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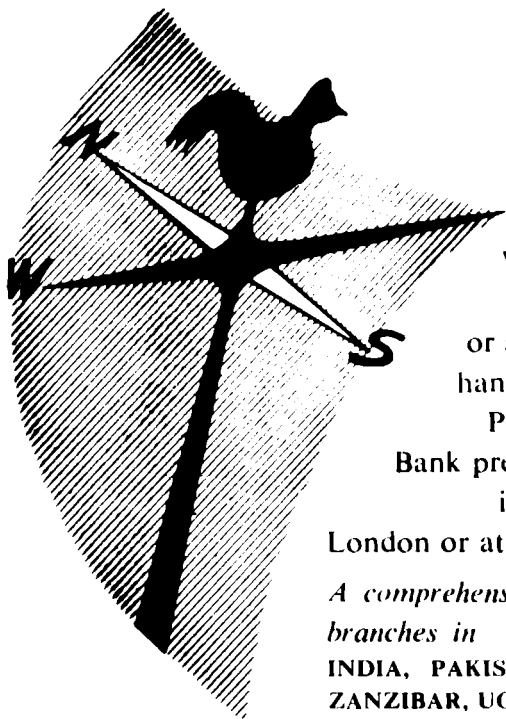
ASIAN REVIEW

INCORPORATING
THE ASIATIC REVIEW
AND
THE JOURNAL OF THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION



LORD STANSGATE AT THE MEETING IN INDIA OF THE INTERNATIONAL
PARLIAMETARY UNION, WITH SHRI G. V. MAVALANKAR

See page 69



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The Asian Review

INDEX TO VOLUME LII

1956

INDIA PAKISTAN AND BURMA:

Page

Proceedings of the East India Association:

Commonwealth Tour, by the Earl of Home - - - - -	3
Nepal Re-opened, by Dr. Patrick Young - - - - -	20
The Indian Navy To-day, by Admiral Sir Mark Pizey - - - - -	42
The Ascent of Kanchenjunga, by Capt. H. R. A. Streater - - - - -	52
Reception to Lord Hailey - - - - -	65
Impressions of India Pakistan and Burma, by Sir Percival Griffiths, CIE - - - - -	91
The Ascent of Mount Everest, by Wilfrid Noyce - - - - -	109
India's Five Year Plans, Old and New, by T. Swaminathan - - - - -	121, 171
Burma To-day, by Sir Hubert Rance - - - - -	180
Himalayan Exploration, by Prof. Kenneth Mason - - - - -	191
The North-West Frontier Re-visited, by Sir Olaf Caroe - - - - -	201
The Impact of Britain upon India, by Dr. T. Spear - - - - -	216
Indian States Reorganization, by Sardar K. M. Panikkar - - - - -	247
The Place of the New Asian Members in the Commonwealth, by Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams, CBE - - - - -	259
The Eighty-Ninth Annual Report - - - - -	267
The Eighty-Ninth Annual Meeting - - - - -	270

INDIA:

Village and Small Scale Industries in India's Second Year Plan - - - - -	70
Railways in India and Abroad, by L. A. Natesan - - - - -	222

PAKISTAN:

Trade and Industry in Pakistan, by H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ikramullah - - - - -	131
Pakistan's Five Year Plan - - - - -	275
Artists of Pakistan - - - - -	282
Mayo School of Art, Lahore, by S. Spedding - - - - -	287

CEYLON:

Ceylon and the Commonwealth, by the Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike - - - - -	217
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FAR EAST:

Federation of Malaya Budget, by Sir Donald MacGillivray - - - - -	76
The Federation of Malaya and its Future, by Tunku Nong Jiwa - - - - -	145
The Religious Persecution in China, by Rt. Rev. R. Boisguerin - - - - -	150
Political Evolution in French Overseas Territories - - - - -	227
Terrorist Activities in Malaya - - - - -	229
When we were Friends (with Japan), by Lieut.-Colonel G. H. Keighley-Bell - - - - -	231
The Training of Overseas Representatives of Industry and Commerce, by M. Gatehouse - - - - -	289
U.K. Trade with the Far East - - - - -	292

NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST:

Some Problems of Defence of the Middle East, by E. Hinterhoff	-	-	139
Social Reform in Egypt, by Mary Rowlatt	-	-	154
Social Rights of Muslim Women, by H. C. Hassum	-	-	158
Economic and Social Development in Syria	-	-	166, 241
An Appraisal of the Military Potential of the Arab States, by E. Hinterhoff, LL M	-	-	295

CENTRAL ASIA:

A Turkmen Historical Novel	-	-	78
Oriental Studies in the Soviet Union	-	-	160
The Food Industry in Central Asia	-	-	301
Soviet Linguistic Policy in Central Asia	-	-	309

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CONTENTS

I THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

3	The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Home, PC	COMMONWEALTH TOUR
20	Dr. Patrick Young, MA (Cantab), DPhil (Oxon)	NEPAL RE-OPENED
42	Admiral Sir Mark Pizey, KBE CB, DSO	THE INDIAN NAVY TO-DAY
52	Captain H. R. A. Streater	THE ASCENT OF KANCHENJUNGA
65	Reception	RT. HON. LORD HAILEY, GCSI, GCIE, GCMG
II GENERAL		
70	Contributed	VILLAGE AND SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES IN INDIA'S SECOND PLAN
76	Sir Donald MacGillivray's Speech	FEDERATION OF MALAYA BUDGET
78	Central Asian Literature	A TURKMEN HISTORICAL NOVEL
86		REVIEWS

The Publishers regret that the publication of this issue has been delayed by a wages dispute in the printing industry, a circumstance entirely beyond their control; and wish to offer their apologies for any inconvenience that may have been caused.

Nepal Re-opened

By

Dr. PATRICK C. YOUNG, MA (Cantab) DPhil (Oxon)*

A JOINT MEETING with the Over-Seas League was held at Over-Seas House, St. James's, S.W.1, on Friday, 23rd September, with Sir CHRISTOPHER SUMMERHAYES in the Chair, when an address was given by Dr. PATRICK C. YOUNG, MA (Cantab), D Phil (Oxon), recently Head of the UNESCO Science Co-operation Office for Burma, Ceylon, India and Nepal.

