blow.

This stop-hit, offering the sharp corner of the sole, is often very dangerous for those who would hurt his shin with violence, while delivering this blow.

One can be served by this method to parry all low kicks, either inside or outside (see figure 9).



#### *Observations on all low kicks*

We have formally banned all low kicks delivered to the outside.

The rule exists for those adversaries who, from the guard, are mutually recognised practitioners of this skill; but it is essential to highlight an exception of inexperienced men who are judged when they delivered their first blow without skill.

For these men, one must try a low kick while surrounding the leg to envelop the heel, take their balance, make them lose their footing and determine a fall, which will always be certain against a man surprised while in a bad guard.

#### *Observation on the low kick in old savate*

Yesteryear the skill named “savate” was principally noted for low kicks which seized the leg and made the adversary fall.

The rule of the old masters forbade the use of kicks above the knee.

Due to this wise foresight players did not have to consider kicks to the head, when they lowered themselves to gather up the leg.

It is for this indispensable reason to make pupils understand the danger to which they expose themselves as they make to hold the leg while striking low.

Professors of the old practice named these blows: “stamps” and “speckled”; the latter were feints which were not developed on the extension and had the aim of creating ripostes by resembling low blows in order to use their classic leg hold, sometimes bringing about a fall.

One named this blow the “low gather”

#### **16 Low kick struck while leaping**

This blow is especially favourable against an adversary of greater strength

who would hold you at his bidding, in a tight spot in order to abuse his advantage in in-fighting.

When in false guard to the left or right, so as to strike a kick to the shin, one must well calculate the side which offers the most space to remain free, to leap easily. Supposing that one is placed in the left guard, adversary in right guard, one nimbly takes a step forward and to the left side, then one strikes a kick with the right leg on the shin of the right leg of the adversary who is found to be placed in front. The blow struck, one bounds vigorously to the rear to re-find oneself placed in the right guard.

By this jumping action the adversary is found trapped on the spot which you previously occupied.

This kick can equally be directed to the chest.

### **17 How to deliver a high kick**

There exist several methods of delivering a high kick, when in false guard either to the right or to the left.

Body in a good guard position to the left, if the adversary finds himself leaning forward, a posture often taken by men who take little care of the essential law of grounding, one must raise the right foot with vivacity, carry the bodyweight over the left leg and release in a direct line the right shank, such that the toe can describe, while plunging into the chest of the adversary, an action both dry and rapid such that the foot finds itself in a state of rebounding, of some sort, to its starting place.

This blow is thrown with all the power of the shank which must stay in control of the action to strike the body or an opening, without upsetting one's balance.

When an adversary places himself in a low guard, the only guard chosen and affected by the old masters, it is essential to make use of high, direct kicks.

One will be certain to encounter the gut, stomach or head. Strike upwards, the blow will be violent and will be sufficient to put him out of the fight.

This blow is delivered from both legs.

### **18 How to strike a high kick in a direct line, with the right leg, to arrive at the chest or face, while in true guard to the right**

Since to deliver a high kick one is found too far from his adversary for the lead leg can reach without safety the rear leg, one will feint a punch to the face with the lead arm; one thus produces a distraction for the adversary to approach the left leg with the right leg which will rapidly raise to whip a kick to the chest or face.

Immediately the blow is launched one must retire rapidly the leg to the rear to find oneself in a left guard, the guard opposite to that which one had

before; this places at the same time a retiring of the left foot, after the aforesaid method, the adversary finds himself in a true guard to the left. This blow must be direct. If the adversary holds himself by leaning forward one must thrust at the pit of the stomach, a sensitive spot which, when well hit, puts one out of the fight, or winds them, which suffices to determine an advantage.

### **19 How to deliver a high kick, to the side, with the right leg, while in true guard to the right**

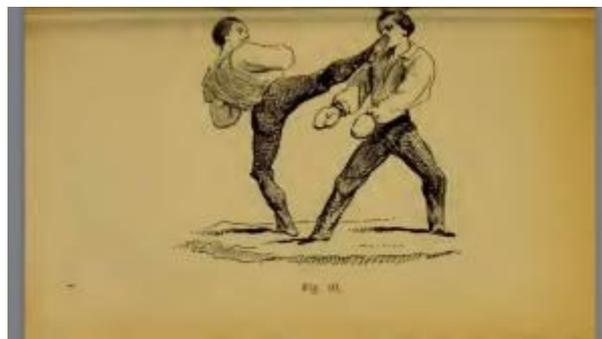
If the adversary holds himself in a guard according to the principles adopted today, one must to deliver a high kick around the leg to strike either the face or the chest.

