

Danish Way To Warm Up

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WITH a large and attractive hall, in the best Scandinavian design, a piano, a very capable teacher and a group of some 30 enthusiastic dancers, the Danish Society began their weekly classes in Danish folk dancing.

The classes will be held every Thursday evening, at Danish House, in Parnell, and will be led by Mrs Elli Olsen, of New Lynn, herself an enthusiastic member of the Danish Society.

Mrs Olsen came to New Zealand from Denmark eight years ago, and although she has never conducted Danish folk dancing classes before, she is familiar with a vast number of them. She is however, used to teaching at gymnastic classes.

**WOMAN'S
WORLD**

and graceful series of movements, with the music slowing and becoming lyrical as well.

Some of the older people had learnt the dances many years ago in Denmark, others had been taught in New Zealand by parents or friends, and some had never even danced a polka before.

Mrs Olsen had chosen several simple dances for the evening's programme. Others were demonstrated by the more expert before everybody was expected to take the floor.

**Keep
Traditions**

Mr Erling Wiese, the accompanist, was often called upon to play the same phrases over and over again until a particular movement was mastered.

It was obvious from the pink faces and the triumphant smiles when a whole dance was completed without a single trip that the class was a success.

"We like to stick to as many of the old traditions as we can," said Mr Borge Kirk, president of the Danish Society, "and we want to be able to show other nationalities just what we can do."

**Test
Of Wit**

Among her first dancing pupils were some of the girls from the gymnastics class. Miss Ann Grant, a Scot who has been in New Zealand for two years, is planning to visit Denmark shortly, and is learning to speak Danish as well as acquainting herself with Danish traditions and culture.

Mrs Olsen takes the folk dancing class in Danish, and for the scattering of New Zealanders participating the first night was a test of the wit and powers of observation, as well as an exercise in controlling arms and legs that were not used to the frisky music.

**Energetic
Affair**

But the rest of the class chattered animatedly, asked questions, shared jokes, and proved themselves extremely adept in "picking up" the new steps, and complicated manoeuvres.

Danish folk dancing is for the most part a very quick moving and energetic affair, with hopping and stomping and clapping of the hands an important part.

There are moments, however, where a dance suddenly becomes a slow



Above: A group of three dancers twirl under one another's arms in "Den toppede Hone" — the Crested Hen Dance, one of the Danish folk dances learnt at the class.

Below: Three couples demonstrate "Svensk Maskerade" Swedish Masquerade — a dance which incorporates a slow turning movement with bright polka and skipping steps.



Paul Pedrsen

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Margrethe & Svend Marquart

Berghild & Knud Kristensen

Annie & Poul Jorgensen