In introducing Dr. Young, Sir CHRISTOPHER SUMMERHAYES said: It is a very great pleasure to me to introduce your speaker to-day, my friend, Dr. Patrick Young. While my own service in Nepal was short—in fact my service in the part of the world of particular interest to this distinguished Association has been very much shorter than that of most of you here—I had the privilege of being there during these recent years of considerable change. After her long segregation, Nepal has been admitting able men from India, and from the Western world, to help towards her social and economic progress, and among the visitors who came in that way Dr. Young is outstanding. He is outstanding in his breadth of education and experience. He did his science and languages at Cambridge, he took a Doctorate of Chemistry at Oxford and in London he studied engineering. He also studied economics, so he started well equipped. Then he had many years of varied and ever increasingly important industrial experience with production and research, and with technical development and in labour relations. In 1948 he felt rather drawn to international civil service and he then went, I think, for the first time to India with the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. He came back to Europe for a short time for work with the Organization for European Economic Co-operation. In 1951 he returned to India and did valued service for India, Burma, Ceylon and Nepal as Head of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, and it was in that capacity that he came to Nepal where he used his skill and his industry to make a very helpful survey. I know you are looking forward to the talk he is to give us about Nepal, that country which is rich in interest. It is rich too, in its beauty, in the quality of many of its men and in staunch friendship, but unfortunately it is not so well off in some other ways. I will now leave Dr. Young to tell you what he saw in this land when turning his trained mind to its affairs.

* Recently Head of the UNESCO Science Co-operation Office for Burma, Ceylon, India and Nepal.

UNTIL 1950, for nearly one hundred years, Nepal was a country closed to the rest of the world, guarded from political and economic influences, and known only to a few visitors other than pilgrims from the South and traders from the North, whose information had no means of reaching but the narrow circles around them. The revolution of five years ago which overcame the power of the Rana family, till then the holder of all the major posts in the Administration, and which regained for the King the control lost by the Royal Family in the middle of the last Century, has re-opened Nepal to the Western World. To enter Nepal to-day has something of the thrill of exploration and adventure, as few are still the Westerners who have had this experience.

Late in 1951, my duties as Head of the UNESCO Science Co-operation Office for South Asia, and Representative of the Director-General in Burma, Ceylon and India, caused me to call on the then Nepalese Ambassador to India, the late Lieut-General Bijaya Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana. Soon afterwards, the Nepalese Prime Minister, Mr. M. P. Koirala, invited me to meet him and members of his Cabinet, to discuss the possible admission of Nepal to Membership of UNESCO. Personal ties of friendship with two generations of Nepalese ambassadors in Delhi and their staffs, coupled with official missions which I made to the Kathmandu Valley in 1953 and 1954, have left me with a true affection for the people of Nepal, with a little knowledge of the conditions of the country, and with a real wish to see this small but valiant nation move from its present state of almost medieval economic backwardness to one of prosperity and peace, avoiding, if possible, the slow and expensive process of learning only by her own mistakes, instead of by the lessons which others have learnt in the course of their development. This paper will speak of Nepal as I have found her to-day, and of the steps which are being taken, or which might well be taken, to help her along her path of progress. There are members of the East India Association whose knowledge of Nepal is profound, where mine is but superficial and incomplete, and I have therefore the great satisfaction of knowing that Sir Christopher Summerhayes, our leading authority on Nepal to-day, who, as our Ambassador in Kathmandu, endeared himself to the country to which he was accredited and to all those whose counsellor and often host he has been, is here and thus will be able to correct such inaccuracies of which I may be guilty and to add to the picture which I will try to give.

Nepal lies, with Tibet to the North and India to the South, as a diagonal strip of mountains and valleys, 520 miles long by 100 miles wide, situated between the latitudes 26° and 31° North, that is to say approximately

on a level with Egypt. The most economically developed part of the state is along the southern border, a low lying plain known as the Terai, which is rich in jungle and highly insalubrious on account of its lack of disease-carrying mosquito control. This area of only 18 miles width, follows the edge of the foothills which extend along the frontier between India and Nepal. The remainder of the country is extremely mountainous, and includes the Himalayas, at the frontier with Tibet. Maps of Nepal are extremely unreliable, as the information hitherto available to cartographers has been totally inadequate, and will continue to be so until the data recently collected and still being sought, by aerial and ground surveys, has been analysed and given to them. Travel in Nepal is accomplished almost universally on foot, or assisted by pony or elephant, except where air services exist to link the main centres, and where, in the South, there are a few inadequate and unsatisfactory roads and railways. Journeying by surface routes between Nepal and her neighbours, and within the country itself, is therefore extremely laborious. Even Kathmandu, the Nepalese Capital, is still largely isolated, as it has no direct road or rail link with the outer world and its air services are at the mercy of the clouds, wind and rain, which in that area have the ability of disorganizing the best laid plans.

T R A N S P O R T

Travellers from Tibet, and there are many, reach Kathmandu on foot, along mountain tracks, for there are no roads; and those from India must use successively: a narrow gauge railway from Raxaul in India to Amlekhganj in Nepal; a motor road with bus service from Amlekhganj to Bhimphedi; a dangerous 31 mile long bridle path from there to Thankot, negotiable only on foot or on pony-back over mountains and sheer rock; and a very rough motorable road, with bus service, to Kathmandu. During the dry season, a jeep may be used between Raxaul and Amlekhganj, instead of taking the train. Goods, other than those flown into Kathmandu as air-freight, travel the same way, or, if they weigh less than 500 lb., can be hauled over an electric rope-way instead of being carried over the bridle path. One of the wonders of Kathmandu to-day is the presence of a number of automobiles on the roads of the city, as each of these vehicles has had to be brought along the bridle path, on the shoulders of teams of porters, approximately 150 strong, engaged for the purpose. Jeeps, being much smaller than other motor-cars, have in recent years been flown in by transport planes and are therefore more common. This regrettable isolation of the Capital, by surface route, was to have ended last year, when a great new highway built by Indian

engineers was to have been completed between Thankot and Bhainse-Dobhan on the way to India. But exceptionally heavy rains in 1954 caused serious landslides and washed away bridges, thereby putting back by several years at least the achievement of the project.

