

INDIAN ART  
AND LETTERS

NEW SERIES. VOL. XVIII., No. 1

FIRST ISSUE FOR 1944

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# THE ROYAL INDIA SOCIETY

## ART AND LETTERS

PATRON : HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY

THE Society was founded in the year 1910 by a small body of scholars, artists and men of letters with the object of promoting in the West and in India a better appreciation and understanding of the cultures of India, both past and present, mainly from the point of view of the Arts. It holds itself entirely aloof from political controversy, and seeks to unite everyone whom its influence can reach in the study and admiration of all that is beautiful and noble in the field of Indian cultural achievement, whether found in India or in those countries which have been influenced by, or have influenced, India.

In 1944 the work accomplished by the Society, and the prestige thereby gained, received official recognition by the grant of the title "Royal." With this encouragement, and with the loyal co-operation of its members, it is the intention of the Royal India Society to multiply and to extend its activities, for, to quote words spoken by his Late Majesty King George V., "the ancient history and art of India are of unique interest in the history of human endeavour."

The work of the Society consists in the main of lectures, the publication twice a year of its journal "INDIAN ART AND LETTERS," and the issue annually of a book or books, especially written for the Society. The lectures are given at frequent intervals. They are given by leading British, Indian or Continental authorities, are usually illustrated by films or slides, and are followed by discussions. The proceedings, together with additional articles from the Society's correspondents abroad, and book reviews, are published in the journal. This scholarly production is excellently illustrated, and enables members who cannot attend meetings and lectures to keep in touch with the work of the Society. Contact is maintained with the Archæological Survey of India, and accounts of the latest discoveries are included.

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# INDIAN ART AND LETTERS

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NEW SERIES. VOL. XVIII., NO. 1

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## YOUNGHUSBAND MEMORIAL LECTURE

### SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND AS I KNEW HIM<sup>1</sup>

By SIR FREDERICK O'CONNOR, C.I.E., C.V.O.

I AM very pleased and very proud to have the honour of giving this address and paying a tribute to my old chief. I had a unique opportunity of getting to know Sir Francis Younghusband well during the mission to Lhasa and to gauge his character in special and trying circumstances.

My first meeting with him was at Darjeeling in June, 1903, where he arrived to take charge as Commissioner of the projected Mission to Tibet. Although I had never met him before, I knew his name well as the author of his famous book *The Heart of a Continent*, in which he describes his journeys in Manchuria and across Asia from Peking to India. And I had heard something, too, of his travels and adventures in the Pamirs and in Chitral. From this moment I was closely associated with him, indeed constantly by his side, in my capacity of secretary and interpreter to the Mission, until we parted in October of the following year after the successful conclusion of the Mission—he to return to India and I to remain as the first British agent in Tibet.

It was not long before I (and indeed I may say everyone connected with the Mission) realized that in selecting Younghusband as our leader Lord Curzon had hit upon exactly the right man for the job. As this Mission constituted Younghusband's most important and best-known work as an official, and as it was during this period that I knew him best and was most closely associated with him, I propose to limit my remarks almost entirely to my experience of him in this one particular episode.

It is all ancient history now, but it may perhaps be remembered that in our dealings with Tibet it was necessary to pay particular attention to the feelings and policies of two great nations with Asiatic interests—namely Russia and China, *i.e.* the imperialist Russia and China of 40 years ago.

It was, indeed, to a great extent due to the fact that the Dalai Lama had entered into communication with the Tsar and the Russian Government, whilst he refused at the same

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered on December 18, 1943, at the Caxton Hall, Westminster. The Marquess of Zetland presided.

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time to hold any correspondence with the Viceroy, that Lord Curzon was able finally to induce the Home Government to sanction a mission at all, and even so with specific limitations, whilst China, as the suzerain of Tibet, was naturally interested and concerned with our proceedings. The Commissioner, therefore, had to bear in mind that it was not only the interests of the Indian Government that were concerned, or the details of vexatious but relatively minor frontier disputes; nor was it merely a matter of advancing with an armed escort into Tibet and compelling the Tibetans to accept our terms. The actual difficulties with the Tibetans and of the country—serious enough as these were—were in reality the least of the Commissioner's problems. Throughout the entire Mission, from the day we crossed the frontier near Kamba Jong in June, 1903, until the signature of the Treaty at Lhasa in September, 1904, Younghusband had to work within the framework set by the pledges of H.M.G. to Russia on the one hand, and on the other to avoid infringing China's prerogatives.

