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EDITORIAL

THE Council's Seventh Annual Conference held at São Paulo in August, 1954, was the second to take place outside Europe, the first being in 1950 at Indiana University. We owe a great debt of gratitude to those who made it possible for the Council to meet at this great distance from its headquarters and we would record our thanks to the Brazilian Government, to the Commission of the Fourth Centenary of São Paulo, to the Brazilian Folklore Commission, to Dr. Renato Almeida, the organiser and guiding spirit of the whole Congress, to Senhora Oneyda Alvarenga, our gracious hostess at the Discoteca Municipal where the meetings of the IFMC were held, and to many others who entertained us and added to the enjoyment of our visit.

A survey of the work of the Council since June, 1953, is given in the Report of the Sixth Meeting of the General Assembly held at São Paulo on August 19th, 1954 (Bulletin No. 8), which has been circulated to members. This, together with the matter contained in this *Journal*, shows that there is a considerable increase in the general interest in folk music and in the activities relating to it. In these the Council can claim a small share. We wish it were larger, not because we have any desire to monopolise the field, but because we believe that the Council could be an even more effective agency in the co-ordination of activities that are being undertaken by scholars and learned bodies all over the world.

The Council has been in existence seven years, a period of some significance in folklore, and it is now incumbent on us to take stock of our present position and to consider what new steps we can take to further our objectives. Through our annual conferences and occasional festivals and above all through our *Journal* and our contacts with many radio organisations we have undoubtedly succeeded in furthering the interest in and the study of folk music. Reference to the index of the first five volumes of the *Journal* is an indication of the wide field that has been covered. But much remains to be done. In fact, we might say that up to the present we have only been feeling our way and that our real work now lies before us. One is constantly haunted by those ominous words (is it a Chinese saying?): "It is later than you think." Certainly this is true so far as the preservation of folk music is concerned, and we should be moving heaven and earth to organise collecting expeditions to those parts of the world in which there is known to be valuable unrecorded material. This is our first duty and one that brooks no delay. Our second duty is to increase our efforts to further the comparative study of folk music. Conferences such as we have hitherto held annually may help towards this end, but they are limited in what they achieve and other more systematic means should be employed.

We would ask members to consider these matters very seriously and to forward suggestions which can be brought before the Executive Board. It is easy to drift into inaction on account of straitened circumstances, but seven years ago we had sufficient faith to launch the Council with only £200 at our disposal—a grant of £100 from the English Folk Dance and Song Society and an anonymous donation of £100. So let us now press forward to new endeavours believing that if we rate our ventures high enough we shall find the means of fulfilling them.