One of my earliest experiences in Nepal was to attend the symbolic opening of this highway by the Senior Queen, wife of late King Tribhuvan, and to see a small convoy arrive from India, which had blazed its way over the temporary track, with the frequent assistance of bulldozers and other aids. Soon afterwards I had myself the unforgettable experience of accompanying Gen. Kiran Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana, C.-in-C. Nepal Army, and Major-General Yudanath Singh, Commanding Officer of the Indian Military Mission in Nepal, along this same track cut out of deep slopes in the Kathmandu valley, and with a magnificent panorama of Himalayan peaks seeming to hang literally without support in the sky. This road, known as the King Tribhuvan Path, is a magnificent example of Indian collaboration and will remain a monument also to one of the great Englishmen still working in India, Major-General H. Williams, Engineer-in-Chief, Indian Army, who, in the course of the planning thereof, walked over every inch of the route, and over other possible routes also, before giving his decision. Even when this highway is re-opened, it will become, however, really effective only when its Southern end can join a much improved link with India, for the present Raxaul-Amlekhganj track is usable only when the weather is suitable.

Newars form a considerable majority of the population in the Kathmandu Valley, but in Nepal as a whole the population consists mainly of Parbathis, commonly known abroad as the Gurkhas. Owing to the great obstacles of the terrain, it has been very difficult to undertake a reliable census of the population, and only to-day are we obtaining a reasonably accurate figure, namely on the basis of a national census organized recently. This gives us a population of approximately nine million. Visitors to the country are struck by the large number of Tibetans constantly moving in and out of Kathmandu, for trade purposes and pilgrimage, thus maintaining a tradition which extends back many centuries, over periods when the Kathmandu Valley was an important centre of North and South traffic in Asia, and played a significant role as an entrepôt trade carrier between China and India.

POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS

The 1949 Revolution, engineered jointly by King Tribhuvan and the underground Nepali Congress Party, had the moral support of India. Two years later, an Interim Government Act was promulgated by the

King, which was designed as a step towards a democratic system of Government. Since then the country has seen governments come and go, torn by internal dissensions, and without the measure of popular support for the ministers in office to afford a workable democratic system. Already once, the King had felt it necessary to dissolve Parliament and to rule himself with the aid only of a number of Counsellors which he had chosen. This regime was succeeded in 1953 by a Government under the leadership of Mr. M. P. Koirala, a very able man. But it could not last, nor a second one again constituted under the same Prime Minister, for the principal parties were never in a mood for real collaboration. Indeed, parties seem as numerous in Nepal as raindrops, and in this land, previously for so long without democratic freedom, there is an upsurge of political aspirations in which political action is, by some, pictured as the cure for all evils and by many used as a channel for purely personal gain. Political feelings tend to run high and compromise is not one of the instruments yet of the profession. Honest politicians and worthy leaders have to contend alike with colleagues and with followers, lacking often both the qualities of judgment and the sense of personal loyalty. Under these conditions it would be senseless to hold elections such as the Interim Government Act of 1951 prescribes for a Constituent Assembly, and it is not easy to predict when it will be practicable for them to be organized. The death of King Tribhuvan added a new factor to the situation this year, and King Mahendra, his eldest son, has again thought fit to dissolve Parliament and to rule the country himself with the help of a small number of personal Counsellors. Foreign influences are bound to rank high in a politically new country such as Nepal, at the frontier of Communism with the immensely important and populous South Asian world. Communist influence in Nepal has been great, particularly amongst the students, and called for a corresponding effort both from India and other forces opposed to it. Such action has not always been understood or appreciated by sections of the population. The importance that the world has attached to happenings on the political front in Nepal may be seen from the number of countries having Diplomatic representatives accredited to her. The U.K. and India have established resident Embassies in Kathmandu, whilst other governments have preferred to arrange for their representatives living in New Delhi to represent them also in Nepal. Difficulties of finding suitable official residences in Kathmandu are an important factor in this decision. Such assignment of Foreign Missions in Delhi to cover also Nepal is, I may add, not unwelcome to the diplomats concerned, as in the summer months it provides a most pleasant escape from the heat of Northern Indian plains and an opportunity of seeing much that is of great natural and

artistic beauty, and of historical interest. Such assignment was less attractive no doubt some years ago before an air service spared one the hard journey by surface route!

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

The national language of Nepal is Nepali (an Aryan language formerly called Parbathi). It is quite close to Hindi, thus making relations between Nepal and neighbouring parts of India comparatively easy. Newari, the language of the Newars, is used as a local language only in the Kathmandu Valley. It is a Mongol tongue with a special script of its own. English is a compulsory subject in schools and colleges, usually as a second language, but is incomprehensible to the man-in-the-street. Indeed, the level of English, even amongst the officials, is much below that in India. It is interesting to note in this connexion that a dictionary from Nepali into English is not available, whilst one in the opposite direction, from English to Nepali, has been in existence for a long time! At least, so I have been told. As is to be expected, a number of divergent views exist to-day in Nepal on the subject of language policy. Whilst some interests are fighting for the use of the local tongue as the medium of instruction, others would prefer, for instance, the adoption of Hindi as the national language, for the sake of closer collaboration with India. It is certain that the absence of an international language, or major foreign national tongue as an effective medium of technical, commercial, and professional education constitutes a serious handicap on Nepal's road to economic and social progress. It would indeed be a very great thing if Nepal's leaders were to be willing to steer the country away from the path of narrow linguistic nationalism and to carry the people with them in a programme of education from the lowest age upwards which included the adoption of a major international language as a second "mother tongue" for all sections of the population.

