

FESTIVAL OF FOLK DANCING

A Gay Reunion

From our London Staff

LONDON, FRIDAY.

Each January, when the English Folk Dance Society holds its festival at the Albert Hall, a team of foreign dancers is invited to join in. To-night, when this gay annual reunion took place, it was the turn of the Danes. Twelve dancers and two fiddlers were there from Jutland. The traditional clothes worn by the men had a raffish air of eighteenth-century seafaring about them—their big red "comforters" were especially gay.

Their dances were much like our own social dances as to time, step, and pattern; the most remarkable of them was one with the engaging title of "The Pig Fell and Broke his Hip"—this was an hilarious affair, something like a polka gone wild. Incidentally it was the Danish Folk Dance Society (to which this team belongs) which first gave Cecil Sharp the idea of forming a similar society over here.

Among the British participants to-night one of the most notable was William Kimber, who, at the age of 77, still accompanies the Headington morris dancers on his concertina. It was at Headington fifty years ago that Cecil Sharp first saw morris dancing and William Kimber was in the team that he saw on that memorable occasion. To-night's team from Headington had been trained by Mr. Kimber.

This festival, for the rest, followed its familiar and pleasant lines, with the meticulous intricate sword dance from Skelton Green in Yorkshire, elegant measures from Scotland (very well done by members of the Edinburgh branch of the Scottish Country Dance Society); a solo clog dance from Durham, and soloists, too, from Northern Ireland. The most enjoyable of the lot were the English "squares" and "rounds" in which everyone took part.