Now to do all this, and at the same time to carry on the daily affairs of the Mission, required a man of very special calibre. He had to have a wide outlook, endless tact and patience, inflexible will, courage, and, in view of the physical hardships, a strong constitution and good physique. Younghusband united in himself all these qualities. His travels in Asia had brought him into close contact both with the Chinese in various parts of the Chinese Empire and with the Russians on the Pamirs. He had had some experience of the ponderous machinery of international politics and of the dangers involved in tampering with an international powder magazine. Such experience was rare among officials of the Indian Government, whose duties lie naturally either in India itself or on the immediate frontiers. It was this wider outlook which enabled him to accept with equanimity and patience the innumerable petty trials and tribulations of every day, and the procrastination and obstinacy of the Tibetan delegates. Any premature or ill-considered action would have involved further embarrassment and would have prejudiced our chances of eventual success. He was determined not to be provoked into any such action and he schooled his mind to allow events to take their course without attempting to hasten them unduly.

Specific examples of this policy of his can be found throughout the course of the Mission. We on the spot soon realized clearly that no lasting settlement could ever be arrived at anywhere except at the capital Lhasa itself. Months were spent at Kamba Jong, just across the Sikkim frontier, without any kind of progress being made. Then the Mission, with an increased escort, moved into the Chumbi Valley, and the Mission itself advanced again on to the Tibetan plateau, and spent three months in a miserable hamlet 15,000 feet above sea level, only to be again confronted with the same impasse. Then a further advance, this time meeting with armed opposition, of 100 miles, was made to the large town of Gyantse.

All this time the Commissioner, in deference to what he knew to be the policy of the Home Government, refrained from any suggestion that our eventual goal was and must be Lhasa. He knew that the mere mention of the word "Lhasa" would so alarm H.M.G., that they might withdraw the Mission altogether, or so tie his hands as to render it ineffective. So week after week and month after month, with a face of granite and the patience of Job, he put up with the various second-rate officials sent to meet him, listened to their arguments and their pleas that we should return across the frontier with unvarying courtesy and patience; and time after time he repeated the old story of our past relations with Tibet on this frontier and our determination to arrive this time at a final and satisfactory settlement. He knew perfectly well in his heart that he might as well have been arguing with a stone wall, but he never allowed even the slightest sign of impatience to show itself. He was bland, persuasive and firm. And all the time he was building up a solid case on solid foundations which would show that we on our part had left no stone unturned to instil reason into the Tibetan delegates,



and through them into their Government, and that it was only their own intransigence and folly which in the end made the advance to Lhasa a necessity.

Another way by which he showed his breadth of mind was in his relations with the representatives of two small countries who were indirectly concerned—namely, Bhutan and Nepal. Bhutan lies between India and Tibet and is Buddhist by religion. Whilst naturally interested in the dispute between Great Britain and Tibet, the Bhutanese had neither the power nor the inclination to take any active part. But when a representative from Bhutan came to visit the Commissioner in his camp at Tuna, Younghusband received him with the greatest courtesy, explained to him in the fullest detail our views and policy, and sent him off back to his own country pleased and flattered. The result was that the *de facto* ruler of the country (the Tongsa Penlop, who later became the Maharajah) himself came to join us at Gyantse, accompanied us to Lhasa, and proved most useful as an intermediary with the Tibetans. And Bhutan has remained our firm friend ever since.

As regards Nepal, the enlightened statesman Sir Chandra Shumshere Jung, who was at that time the Prime Minister, showed himself from the start of the Mission friendly to us and desirous of being helpful in any way he could. He wrote several times to the Dalai Lama urging him to take a sensible and realistic view of the situation, and he gave us practical help by the supply of coolies and yaks from Nepal. When we reached Lhasa we found the representative of the Nepalese Government there most anxious and willing to help us, and he also proved a very useful adviser and intermediary.