Nepal is at present a very poor country economically, with a trade deficit which has reduced the value of the Nepali rupee during the past few years to a figure which is substantially below the Indian rupee. The democratic revolution of 1949, in opening the door to foreign traders, has led to a substantial demand for foreign goods, especially luxury goods, without a corresponding expansion of exports. The removal of the Ranas from power ended the financial control of the country by one family, but caused a flight of their capital, hitherto the only important source of private investments, and the mainstay of Nepal's famous arts and crafts industries. Whatever the causes, the fact is that Nepal has a very difficult and urgent task ahead to raise the economic and social standards to a

satisfactory level. The people, conscious of their new political freedom, are clamouring for better conditions of life and impatient at the delay in obtaining them. This is a fertile breeding ground for political unrest generally. Every move to make them conscious of the improvements desirable in the health services, in schooling, communications, housing, administration, etc., serves to add to their discontent at the delay in effecting these improvements. The public in general, not realizing that the national revenue is inadequate for this purpose, expects the Government to assume the responsibility for initiating and carrying through these tasks immediately. Such handicaps are not restricted to Nepal, as we know too well even here, but few must be the governments that have so much to do, with so little revenue to do it with.

FINANCE

Under the Ranas, there was no system of national budget and the expenditure on public account was not divulged. Since then, the only official figures of expenditure of which I have knowledge are those for the financial year 1953-54, which the Prime Minister presented last year to the Nepal Advisory Assembly. These showed an expenditure of 65 million Nepal rupees against an undisclosed revenue which I understand unofficially was below the estimated revenue of 45 millions. What is startling about the figures is that they correspond to an almost negligible sum calculated per head of the population. Thus, the main expenditure items, namely for Defence, Police, Public Works, Communications, Education and Health, add up to a combined total of less than five English shillings per annum per head of the population! And this even on the basis of the existing deficit financing of government expenditure! I will come back again to this matter when speaking of education in particular. I would only add now that I have little confidence in means, such as certain foreign advisers have put forward, to increase the revenue by raising new direct taxes and enforcing all such taxes more strictly, as this will meet with the violent opposition of the people and lead, as elsewhere, to a disincentive to work. Already, land reform has proved a prickly problem, with new small land-holders refusing to pay land tax and the revenue from the land in such areas having fallen therefore to below the yield under the previous regime. I hope that the Administration will take heed of the dangers of a too theoretical approach to fiscal policy, of which countries elsewhere show ample evidence, and work towards a larger revenue in the manner of the wise farmer who increases his yield by wise sowing and nurturing of the soil that brings him his return, rather than by over-burdening it, as the academically taught absentee landlord in the town believes to be the hall mark of

efficient management. Nepal has many natural resources which, if wisely developed, can bring a rich revenue to the State without imposing a new burden on the tax-payer. Private enterprise and both rural and urban industries can be encouraged by providing them, at a small cost to the exchequer, with modern know-how which will increase the national product, and simultaneously the State revenue. By co-operative action, local groups can be led to undertake social services and public works of direct value to them, without the intervention, otherwise than in an advisory capacity, of the Government. By such means rather than by fiscal action, will Nepal show that she has learnt from the errors of others how to raise her economy from one of feudalism to one of true democratic freedom in a prosperous modern world.

A G R I C U L T U R E

Nepal is an agricultural country with 95 per cent of her population employed on the land, and has large possibilities of development through irrigation and better communications and through the application of research in crop production, Dairy Farming, Livestock Raising and a scientific exploitation of her forest resources. At present the rural population has to work very hard for its living, at least in the hill areas where the cultivation has to be in terraces on the steep slopes, and where all materials and implements have to be transported on the head or back. The work is all the harder as the implements are primitive and religious taboos limit seriously the use of animal power for draught work. In the Kathmandu area, for instance, cattle may not be used for work within sight of the temples, which are so numerous that in practice most arable land has to be tilled by hand. Fortunately the soil is often very fertile, and the climate excellent for crop production of all kinds. Nepal has been a food exporting country, and I have personally been amazed at the variety of crops raised, which in one and the same area range from fruits that one associates only with the tropics to vegetables that require seasonal frosts to be really successful. I have also seen how normal vegetable seeds from Europe or the U.S.A. have produced, in Nepal giant vegetables of excellent tenderness and flavour. Rice, ghee (clarified butter), hides, and jute, are important exports. Nepal is rich in timber, and timber is her second most important export after food grains, but there is much to be done to re-organize her forestry services along rational lines. There are also legacies of the past to correct, such as the complete de-afforestation of areas within a large radius of the cities, which has led to the unhappy situation that timber is scarce just where it is most wanted.

Ninety-five per cent of the population is believed to be illiterate, and few are those who, having received a good education, are in a position to use it to full advantage. This is a terrible handicap in this era of political effervescence, when a reasonable level of education is so needed in order that the people should comprehend better, accept, and adapt themselves to the changes that are necessary in their mode of life and in the world around them. At present the means at the disposal of the country for this task of education are very meagre, for the Government has not the money and there is no incentive for students to train to be teachers. Indeed, many graduates in Nepal, as in India, earn their livelihood to-day as mere clerks in offices and secretarial agencies, because this is the best paid employment that is available. Other graduates, more gifted or more enterprising, have emigrated to lands where they have obtained professional posts in their speciality. What a waste this is from the national view point! Primary education is mostly free, but the number of primary schools is extremely small and there is no prospect of improving this situation for so long as a policy of free schooling is advocated. Indeed, as I mentioned earlier, the Government revenue is only of the order of four to five shillings per annum *per capita* of the total population, and, of the Government expenditure possible, less than one shilling, in terms of English money, is available per head each year for education. Under conditions such as these, the splendid ideals of free and compulsory education for all, to which such bodies as UNESCO have pinned their banner, become a sad snare and delusion into which other under-developed countries have already fallen, bringing with it the vicious circle of under-paid unqualified teachers, imparting the wrong type and quality of education, compulsorily, to the youth of the nation, and this at a cost that cripples the exchequer and absorbs the time and efforts of men who could so much more profitably be employed otherwise. I hope that Nepal will avoid this calamity, and seek initially in a practical basic form of primary education, one that will bring immediate visible benefits to the population in rural areas, benefits in hygiene, housing, crop production, side by side with simple literacy as such; an education that will be understood by the adults and such as to lead them to club together in every community to provide the housing and the facilities and the privileges and the salary which an intelligent teacher will require to establish himself amongst them. The Nepal Government has made known that it could spare 300 rupees per annum as a contribution to each new school to be established. This is about £15. It can never be a sufficient incentive in itself, but this may suffice