So that the kick acquires force one must affect the split from the left leg, on the left side, while carrying oneself with confidence on the shank, and present the shoulder and right thigh forward.

This action leaves the leg with every ease to describe a horizontal circle and make leave with vigour the release of the shank to strike with the toe the upper parts of the body. These kicks must be stopped with a violent punch on the shin, while affecting a retreat of the body.

Able players can follow up with a second kick to the first which will not have much result.

This blow can be executed in the opposing guard by observing the methods underneath (see figure number 10).



### **20 How to gather up the leg to the inside, when direct kicks are delivered high**

The adversary placed in false guard to the left must strike with the right foot placed to the rear. While changing guard to the rear to seize the leg inside, one turns the palm of the left hand to the outside to seize the heel, and one develops immediately afterwards a vigorous punch to the chest or face.

The procedure is the same when in false guard to the left and the adversary is in false guard to the right; it is thus the right hand which seizes the leg and it is the left fist which ripostes to the face.

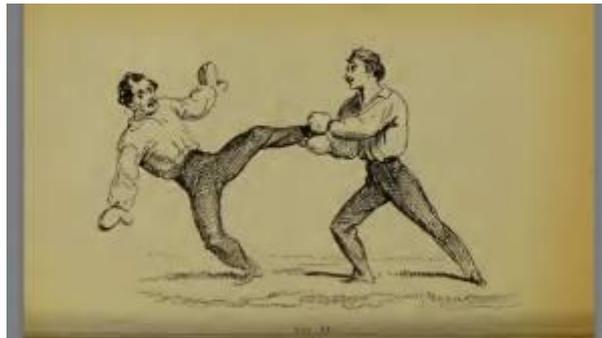
Immediately that the rear arm strikes one must abandon the seized leg with the hand placed to the fore, so as to not be holding on to the man at the moment of his fall (see figure number 3).

### **21 How to gather up the leg to the outside when in false guard**

The adversary placed in false guard to the right delivers a kick with the left leg to the face or chest; one must, to seize the leg, affect a change of guard by passing the left foot to the rear, at the same time that the right arm follows the leg of the adversary to strongly seize the heel, with the right hand, while turning the palm of the hand upwards.

The left hand binds promptly the toe, in such a way that, both hands constraining the foot vigorously, every effort to disengage will be fruitless.

But if in a desperate flourish the adversary tries to clinch you with both his free arms to bring about an opportunity for infighting, one will, so as to get away from this at will, do no more than raise the heel and push back the leg over the adversary's own body, which will oblige him to recoil to find a point of balance (see figure number 11).



If an adversary placed in false guard to the left strikes with his right foot, one is served by the same means to seize the heel with the left hand while carrying the right hand to the toe.

A fall is an infallible consequence of this attack.

It is necessary, when affecting a change of guard, to reverse the head to the rear, so as to not be reached on the chin by a high kick delivered by a very tall man.

### **22 How to strike a kick to the side to arrive at the face or chest**

When in false guard one must occupy their adversary with a feint of the left arm, to launch more boldly a kick.

One places oneself to the side of the left leg with a large leap, toe turned to the outside; this oblique is named "the premeditated slip".

At the same time that one affects this change of place one raises the right leg, in such a way that the heel is found in a horizontal line with the knee; then, while carrying the bodyweight on the left, shank slightly inclined, one

will describe a rapid curve with the right leg while presenting the shoulder and haunch to the fore.

Thus, the release of the shank is comparable to a backhand whipping the toe to the open chest or face, without opposition from the arms.

The blow delivered, the right leg is placed back on the ground withdrawing the left leg to the original guard.

It will be the same if one was in false guard to the right; to strike with the left leg one angles to the right instead of angling to the left.

One must not neglect a feint with the lead arm, a rigorous requirement for delivering all high kicks.

### **23 How to parry and riposte to high kicks, while in false guard**

While in false guard to the right, if the adversary is left guard he must deliver his high kick with his rear leg, which is the right one.

One must use the right arm to parry this blow with the aid of a vigorous punch struck to the shin, sufficient to follow the leg without over-reaching, then immediately riposte with the left foot, which is the rear, a low kick in the left leg of the adversary which stays to the fore, the sole support for the body while the right leg tries to strike the chest or the face.

This riposte is terrible, the adversary does not have enough time to replace the leg with which he wanted to strike on the ground and to raise the lead leg which stays solely in a hold and now is the balance for the body. This unsteady position doubles the force of the riposte which one can deliver indifferently to one or other leg.

