

## NEWS FROM PARIS

By BARBARA KENT

SINCE arriving in Paris in 1969 I have been dancing with "Le Chardon d'Ecosse" (the thistle of Scotland), a group affiliated with the R.S.C.D.S. and which has Monsieur and Madame Chamoin as teachers. There are classes each week (following the school term) for first, second and third "degrees" and once each term we enjoy a weekend away or, rather, a mini-weekend, as many French people work on Saturdays (teachers on Saturday mornings).

The most recent was held at a "Villes Vacances Familles", a well-run organisation providing weekend and holiday accommodation for groups and families. This consisted of a large, attractive modern block and cabins spaced out in the woods. All this was on a hilltop overlooking the old town of Dourdan, 45 miles from Paris, and with the nearby forest for walking, and stables for those who ride, there was a happy atmosphere of a weekend in the country as a setting for our main purpose—dancing.

On 4 March our group of thirty-seven assembled in time for evening dinner then danced a programme of ten dances in the very attractive hall—varnished wood ceiling, walls partly of stone, with large corner fireplace (no, we didn't need a fire), two of the walls being hung with wool-patterned canvas.

In the class on Sunday morning we studied, in particular, the dances "Berwick Johnnie" and "The Three Bonnie Maidens", and these were incorporated in the programme for the dance 3.0-5.0 p.m. Another excellent five-course meal and some free time came between the morning and afternoon sessions.

The favourite dances in Paris? Perhaps the same ones as sweep the world—The Wild Geese, The Drummer, Fergus McIver, The Silver Tassie.

No need to say what a wonderful opener is Scottish country dancing as one moves around the world, knowing that it will be danced and taught in the same way. And even if, in a foreign language country, one begins by "understanding with your feet" (as Monsieur Chamoin once said to me) one is sure of finding a group of sympathetic friends.