for the central administration of a supervisory service to co-ordinate and control a nation-wide scheme of locally sponsored and financed basic education. With this as a foundation, the nation will grow to its place in the modern world, steadily at first, then faster as the benefits of a basic education increase the prosperity of the country, allow for additional expenditure on teacher-training and on schools of an ever higher level and quality. Then a time will surely come when, without a false start, the Government will be able to assume the total financial burden of a free education for all, and a valuable one at that! Secondary education and higher education in Nepal are greatly assisted now by the proximity of India, and by the considerable number of foreign study grants which are open to Nepalese students in that country and in other countries of the Commonwealth, under bilateral arrangements, and under the Colombo Plan. Additional facilities of this nature are afforded under American "Point Four" Aid, and through the United Nations or UN Specialized Agencies. The only establishment of higher education in Nepal itself is the Tri-Chandra College in Kathmandu, which is affiliated to the University of Patna in India, and provides courses leading to the BA and BSC degrees.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The health standards in Nepal are appallingly low, and malaria, filariasis, smallpox, dysentery, cholera, and kala azar, are ever present. There is no filtered water supply even in the Capital with its 80,000 people. Surveys made by the American Technical Mission have shown that, in the Terai and in the Kathmandu Valley 95 per cent of the population is suffering from filariasis, that hideous mosquito-born disease of which the attack is so insidious that it may take up to six years after infection, to manifest itself. During my own visits to the Capital and to her satellite towns of Lalitpur and Bhaktapur, I observed persons sick with virulent outbreaks of smallpox lying in the doorways or sitting in the street a few feet away from me, without any pretence at isolation from relatives or the public at large. Conditions such as these contrast with the charm and friendliness of the people, the magnificent scenery, the healthy climate, the wonderful works of art everywhere, and the considerable natural resources remaining to be developed.

CULTURAL WEALTH

Nepal has an extraordinarily rich heritage of monuments and other treasures of art, culture and history, in and around Kathmandu, including a remarkable collection of palm-leaf manuscripts of great antiquity,

housed at present at Tri-Chandra College. This cultural wealth is however very sadly neglected, and there is an urgent need to undertake work of restoration and conservation, side by side with organized surveys and excavations of historical sites, where new finds are to be expected. For such tasks, foreign aid in the form of experts and finance is of course essential, and this will be welcome by the present Director of Archaeology a charming personality, and by the Kathmandu Museum authorities.

Except for one or two centres of industrial activity in the Terai, Nepal's activities in the field of industry lie in the narrow circle of arts and crafts as cottage industries. They constitute a fascinating study in the survival of ancient methods born of great ingenuity and skill, but being strangled through the decadence of the craftsman, whose training is not equal to the demands of modern conditions both as regards the various sources of his raw materials, and through the competition of mass-production methods. Wood-carving and ivory work of great beauty was once an industry of which Nepal could justly be proud, and of which examples are to be found in profusion in the temples and shrines and in the palaces of a past era. Now its product is in no way competitive with the better organized work for instance of India and Kashmir, and its artisans are turning to ordinary carpentry to make a living in the absence of orders requiring their artist's skill. Soon this art may vanish altogether. Weaving and all its related operations are carried out in Nepal according to the most primitive methods, which must soon give way to improved techniques if the industry is to survive as a distinct trade. Already the Government has taken the matter in hand, organizing the training of youths in the use of improved types of hand-looms, etc. Pottery-making is in Nepal a time-worn art which seems to have made little progress since many centuries gone by. At Thimi, centre of the pottery industries in the Kathmandu area, raw clays are drawn straight from the ground and blended by hand, without any pretence at upgrading to remove the impurities. Under these circumstances the process of making a sound pot is infinitely laborious. Firing is equally primitive and unreliable, using straw as the main fuel. Little additional training and the organization of a central clay beneficiation unit to feed individual potteries on a co-operative basis, would lead to an enormous increase in productivity and quality. May this be arranged soon! In marked contrast to the evident lack of imagination and resourcefulness which I observed in the Thimi potteries, the Kathmandu valley bears testimony, in its small units where edible grains are ground, of the ingenuity and skill of the flour millers. Wherever there is a watercourse you will find nearby one or more diminutive little huts through which a stream of water is passing and which contain a single water-driven flour-mill, owned and operated

by one family. Though extremely primitive, these mills are ingenious and effective in design, in particular with reference to their feeding mechanism which operates beautifully smoothly on the modern vibrating table principle. Their output is of course low, and of the order of four gallons per hour of maize or six gallons of wheat. The extraction of edible oils from oil seeds in Nepal is carried out in most primitive oil-mills, the only merit of which is that their over-cooked and pungent product has so long been the normal oil on the market, that other purer oils are not acceptable to the palate of the local population. In one oil-mill that I had occasion to visit the owner feared that I might be after the secret of his process, and would not allow me to have a close view of the press on the pretext that the latter contained "a god" who objected to the presence of a stranger! In common with most Eastern countries, Nepal has a well-developed industry based on copper sheeting. One of the interesting products of this industry is the Nepal Horn, which bears some similarity to the Swiss Alpenhorn, and is used for the same general purpose, *i.e.* for communications between adjacent valleys in the mountains. At one coppersmith's shop which I visited in Lalitpur with the Director of Archaeology I met an interesting character who was gifted with the power of divining the presence underground of holy objects or effigies. He had not long previously demonstrated these powers in two cases, to the satisfaction of his fellow countrymen. I am far from superstitious myself, but I was conscious of a strange psychic feeling or giddiness when he entered the room. Possibly this was just tiredness, but it was an interesting observation. He told me that he had known of my visit through a dream, and that he had also in this vision learnt that contrary to the general belief Lord Rama had visited England and taken a wife there unto him. Her skeleton was now waiting to be discovered in a hollow grave immediately beneath the main square of one of our English towns! He had seen the site clearly in his dream, and he even drew me a sketch showing the position in relation to the main arteries of the city. As this plan related unfortunately to the city as it was in Rama's time. I had to express some doubt as to anybody's ability to recognize it to-day!