One can, by employing the same means of parry, riposte higher, always with the rear leg.

There exists another riposte for this blow:

One must, while advancing the left leg, develop a vigorous punch with the left arm to the face.

This blow is named “returning a punch upon a parried kick”.

Placed in right guard, the adversary in left guard, one can again riposte with success upon a high kick, after having a punch prevent the development of the right leg; one passes quickly the left leg behind the left shank of the adversary, while at the same time one ripostes a punch to the face.

This violent shock will suffice to determine a fall.

Upon this same kick parried there exists again another riposte which a man of greater height can easily put into practice:

Without advancing the leg one must deliver an energetic punch to the face with the rear arm, after having stopped with the lead arm a high kick, one

can then riposte with the lead arm. These parries and ripostes are drawn from boxing.

A man of small size is obliged for the latter riposte to advance the lead leg to strike with the same punch to the face.

These blows are delivered with both arms and both legs.

#### **24 Observations on all high kicks and low traps in true guard**

When in true guard, low kicks are struck with the rear leg are delivered to the calf and the outside of the femur; but they do not have a dangerous effect unlike those launched higher to the ribs.

At this height, the adversary can block the leg with a rapid movement of the hand turned to the outside, palm fully reversed.

*General rule:* one must never deliver kicks to the outside for the reasons underneath.

Placed in true guard to the right or left, redoubtable kicks are delivered by the lead leg, waiting until they can reach the male member, pit of the stomach and even the face.

In a serious combat, one must never deliver kicks to the outside.

It is generally more favourable to choose true guard to the left for defence, as men are, in general, more apt to use the right leg than the left leg for delivering nimble kicks with force.

#### **25 How to stop with a kick from the front leg, a man who delivers a punch while stepping**

The adversary is in false guard to the left and your guard to the right one must prevent the arrival of a punch without making a parry with the arm.

Carry the bodyweight on the left leg placed to the rear, immediately one raises the right knee in such a way that it must be in a horizontal line with the thigh, then one develops a blow with the shank so that the foot whips to the chest. This blow is infallible, wait so that the adversary is obliged to make a slip of the right arm with his left arm, to deliver with the rear arm a punch which you stop rapidly with the leg extended with vigour, longer than the arm which becomes unable to develop itself. Both arms occupied, the blow will strike without the opposition of a parry.

Blow struck, one must replace the leg to the rear to at the same time to allow the left leg to be placed to the fore.

A man who steps to seize the legs can be stopped in exactly the same way.

In both cases the kick must be delivered in a direct line.

A player who launches himself with force to reverse the shock of his course can equally be stopped by a high kick, delivered around the leg to ribs to

avoid the violence of the encounter. In this case, affect a slip of the rear leg to thrust with the lead leg, after the principle announced above (see figure number 12).



### **Observations on a stop hit opposed to our method**

If we have thought to consciously signal the errors of the old practice, we believe it to be equally useful to teach pupils to be forewarned against certain blows of the new method and dangerous attacks in the case of legitimate defence.

From this point of view, to extend with force at an adversary one must stop while approaching nimbly the leg to the rear of the lead leg when presenting (contrary to our principles) the flank, this does not permit one to see his enemy opposite and is thus obliged, while raising the leg to the side, to carry the head and body to the side; at the moment of shock one presents him the flat of the sole to demonstrate a stop hit. Is it probable that a similar blow, borrowing a further action from our direct stop hits described above, can arrive fairly promptly to prevent and contain a violent shock?

We will not admit that this position of contorted balance is equal in balance to that which gives a direct position. No, a kick struck with the flat will never have the power of the toe whipping into the pit of the stomach. This blow can, as everybody will understand, have some appearance of force and resistance, however, that will make his enemy run away, far away. In this situation, a stop hit can be used, but it only has merit when impromptu.

### **26 Several methods of riposte, after a parry takes the punch delivered by the adversary while stepping**

Parry obtained by a change of guard places one at the same time to riposte with a low kick with the rear leg to the ankle or shin.

This riposte is made indifferently from one or other leg.

One can also in the same case riposte higher, either with a direct kick, or around the leg to the ribs.

One can again riposte with a punch from the rear arm, especially when one has the advantage of height; thus, one reaches easily the chest or face.

It is then possible to riposte with the lead arm without changing place, if one takes parry with the rear arm. This blow is borrowed from English boxing.