The position *vis-à-vis* the Chinese was more difficult as China claimed suzerainty over Tibet and maintained a representative of high rank, the Amban, at Lhasa. We, however, never attempted to ignore or deny China's position and rights, and Younghusband, as soon as we reached Lhasa, entered upon close and friendly relations with the Amban. Visits were exchanged and frequent consultations took place. And it is only fair to say that the eventual signature of the treaty by the Tibetan Government was greatly facilitated and expedited by the good offices of the Amban. In all this Younghusband's previous knowledge of China and Chinese officials proved naturally of the greatest value.

I have tried to depict in some degree Younghusband's tact and diplomacy. Now for a few examples of his courage. Several crises arose during the course of the Mission when we were confronted with the choice of two or more alternatives, and invariably Younghusband advised and followed the bolder course. We see this in his determination to make our first camp in Tibet at Kamba Jong with a tiny escort in spite of the veiled threats of the Tibetans and in a situation where a very small force could have overwhelmed us without much difficulty and without the slightest chance of our being reinforced or rescued. Similarly it was a bold move to take forward the Mission and to plant it, again with an absurdly small escort, at the village of Tuna, 15,000 feet above sea level and well beyond the watershed of the main Himalayan range. There was a force estimated at several thousand Tibetans only a few miles distant, and if they had made a resolute attack we should not have stood much chance of beating it off.

It was at Tuna also that he gave me my greatest surprise. We were camped, as mentioned above, on an open plain well into Tibet proper and separated from the nearest British post by some twenty miles of desolate country and the 16,000-foot Tang La; and some ten miles farther on, along the road into Tibet, there was camped this large armed gathering under the leadership of several generals and other high officials from Lhasa. Early one morning Younghusband told me that he had been thinking things over very carefully and had come to the conclusion that probably the Tibetans had not yet fully realized the reasons which had brought us into their country, and our determination to remain there until we had arrived at

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a satisfactory settlement, and he thought that he might be able to explain things to them, and at any rate persuade them to transmit his words to the Dalai Lama, by means of a heart-to-heart talk with their leaders. So he proposed after breakfast to ride over unescorted to the Tibetan camp, taking just myself as his interpreter.

I must confess that I was rather flabbergasted at this proposal. We knew that the Tibetans were definitely hostile and objected to our presence in their country at all, and were only deterred from driving us back over the frontier by the presence of our armed escort. To ride unescorted into their camp seemed rather like putting our heads into the lion's mouth. However, I knew the Commissioner too well to attempt any remonstrance and merely asked him what time we should start. The officer commanding our little escort, Colonel Hogge, of the 23rd Sikh Pioneers, did not like the prospect at all, but Younghusband told him that he himself accepted full responsibility for what he was about to do. Just before we started a young officer of the 23rd, Lt. Sawyer, begged to be allowed to come too. Younghusband agreed, and we three set off together across the plain on our little Tibetan ponies upon what was, I suppose, one of the most fantastic enterprises ever undertaken by a British Commissioner in what was virtually enemy country.

We arrived in due course at the Tibetan camp, a small hamlet surrounded by the black tents of the soldiers, and riding through a crowd of grinning men we were directed to the Commander's headquarters. Here a General received us courteously and conducted us into a room where we found all the chief military officers and the Lhasa delegates assembled—generals from Lhasa and Shigatse and, most important, three truculent-looking Abbots, the representatives of the three great Lhasa Monasteries. We all sat on cushions ranged round the room, and a long parley took place, myself interpreting. Younghusband explained quietly and at length the reasons for our presence in Tibet and that he had come along thus unescorted in order to talk things over with them in an informal manner, in the hope that they would in turn pass on his words to the Dalai Lama, and that thus a settlement might be arrived at and further friction and possible hostilities averted.

The military officers were courteous enough, but, as the conversation proceeded, the three monks became more and more truculent and menacing and there were signs that our arrest was imminent. One of the generals left the room, trumpets blew outside, and attendants closed in round us.

This was a situation where Younghusband was at his best. His courteous, quiet voice and manner never varied, and not by the flicker of an eyelid did he betray the fact that he was perfectly well aware that matters were critical. The Tibetan military men on their part were clearly reluctant to proceed to extremes, and, in spite of angry and rather abusive interjections from the Abbots, we were allowed to say our farewells and to depart unmolested. We mounted our ponies outside and rode quietly through the camp and, once on the open plain, rode back to Tuna as fast as our small steeds could carry us.