Nepal is famous for her deities and dragons and other figures cast in metal by the "lost-wax" process. This industry is centred in Lalitpur and utilizes designs of great artistic merit. Unfortunately the quality of the castings is extremely poor, due to a complete lack of materials' control, and the use of furnaces of most primitive construction and too small size. This is one of the industries in Nepal which could usefully be up-graded by means of training courses given by modern metallurgists or non-ferrous metal founders, and the industry made thereby the nucleus for a potentially thriving export trade and also for the production of much

needed utility castings for the local Nepalese market. Side by side with her brass and copper crafts, Nepal has a well developed semi-precious stones and curio industry based on rock crystal and other stones. The turnover could be expanded, given some technical assistance to improve the quality for the export markets.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Nepal has a great store of latent natural resources and of skills to be developed: Water power from the Himalayas, for the development of the country generally, and perhaps for electro-chemical and electro-mechanical industries; mineral resources such as coal, peat, copper, beryl, iron, sulphur, quartz, and semi-precious stones; a climate excellent for horticulture, both for fruits and vegetables, and a soil which is fertile enough to feed the population, whilst still leaving an exportable surplus; raw materials for new industries for which there is a local market which is at present met from abroad, *e.g.* sugar; traditional skills, such as wood and semi-precious stone carving, fabricated or cast copper and brass work, etc., which, if suitably channelled, could be the basis of an export industry; mountain slopes which could be improved as pastures, and provide fodder for cattle, sheep, goats and other livestock, as a source of milk and milk products, wool, hides—each a raw material for cottage industries to increase the earnings of the landworkers and thus provide employment for them during the months of the year when work on the land is at a low ebb; a tourist industry with, as attractions, the scenic beauty of the mountains and of the valleys, the temples and the works of art which are to be found here in profusion at this ancient meeting place of Buddhism and Hinduism, the holiness in which are held many of its monuments and sites of historical importance, the climate which, during the months of May and June, provides a splendid contrast to the burning heat of the plains of India. But for these developments huge sums are needed, and a supply of trained manpower which is at present difficult to find. As a start, the Government has set itself several tasks of a fundamental nature, which include the calling in of assistance from various international organizations and foreign countries in a plan to improve the administration, collect statistics, survey the natural wealth of the country, and seek means of tapping new sources of revenue.

There is a small hydro-electric power station of 1,000 k.v.a. which supplies some electricity to Kathmandu and its satellite towns, and another of 400 k.v.a. which supplies the power driving the electric ropeway. This is all so far, but plans are in existence to tap the power of the Trisuli River to operate initially a 3,000 k.v.a. station to supply the Kathmandu Valley and an agreement has been made authorizing India to proceed with a

project on the Kosi River on Nepal soil which will control the flow of this destructive stream and supply electric power both to Nepal and to India.

This is but a beginning but one which, once accomplished, will be of great moment in the progress of the country. Similarly in the field of water utilization work is proceeding in the Terai in the harnessing of sub-soil water for agricultural purposes by means of tube wells. A complete geological survey of the country for mineral resources has been organized with the assistance of foreign experts and special training has been given abroad to the staff of the Nepal Bureau of Mines. Aided by American specialists and staffed by personnel which has been trained abroad, an agriculture Training Centre has been operating a network of village development centres designed to promote a better use of the agricultural potential of the country. This Centre has also been serving as a training school for agricultural extension workers to man the village centres. Similarly a Cottage Industries Training Centre has been in operation for several years now, experimenting with possible new types of work and training workers in improved techniques. Whilst this unit has still a long way to go before its efforts bear fruit to any substantial degree, it marks a step in the right direction. Foreign experts have been assisting Nepal in the field of livestock farming, carrying out experiments with new types of grasses, and fodder types, and teaching elements of animal husbandry and dairying.

In the field of tourism little development is to be expected at the moment from Government action, and a lead will have to come from the private investor. This however is not likely to make any headway until the country is better served with roads and airfields, and the health standards have changed greatly for the better. One enterprising individual has however established a hotel in Kathmandu for foreign visitors who can afford his charges, and who otherwise would have been unable to obtain accommodation at anything approaching the European standard.

There is already, of course, as in times past a constant flow of pilgrims (as distinct from tourists) from Tibet and elsewhere to the Buddhist Shrine of Swoyambhu; and in February each year some 100,000 Hindus visit the Temple of Pashupatinath, which is also near Kathmandu.

LIBRARIES

A prerequisite to any economic development on a substantial scale in any country is the existence of a suitable force of trained engineers. Nepal unfortunately possesses no engineering school of her own, and those students who study the subject abroad return to find that they can do little

because of the lack of subsidiary staff to work under them. This observation led recently to the establishment at the instance of the Institute of Engineers and with the assistance of the Indian Military Mission of an Overseers' School in Kathmandu to produce overseers, sub-overseers and draftsmen for the Public Works Department. This also is a useful conception which has made a beginning, if only a modest one on account of lack of funds. Another important need in a country like Nepal is the existence of public libraries, where students and others can consult recent books and periodicals in the fields of their personal interests and learn something of the outer world. This has led to an extraordinary mushroom growth of libraries in the cities, where they have been organized by groups on a subscription basis. The U.S.I.S. (United States Information Services) has for some years had a well stocked library in Kathmandu, which has given freely to the public access on its shelves to books of a technical and cultural nature, and which has distributed to schools and similar establishments sets of American books of interest to them. The British Information Service Library was a very poor second when I visited it last, and I cannot but feel that it was doing less than justice to our wish to help the country's advancement, and was not receiving the financial means to serve its purpose. Through the mass-media the public can be reached to help it play its part in the process of national advancement. Such facilities exist in Nepal. The best newspaper, when I was there, was the Government tri-weekly paper *Gor Kha Patra*. There were several others, besides a variety of political party papers with as little stability as the parties themselves. An English fortnightly *Nepal To-day*, had ceased to appear through lack of support. As for the Radio, "Radio Nepal," the Government station, provided daily broadcasts on short and medium wave bands, some programmes being in English. As a source of entertainment, films have become extremely popular and cinemas have multiplied. Unfortunately the cost in foreign exchange is high.