### **27 How to enfork inside and to pass at the same time the leg inside**

The adversary placed in false guard to the left strikes with the right fist to the face while advancing the right leg.

One should, when in false guard to the right, at the same time that one makes a slip of the right leg to the right ribs while lowering oneself rapidly to let pass the punch of the adversary overhead, clinch with the left hand the right leg at the height of the shank. Hold the right hand on the right shoulder of the adversary, in such a way that the forearm is found placed on the chin. Then one advances the left leg about two paces, to give facility to the right foot to cross the left leg of the adversary which, ceding to the rapid force of the blow, will fall without resistance.

One must, at the moment where the fall is brought about, pass his head between the arm and body of the adversary to avoid being taken into infighting (see figure number 13).



### **28 Leg hold on the ground**

Old players and men accustomed to beating each other with a method of taking the leg of the adversary often had the contrary result of the reversal which they were attempting. Thus, when the leg was well constrained by both hands, they raised it and pushed with force to make them lose balance; but when disproportionate force exists between players it comes about sometimes that the adversary bounds upon his enemy, binding with force his head under his arms and by a sustained compression he makes him lose his breath, the advantage changing thus to his side (see figure number 14).



This blow is named the “Leg Flow”.

We have regulated into a specific attack this leg-hold which is no more dangerous for those who execute it.

This blow is practiced against a player who delivers a punch while stepping

When in false guard to the right, the adversary in false guard to the left should deliver his punch with the right arm while advancing the right leg.

Then he must affect a half-change of guard while delivering the left leg a distance of one pace on the same line that the right leg is placed on to the fore at a distance of two paces, then quickly slip this leg to the rear while extending as quickly as possible to avoid the punch, which must pass overhead, immediately one seizes his lead leg with the left hand to the heel and right will wrap around his shin with a rapid shock, then one pulls the leg to the right side to force the upper body to depart to the rear (see figure number 15).



The pulling action of the leg will develop the extension, in a manner that compromises the balance of the adversary, who will fall to the ground without having time to change to the head or shoulders to make them a point of pressure.

At the instant of the fall one must shift promptly by passing the left leg to the rear; because if the leg stays entirely extended in this first position the body can break it by falling onto it.

This blow is made equally in the opposing guard: the adversary in false guard to the right striking with the left fist, one must thus affect a half-change to the guard by approaching the right leg and by freeing the left leg to the rear, seize the heel with the right hand, envelop the shin with the left hand while then using the methods previously to accomplish the fall.

### **29 How to raise the leg outside at an adversary who delivers a punch while stepping**

The adversary placed in guard to the left strikes with his right arm to deliver a punch while stepping.

One must, when in right guard, at the moment the punch is developed, lower oneself rapidly by advancing the left leg, to let it pass over your head,

pivot on the right toe, in such a way that the left leg is found behind the right leg of the adversary, which will by this means this leg be placed between both of yours.

Rapidly raise the right leg with your right arm at the height of the shank while at the same time the left arm extends to appear strongly on the clavicle while twisting round the chin to make the head tilt back (see figure number 16).



The action which seizes and raises the leg must be in rapport with the forearm making the fall at the upper body to break balance and bring about the fall.

This blow is equally performed on the opposing guard.

When in left guard and the adversary is in right guard at the moment where he develops his punch, one must advance the right leg while lowering oneself to make the blow pass overhead and place the left leg of the adversary between both of yours; seize the ankle with the left arm while carrying the right arm to the clavicle to continue the blow above.

One must let go of the adversary at the moment of the fall so as to not become tangled up, which will result in infighting on the ground.

### **30 How to slip the lead leg in front upon a low kick, to riposte low**

The adversary wants to strike with his right foot placed to the rear of your right leg which is placed in front, one must raise it nimbly by passing it behind the left without placing it on the ground.

The kick having been evaded by this slip, one replaces it quickly to the fore, but while also seeking to gain ground, if there is a disparity in height, thus to be able to riposte vigorously with the left leg to the lower part of the leg of the adversary.

This blow is performed equally with both legs, always by replacing the leg to the rear of the leg with which one strikes.

### **31 How to slip the lead leg upon a low kick, riposte high**

The adversary wants to strike with his right foot which is to the rear on your right leg which is in front, one must pass it behind the left leg without placing it on the ground.

The kick evaded by this prompt retreat, one extends it forward by encroaching on the player, thus to be at a suitable distance to deliver a direct high kick to the chest or face.

This blow is used with success against players of the old method who lower themselves after having delivered a low kick, presuming that, according to their principles, one will riposte low. Trumped by their presumption they will receive the riposte to their head. One can also, the kick having been evaded, riposte with a high kick to the ribs, by going around with the leg.