I regard this incident as typical of Younghusband's courage and character. He had deliberately come to the conclusion in his own mind and without consultation with anyone that such an informal meeting and discussion might possibly influence the Tibetans and produce a good effect, and he decided to take the risk. Once having decided, nothing could alter his resolution. He would follow the dictates of his own reason to the bitter end, whatever the risks and dangers. There was no flurry and no bravado, but no faltering. And his demeanour during the meeting was perfect—calm, courteous, imperturbable, with now and then a flash of humour when things were at their worst. This is the ideal leader.

One may criticize the wisdom of this proceeding. Indeed, I thought then and still think that he was taking an undue risk, and if we had been made prisoners or killed our Government

would have been placed in a very awkward predicament. But here again we have an instance of his taking a bold course and coming through successfully.

Other instances occurred from time to time during the subsequent course of the Mission. After the storming of Gyantse Jong on July 6, the long-awaited advance to Lhasa was begun, and our small force moved forward through this formidable terrain, over the 18,000 foot Karo La, along the shores of the Yutok Lake, over another pass, and so down to the bank of the great river of Tibet, the Tsangpo or Brahmaputra. And even now we had not reached Lhasa, which still lay some fifty miles beyond the great river up a winding gorge.

It was here that the G.O.C. became seriously concerned at our situation; and indeed, from the military point of view nothing could well have been more unsatisfactory. Here we were, a force of some 2,500 fighting men, infantry with a few small mountain guns, over 200 miles on to the heart of the Tibetan plateau, connected with India only by 300 miles of rough mule tracks over several high passes, and about to cross a wide, swift, unbridged river by means of a couple of pontoons; and then to advance on the capital of the country where we should probably have a hostile reception and where the Tibetans could barricade themselves in the Potala and other impregnable stone fortresses, and at the same time harass our long, feeble line of communications to their hearts' content.

Frankly, it was a mad proposition, inadmissible by any military canon—and so the General regarded it. He conveyed his misgivings to Younghusband, and indicated that he did not feel justified in taking the risk of any further advance. I was charged with the Commissioner's reply. It was to the effect that while he quite understood the General's difficulties, the fact remained that he, Younghusband, had been instructed by his Government to proceed to Lhasa to make a Treaty, and that, should the General decide not to risk his troops any further, the Mission would go on by itself. Further discussion took place, and, as all the world knows, we all did go to Lhasa and made a Treaty and returned safely.

As to his personal courage under fire, that was pretty severely tested and was never in doubt. Twice the Tibetans made night attacks on a post where he was sleeping. The first and most serious was at Gyantse. Our post there had been in a virtual state of siege for some weeks and half the small garrison had gone off to disperse a hostile gathering on the road to Lhasa. The Tibetans took advantage of this opportunity to try to rush the depleted garrison. Just before daybreak on May 5 they made a sudden attack on the little post with overwhelming numbers, and were almost over the outer defences before our men could get to their arms and man the ramparts. Everyone in the place, including the Commissioner and his Bengali clerk (who, by the way, behaved with great gallantry), seized the nearest weapon and helped to repel the attack. It was touch and go, but in the end the post was saved, and the Tibetans were driven off with heavy loss of killed and wounded.

A few days later, when he was on his way down to Chumbi to consult with the General, the outpost where he was spending the night was also attacked, and again he seized a rifle and climbed on the roof and opened fire on the attackers. He regarded these little adventures with humorous detachment, and I think rather enjoyed the excitement and danger as a change from our interminable discussions with the Tibetan delegates. But nothing the Tibetans said or did could deflect him for a moment from the main purpose of the Mission or from his determination to allow no single hasty word or act of his to prejudice the hope of an eventual peaceful settlement.