### **32 Doubled kicks**

There exists players who do not change guard to parry low kicks; they raise the leg at the moment where the blow arrives, to then riposte in place.

At these adversaries, one will feint a low kick with the rear leg, while not letting it cross over the line of the lead foot.

The foot stops in the middle of its path to go promptly to the ground at its point of departure, to re-seize its elasticity to launch with force a kick to the tibia of the adversary, at the moment where he replaces his lead leg to develop his riposte.

One can, as desired, throw this blow to the chest or head.

### **33 Feint of a low kick at fencers accustomed to change guard**

When in false guard to the left, the adversary in right guard, one simulates a kick with the right leg, to make the adversary change guard.

At the moment where he begins to change guard one places the right leg on the ground simply as if one wishes to also change guard forward, one nimbly raises the left leg to strike the tibia of the lead leg staying in place.

This blow is equally done in the right guard and the adversary in false guard to the left.

One can employ the same principle but developing the blow higher up, to the chest or face.

### **34 Feint a low kick with the rear leg, while in true guard to the right, to strike with the right foot**

One simulates a kick with the left leg stopping its path in line with the right toe, in such a way that the heel forms a right-angle; then at the moment where the adversary is deceived by its true purpose, one places the left foot on the ground, and one launches with the right foot a vigorous blow in a straight line to the chest or the head.

As soon as the blow is complete, one passes the right leg to the rear to re-find it in true guard to the left, which is placed at the same time to redouble the feint of the right leg by using the same method as above.

### **35 Feint a low kick to strike high**

The adversary in false guard to the left, one must feint a low kick, when in false guard to the right, and turn the right toe entirely to the outside, while inclining the bodyweight over this leg, thus that the passage of the rear leg is not impeded.

This manoeuvre will give more grounding to the body at the moment where one launches rapidly a feint of a low kick to the left leg of the adversary. Immediately the blow is noted, one raises the leg horizontally by presenting the thigh and the left shoulder forward, then one strikes while launching a rapid release of the shank.

One must take care to retrain the first part of the feint so as to conserve all its power for the blow which strikes to the face.

Observe especially that this feint is good to use with players who have a habit of seizing the leg while lowering themselves.

This blow is delivered equally with the right leg, when in false guard to the left.

With the right foot, one simulates a strike to the lower part of the right leg of the adversary which will be in false guard to the right, to direct with force a blow to the upper body.

### **36 Several methods to remove oneself from body holds**

When a player in a tight spot does not have time to place himself in a defensive position and has been seized by the collar by an adversary of superior strength, he must equally seize his antagonist by the collar, but by taking hold over his arms; immediately after, free one leg to the rear while pulling him vigorously towards himself so that his enemy is forced to fall, then to redress himself violently while presenting the top of his head to the lower jaw of his adversary; this terrible blow delivered, he lets go his adversary so as to not impede the certain fall. Men of great height have more ease in making this blow.

One can again employ the headbutt against an adversary on any point that you intend.

One must deliver rapidly the right hand behind the neck of the adversary, left hand in front of the face to parry punches which he will want to deliver; then, holding him well bound up, extend the arm while escaping the left leg to the rear. Bound by the movement of the body and the arm which holds, the adversary will present his face without defence to the head at the moment where it is brought back by a nervous action of the shank.

### **37**

Often it comes about that without preparation for wrestling one is found completely bound by the hold, bruised by this vigorous restraint and no

means of resistance seems possible. This is a certain blow but which demands a great vivacity in its execution.

Plunge the head forward while rolling the shoulders to allow them to pass inside and under the extended arms of the adversary; then redressing oneself vigorously one forces the interlocked fingers to let go their hold. A shove given with the shoulder and seconded by the thigh will deliver an arm onto the shoulder making a lever.

If the adversary does not stiffen the arm, if he bends it without resistance to follow the actions of the body without abandoning the hold, one must raise both arms above his, strongly join the hands by intertwining the fingers between each other, and strike, with violence and with both hands cupped, a blow to the crook of the arm; the shove will force the head to bring itself forward. During this action one strikes vigorously with the top of the head to the face of the adversary which will arrive before the blow to double its power.

### **38**

A player of inferior strength, from the point of view of being seized by both arms by his adversary, abandons all attempts of wrestling with arms to the body.