I have tried to show by these instances (only a few out of many) that Younghusband was a brave man and a good diplomat. But there are plenty of brave men in the world (indeed we had plenty with our little force—men like poor Bethune, who was killed, and Ottley and Bailey, etc.) and plenty of diplomats, although not perhaps many of Younghusband's calibre,

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in the Indian Services. But where he was unique was, I think, in his personality as a private individual. He was one of the simplest men I have ever met in his personal habits. He appeared to be, and he really was, completely indifferent to the small daily matters which seem so important to most of us. For instance, he took not the slightest interest in food or drink. And the same with his clothes or his tent or other belongings. He was pleased enough to have nice things and to use them if they were there. But if they weren't there, he never bothered his head about them and never seemed to miss them. Other people (all the rest of us in fact), being human, had their moments of bad temper, impatience, pessimism and so on. But not he.

This may seem rather fulsome, but I can quite honestly say that I know it to be the truth, and I was constantly with him through months of really trying physical discomfort which tested everybody. There are, for instance, few things more trying than to be routed out of bed before dawn on a piercing cold winter morning with the thermometer some 20 degrees below zero and to dress in the cold, and to see one's tent, one's sole shelter from the elements, laid low and carted off. It is not a moment when one feels at all genial towards one's fellow-man. He was generally busy in his tent on such mornings, perhaps reading a despatch or drafting a telegram, and I used to have to hint to him that the military transport officer was outside clamouring for his tent and baggage. I can see him now, glancing at me under his shaggy eyebrows as he hastily bundled his things together and cracked some little joke about the exigencies of "warlike operations." There were long weeks of boredom too, as, for instance, at Tuna, when there was nothing to do but to sit about and await events in extremely uncomfortable conditions. These are very trying circumstances for most men, much more trying indeed than times of actual difficulty or danger, but here again Younghusband showed himself quite indifferent to his surroundings. I remember so well seeing him sally forth nearly every morning in the bitter wind after our so-called breakfast, clad in his British warm with a book under his arm. He would ensconce himself under the lee of some rock and remain for hours reading or writing and return for lunch perfectly contented and cheerful.

Our long interviews with the Tibetans, too, which might have tried anybody's patience, were all conducted with courtesy and good temper, and they were often lightened and enlivened by touches of humour. The Tibetans are among the most good-tempered and cheerful people in the world, and they used to appreciate a little joke; and it was pleasant, after say three or four hours at a stretch of tedious arguments and endless repetitions, to be able to end on a pleasanter note and to part with a laugh or a smile.

Even the monks, generally so hostile and reserved, came to relax in the end. One especially, the old Ti Rinpoche, the high prelate who had been deputed as Regent by the Dalai Lama on his departure from Lhasa, became a real friend. He was an elderly man, very devout and very learned in Tibetan scriptural lore, and he put up a prolonged and tough struggle in the interests of his own country. For instance, in the matter of an indemnity, he protested against the amount fixed by the Commissioner as excessive, and he begged Younghusband to bear in mind that too heavy a weight might destroy the poor patient donkey that was trying to carry it. "Very well," said the Commissioner, "let's divide up the weight into small packages, and the donkey can bring along one load every year." "Ah, yes," said the Regent, "but suppose the donkey should die in the process?" "I will ask the Chinese Resident," replied Younghusband, "to see that every care is taken of the poor beast to ensure its long life." They were both smiling now, and the old Regent, having stuck out as long as he could to get better terms, surrendered the point with perfect good humour. And on the morning of our departure from Lhasa, after the signature of the Treaty, the old gentleman paid a farewell visit to the Commissioner and to the General and presented them and some members of their staffs with small images of Buddha. Similar instances of friendliness and



goodwill were showered on us from all sides, and the good relations so inaugurated, both with Tibet and with Bhutan, have continued unimpaired from that day to this.

This was my closest association with him. I met him, of course, from time to time in England after his and, later, after my retirement; and the last time I saw him was on March 26 of last year when he presided at a lecture I gave for the Universities' China Committee. We walked down the street together afterwards, and I said goodbye to him for the last time.

I should like, in conclusion, to say just a few words to try to indicate the impression which I received of a character at once so capable in worldly matters and at the same time so utterly indifferent to such worldly matters as affect most of us. We know that almost from his youth up he was a student of serious matters, religion and philosophy, and I think that these studies and his own reflections kept his mind permanently on a high plane where petty things were not able to vex or influence him. His conduct in life was guided by certain principles, and by the code which he had elaborated for himself from these principles. What he did was done after reflection and in accordance with what he believed to be right. Once resolved on a certain course he could not be turned aside. This was not due to obstinacy but to conviction. And acting thus on conviction, he attained to what is, so I believe, as near as possible to human happiness, namely equanimity; and neither small things nor great could affect this equanimity. It was part and parcel of himself.