He must place his left forearm under the chin of the adversary while forcing the head to turn to the rear, thus to avoid a headbutt to the face, and to compromise the balance of his body; he passes at the same time the right hand between both legs to raise rapidly the left leg, such that he delivers the left leg behind the right ankle of the adversary.

One must seek to unite these three actions: left forearm turning the head back; right hand raising the left leg leaving only the right leg placed on the ground; left leg forcing him to bend by acting strongly to the inside with a tipping action.

Immediately a fall is almost infallible, separate oneself with a rapid leap, so as to not be brought to ground. This blow is named “enforcing in infighting”.

### **39**

It comes about sometimes in deploying this means of riposte to get away from the adversary that one is seized by the arms to the body.

In this struggle superiority of physique must necessarily have the advantage.

There exists a means to paralyse the hold and avoid a fall: One must place the flat of both hands around the neck of the adversary, raise both thumbs while plunging both of the first knuckles into the amygdala to compromise with strength the airway; no power is able to prevent the effect of this momentary strangulation which obliges him to let go the hold in an instant.

The adversary can reverse the thumbs to the outside to free himself from this humane hold; thus, he must contract nervously the thumbs to the inside to render this attempt powerless

#### **40**

It comes about sometimes that the above blows, either by demoralisation or by the promptness of the attack, are not performed.

Assuming that the moment of the fall has come, one must avoid falling first, so as to not be subject to the violence of the adversary, who can dispose of at will the conquered enemy under him

When feeling reversed one must pass the left hand behind the head of the adversary, seize forcefully the ear or the hair of his left temporal bone, push with the palm of the right hand to the right side of his chin, so that the head, obliged to turn and connected by the same action to the body, at the moment that one rolls to the ground. In this manner, instead of being compromised and falling underneath, one obliges the adversary to touch the ground first and one retakes the advantage of falling on top.

If it is the right hand which brings about the blow it should pass equally behind the head of the adversary, to grasp the right ear or the hair which is pulled backwards, and it is the left hand which goes to apply strongly to the chin to complete the twisting action.

#### *Observation*

Other infighting blows can be joined to these shown above, but it repels us to initiate readers in these dangerous and nasty understandings; these blows are only demonstrated practically at the request of pupils.

#### **41 A word on English boxing**

The guard positions in English boxing differs from ours thus:

The left shoulder is forward, the left arm shortened to the left temple, the hand turned to the inside to strike by stiffening the crook with the flat of the fist which presents the first knuckle.

The right shoulder is half-turned, right fist at temple height to bring about a protection from blows delivered to the head, legs separated by a distance of one and a half paces.

English in this boxing position prepare a delivered punch to the face with a brisk movement of the rear arm, while making a retreat of the body to riposte with the lead arm.

It is rare to see the English to take a right guard. If a boxer presents his right arm forward, it is that he attacks with the arm to parry with the left.

The English have as a rule for boxing to make use of the more agile arm to parry, and the use of the less able and less strong to deliver blows in attack and riposte, boxers who present the right arm forward are left-handed.

Also, generally in boxing the left guard is adopted for attack and riposte with the left arm, the English do not neglect to use the right arm as required; but it is ordinarily in in-fighting, that is to say when spirited boxers do not maintain the distance observed in boxing.

The English always act with both arms in the inverse sense; one serves to parry, the other to strike: the legs are balanced continually to take the strength on the lead leg to deliver a punch, and obtain the grounding on the rear leg, or for the retreat of the body at the moment of attack.

To retreat, the English carry the bodyweight over the leg placed to the rear, while raising the lead leg; this recoil is done with small leaps.

One uses in boxing several feints: by a movement of the upper body one simulates a strike to put doubt into the spirit of the adversary, thus one profits from his indecision to launch a punch with the left arm. One is served by this false attack to make a thrust at the adversary; one strikes at the same time that one parries, this confirms the rule of protecting the face with the right arm, when it is the left fist striking; it is the means of avoiding a double hit.

Punches directed at the pit of the stomach are parried with a punch of the right arm which rises while beating the forearm, while a release of the left arm ripostes to the face; the dexterity in these blows unites a little more the skill of boxing which is a little more simple than our method of Parisian skill.

But it is indispensable to initiate to this practice our pupils who will have to defend themselves in a tight spot; it is thus where we cannot make use of legs and punches and wrestling become a necessity.

Assuming that tables and chairs separate you from the adversary and impede the means of defence shown with kicks, it will especially useful to function quickly and strongly with the arms. The particular blows of boxing are arranged in this theory according to the point of view of their usefulness.

It will be superfluous to prolong further the indication of the skill which we practice since it complements our method.