And I believe him to have been a good man in every sense of the word. Indeed, the writer of his obituary notice in the *Times Literary Supplement* said: "He had something of the saint in him." This, I believe, is true, but I should like to make it quite clear that there was never anyone with less of the prig or what schoolboys call "pi" about him. Not a trace of unctuousness or of spiritual superiority or self-righteousness. Just a simple, soldierly, rather laconic man, with plenty of quiet humour and sense of fun, and a keen eye for the foibles of others—but always in a good-natured way.

Then he made no distinction in his manner to and treatment of anybody, high or low. He was just as attentive and courteous to the youngest subaltern or to a sepoy or a servant as to the high and mighty. And I know that on our Mission this was generally felt and appreciated throughout the little force, and he was regarded with affection as well as with respect and admiration.

I think I may close on that note. Younghusband was a Christian gentleman in the best sense of the words. He was brave, courteous and charitable. I can testify that he was an ideal leader of men and I do not think that we shall soon look upon his like again.

THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND, after giving expression to the sense of regret felt by the meeting at the lecturer's illness, which had prevented his presence (Sir Frederick O'Connor died the next day), paid a moving tribute to the memory of the late Chairman of the Society, and called on Baron Palmstierna, representing the World Congress of Faiths, to speak.

BARON PALMSTIERNA said: I have listened with great interest to the address which we have just heard and which gives an intimate and true picture of our departed friend as soldier and statesman. We recognized in him a true leader of men, who conquered through the force of personality, infinite patience and tenacity. He never gave up a cause he found to be the right one and sacrificed himself in endeavour to reach fruitful results.

One feature ought not to be missed, however, in this picture of a good man. He showed a modesty paired with enterprise which impressed all who came in contact with him, and occasionally one would say that he was like a child in innocence of character. He would not admit obstacles, but went ahead bravely, encouraged by a natural optimism that surmounted hindrances on his way.

My own personal association with Sir Francis was initiated by a visit I had one after-

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noon in my flat. Our conversation became intimate, and he related the life-changing experience he underwent during his stay in the Himalaya massive. Like many saintly men and women in the past he found himself all of a sudden rapt in an ecstasy of vision that brought him in touch with the Reality beyond sensual appearances. He became convinced of contact with a Universe charged with divine life and acted upon what he conceived as eternal truth. A seeker of God found Him. He discovered the religion beneath all religions.

This experience gave the impetus to his work for a World Congress of Faiths which has become an actuality in our day. Much discussion followed the enterprise into Tibet, and one may hesitate regarding the permanent effect of the mission, but the establishment of the World Congress of Faiths, the ideas embedded in it, remain a lasting monument that will ever speak of his self-forgetting love for and trust in mankind.

I have not had the privilege to be born a citizen of the British Empire, and I may on that account be allowed to say that the type of Christian soldier-statesman Sir Francis Younghusband represented remains the pillar of strength which upholds the might and civilizing power of the realm. As long as such men give their service to the Empire its foundation is safely guarded.

The Chairman then called on Professor F. W. Thomas to address the meeting.

PROFESSOR THOMAS said that he would be glad to associate himself with the expressions of high appreciation of the memoir by Sir Frederick O'Connor, whom he had had the privilege of knowing personally during the period of the Tibet exposition. Naturally Sir Frederick had dealt most fully with the events and crises of the expedition, which had furnished him with so many intimate experiences of Younghusband's courage, daring, endurance, wisdom and powers of conciliation. As regards the physical trials of a campaign in Tibet, mention might be made of a casual remark by Younghusband that for his desk work he had often had to retire behind a mountain in order to escape the fierce winds which every late afternoon sweep the great plateau. Long before the Tibetan expedition Younghusband's adventurous spirit had been signaled by the great journey of exploration in Mongolia and Central Asia, described in his celebrated book, *The Heart of Asia*. The finale of the journey included a crossing of the Karakoram by passes unvisited by Europeans, and perhaps never traversable at all since the Middle Ages. The perils of this part of the journey were indescribable, and one could only refer anyone interested to the fascinating book itself. Younghusband's quiet moral courage was called into play on one occasion when upon a change in State policy the terms concluded with Tibet were the subject of a rather hectoring admonition: his modest self-respect impressed the statesman who had summoned him.

One factor in Younghusband's mental life must not be passed over, since it was the mainspring of his important work in connection with the Congress of Religions, and through his published books won for him a rather wide following, and through his letters to *The Times* made him a recognized leader. This was the religious inspiration which came to him, as he has related in one of his books, during reflective days in hospital. It was one source of his quiet strength amid the difficulties of the expedition, and its somewhat mystical character is seen in his feeling of conviction that there was, for instance, a real existent "spirit of England" whereof in his representative situation he experienced the immense support. His view, which of course is not subsumed in this concrete exemplification, was on at least one occasion expounded in a paper read before the Aristotelian Society, where his views, backed by first-hand experience, had a candid reception. Its wider outcome is seen in his efforts to promote a mutual understanding between the great religions, with recognition of a common basis in the really experienced world.

This factor in Sir Francis Younghusband's mental life may, as something deeply individual in his personality, be prominent in future remembrance of him by some; but it does not impair the adequacy of Sir Frederick O'Connor's concluding broad appreciation of him as the model of a Christian gentleman.

## CAMBODIA AND ITS MONUMENTS<sup>1</sup>

By ALAN HOUGHTON BRODRICK

AS part of their programme of national revival, the French did much to foster the old arts and crafts of Cambodia. The Phnompenh Museum is a treasure-house of beautiful things both old and new, for it is also the workshop where, under the watchful eye of M. Groslier, Khmer craftsmen fashion their fine gold and silver smithery and weave the lovely silks that are unrivalled in the East for sheen and shade.

The cool halls of the Museum are decked with the sculpture of Angkor and of Funan. The Buddha images have been draped by pious hands with yellow sashes, from left shoulder to right hip, and these sacred *grands cordons* are of varied shade from palest daffodil to deep orange. A pleasing note in a museum, but, then, the Cambodians use their museum as a church and sit in family groups upon the floors, praying or chattering while the thin bluish wisps of the joss-stick smoke drift through the window-bays to curl among the greenery of bamboos, bananas, shiny mangoes, hibiscus and tulip trees.

A thing that strikes one in the lands of Little Vehicle Buddhism is the apparent happiness of the people. An Indo-chinese lady said to me once as we were travelling in the Paris underground—not, it is true, a place where to seek for great spirituality of aspect—"I should hardly care to profess a religion which lets people's faces get like those of the men and women around us."

For the Buddhist of the Little Vehicle life is a passing incident in an incommensurably long series of reincarnations. Nothing matters very much, for nothing is irrevocable.

The underlying idea is, of course, Indian, but in Hindustan, where the conception of *karma* informs the faith of two-thirds of the inhabitants, the development of theism and of polytheism and priestly thralldom have effectively removed most possibilities of spiritual happiness. Resignation there is in plenty. Contempt for life is not rare. But you may seek long before you find upon a Hinduist's face that freedom from care which is not seldom expressed in Buddhist lands.

So the jolly, impudent Cambodian children play about in their ecclesiastical museum under the coolly appraising eyes of elegant Chinese girls who stroll through the rooms and possibly find it all strange and puerile.

Now, let us move westwards to Siem-Réap, the village nearest to the mighty monuments of Angkor which are the marvel of all south-eastern Asia. If you walk out of the village along the shaded sides of the Siem-Réap stream and over a hump-backed Japanese-looking bridge of finely weathered timber, you come to a little hamlet of high-perched huts half-hidden among the kapoks, the mangoes, the oranges and the cocos. You might be in Borneo.

A family lumbers by on the elephant-bus. An old man glances up at you without either the usual enmity or resignation of old age. He has a fine, broad forehead. His hair is snowy-white and cut *en brosse*. He has features handsome even in our prejudice. I have seen old men in Galway very like him. At his side crouches a girl whose Eton crop frames a Mon-

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered at the French Institute on January 24, 1944. M. Maurice Dejean presided.