TECHNICAL MISSIONS

Nepal has not joined the Universal Postal Union, and is one of the few countries left which have therefore to rely on foreign enterprise for external postal and telegraph communications. An Indian Post and Telegraph Office has, for this purpose been established near the Kathmandu airfield, to serve that area. Nepalese stamps are used only for inland mail, and Indian stamps for the rest. A manually operated telephone exchange serves the capital.

I spoke earlier of the importance for Nepal to receive foreign aid in her developments and control measures. Such aid has been given in

the form of training facilities, know-how, equipment, finance, and pub works. Large numbers of students are sent abroad for higher education and for technical training, and foreign missions have been received under various Technical Assistance Programmes in the fields of agriculture, health, mining, geological survey, education, cottage industries, road construction, and hydro-electric development. In recent years, Nepal has become a Member of several Specialized Agencies of the United Nations, and received help from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, from UNESCO, and from the World Health Organization of the United Nations. She has been invited to participate as a Member in the deliberations of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. She has received public aid bilaterally from India, the U.K., the U.S.A., and Switzerland, and under multilateral arrangements such as the Colombo Plan. Furthermore she has been assisted by the Ford Foundation of America. So grave are Nepal's needs, however, that these sources of assistance and many others must be tapped more fully still if real progress is to be achieved economically and quickly. Nepal herself has not the experienced and trained men required, and she must not be allowed to expend her meagre resources in such staff unassisted. It is of even more fundamental importance that foreign aid given be in a form and under conditions appropriate to the state of the country to-day rather than in accordance with some set pattern established by bureaucrats in offices and conference tables thousands of miles away, or on the advice of these same officials after they have made a lightning visit to the area. It is not easy to be a Technical Assistance expert in Nepal, for it requires a great deal more than just knowledge of the subject; it requires grit and initiative and a real desire to understand and help, and masses of patience and the tact to follow the reactions of a people of sensitive nature. It requires also some experience of the working of dishonourable practices, to which the expert not infrequently finds himself exposed on the part of persons at his headquarters at home, or of officials in the field, whose honesty and competence is not in keeping with their position. Prominent Nepal Government officials have complained to me of Technical Missions which come to Nepal and leave with only a report to their credit, and no follow-up action in sight. Members of Technical Missions have suffered grave risks and discomforts after arriving in Nepal because no suitable provision had been made for their accommodation, and for other facilities which were essential to the execution of their duties. At first they would blame the Nepal authorities who had been expected to make this provision, but soon would agree that this was hardly fair, the fault lying squarely on the shoulders of the administrators at home who, in negotiating the Technical Assistance contract with Nepal, had imposed conditions

on her which any one who knew the position there would admit were unrealizable. Against this background I should like to pay tribute to those Technical Assistance experts who have made a success of their mission to Nepal, and there are a number. The U.S.A. "Point Four" Mission handled its local problems of housing and facilities in the very practical way of buying an estate and equipping it with all necessary amenities for its staff and their families, including water, electricity, jeeps, etc. Freed therefore from material difficulties, the staff was able to "get on with its work"! When new problems arose, they were solved in the practical way that is possible if there is adequate financial backing, and personal support enough to trust the "man on the spot." Two Swiss experts, initially sent to Nepal by the Swiss Government under a bilateral programme of assistance and later absorbed into the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance of the United Nations, have achieved success for the reason that they were able to adapt themselves and understand immediately the needs of Nepal which has in many ways so much in common, geographically, with their own country. To this useful background they added the qualities of initiative and the courage to act in the interest of their mission, even where this entailed a conflict with the terms of their instructions from the U.N. Other experts, under UNESCO, WHO, and the Ford Foundation, have each contributed their share of help, and collected in the process a store of experience which must be used to guide organizers of future aid projects away from courses which have proved disastrous if foreign aid is to succeed. Indian Missions have been prominent in several fields, and in their case the problem of the language has been a much reduced one. Against this they have had to face a considerable measure of political opposition from quarters that took umbrage at India's "big sister" attitude.

Time is too short to enable me to go into the details of the various Aid programmes to which I have made a short reference and I have had to leave out a great deal of otherwise important matter on Nepal to-day. I hope, however, that I have succeeded in giving enough of a picture, to stimulate your interest in that country, and to encourage you to follow her development further. Whether she will advance rapidly and side-step successfully the pit-falls which others have encountered in their path of economic and social development, will depend a great deal on the attitude and understanding of leaders in countries such as ours. May valiant Nepal rise again in modern times to the greatness that her traditions in the past show to be possible. May she be as valiant in the pursuit of peace and social justice as she has been great on the fields of battle and in the realm of culture and the arts.

THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: Your lecturer has suggested that I might be able to correct some of the things he has said, but this is not the case; he is a very accurate man and I have nothing to correct at all. I wish I could correct some of his figures, which I must say are rather gloomy ones, but I am afraid they are true. I left Nepal pretty soon after Dr. Young. I actually left immediately after the last King was cremated, and now so much depends on this new young King who has the respect and loyalty of all his own people and so greatly deserves our sympathetic backing too. He is a fine young man and he has a fine people, but he has got a very tough job. He has, in these last six months, not been able to appoint a government. He still has a few advisers but unfortunately he has no buffer between him and the inevitable criticisms that go on. He has improved the land tenure law, which is the basis of many things and of vital importance. He has got rid of a number of corrupt men. He has not been able to do much about the tremendous problem of communications in that great country where to drive a road a mile or two is quite a stupendous task. Dr. Young ended up by speaking of sympathy for the country. I know we have always had that because the Nepalese have been such staunch old friends of ours and they still regard us as their greatest friend, I am glad to say, though it is rather hard to help them as much as would we like to do. Anyway I shall take up no more of your time because I expect some of you are waiting to ask the lecturer questions on some points of what he said to-day.

QUESTIONS

Mr. HANCOCK asked could Dr. Young add still further to what he had said by saying something about Chinese Communism or Indian Imperialism. Which is the greater danger to Nepal? Secondly, could he say something about conditions under the Ranas—whether it is not a fact that the people on the whole were very happy under the Ranas?

Dr. YOUNG: Indian Imperialism is a question on which many people have held discussions during the past few years. The "Big Sister" attitude of India has been resented by certain elements in Nepal and, I think, that is rather inevitable; some of the help which has been given to Nepal by other countries has also been rather in the nature of a "big sister's." But on the whole the better elements in Nepal realize the position which exists and know that India is the only country able to provide instant help which may solve some of Nepal's immediate problems. Those people may not feel that Indian Imperialism is a danger.

On the Communist question I am afraid that I cannot say very much. To know more about that, one would need, perhaps, to have been on the Communist side of the frontier. The students are certainly very Communist-minded and that is partly due, as it is in India and in many other Asian countries, to the clever way in which Russia gives away, free, books in large shipments. They arrive free in the country, they are sold there at a very low price, and the money collected in that way goes to the funds of the organizations which are working for Communism. People are very glad to get books cheaply and, of course, the students particularly so. Such books speak not only of Communism; they may be works of Shakespeare translated into another language, they may be books on science—some only are books on Communism, but every book which arrives in Nepal or in Asia from Russia is an instrument for adding to the funds available for Communist propaganda in that region. I think that is a real danger. In India, Mr. Nehru has drawn attention to that fact on several occasions.

On the question of the conditions under the Ranas, I think that it should be answered by people who have had more experience of the Rana period. I think that it is true to say however that the absence of Rana capital to-day is a very serious matter for Nepal. The fact that this capital was available in Nepal during the Rana regime meant that development could take place, that arts could be maintained, that craftsmen could find work: moreover, so long as the country was isolated from the influence of other countries, many people who were not living very satisfactory lives by modern standards elsewhere, still led perhaps a more happy life than they do to-day when they see that things are wrong which before they thought were right, and which no one can remedy right now.

Mr. HOOD: Could our speaker give us a little information about the recruitment of those brave sturdy little men who used to do great service with the British Army, and I believe some of them are still giving us very valuable help in putting down terrorism in Malaya to this day. Could Dr. Young tell us something about the position with regard to their recruitment?

Dr. YOUNG: I am sorry, I cannot give you any information on that.

Sir CHRISTOPHER SUMMERHAYES: It is a matter of great interest, of course. We still have got ten thousand men as a brigade—we are, for the first time, organizing depots inside Nepal, as the Indian Communists objected to a continuation of our depots inside India. India has been good enough to promise transit facilities still to these ten thousand men. These men

are nearly all in Malaya, as you say, keeping the peace as they have done so wonderfully in other places before. It is really a matter of great satisfaction that the brigade can have closer touch with Nepal. The British officers who were previously excluded can come and visit the country they are already so fond of, and the families of men who are their good comrades, and we hope that understanding of the British people will also be helped by these depots. No one in the world can guarantee how long these things will go on, but at the present time the situation is as good as we can reasonably expect.

Miss GODLEY: May I ask what is likely to be the outcome of the return of the Nepalese Communist leader to Nepal? Is it not going to be a very difficult situation?

Dr. YOUNG: Yes, it is a very difficult situation; I can say no more.

Sir CHRISTOPHER SUMMERHAYES: Still more so in view of the fact that during the last two or three months the Chinese Ambassador to Delhi has also been allowed to extend his scope to Nepal, and no doubt he will exploit this matter to some extent.

Dr. DUNNICLIFF: Dr. Young said that when the Ranas were in power there was a certain amount of money which was available for the development of industries and so on. Where did they get that money from? Has the source of that money dried up, or was it purely private money that was available for development of such industries which now, in the days of the fall of the Ranas, have been neglected?

Dr. YOUNG: All the revenue in the Rana period went into a pool from which money was spent publicly on the country or retained by the family for use in a private account. The division of this money was not divulged but the money, of course, came from land taxes and similar sources of revenue. To-day these forms of revenue still exist, but—as I think I mentioned—with the new land reform the tenants who have become the new landowners object to paying taxes. They say “we are the owners, why should we pay to the Government in taxes what before we were paying to the landowners?” There has been a great deal of opposition, which means that the revenue has not been coming in, or that there is less money coming in than there was before. Furthermore Government expenditure has no doubt gone up, at least so far as administration is concerned. The main point however is not so much what the Government had to spend as what, should we say, the people with money to

spare could do. Now people who have got the money are no longer there! The same applies in our English countryside where the breaking up of large estates has not led to greater prosperity and employment; as you know, in the days when estates were large and large landholders had money, they kept considerably more people occupied on the land. They had the money, but the money went out in wages. Since these landlords no longer have the money, many parts of the countryside have become depleted of labour. This is really what has happened in Nepal. Capital is no longer there, and therefore many industries are starved of orders. That applies particularly to the arts and crafts which, after all, are a luxury and which can only be afforded by the people who have the money.

Miss GEDGE: Has any project been undertaken for dealing with the Kosi River? I happened to be staying with an Indian there who had been asked to go and size up what the position was the last time I was in India. I have often wondered whether India paid out a million pounds to alter the course.

Dr. YOUNG: The Kosi River has had many projects which have been worked out for the purpose of controlling its flow. Largely, it is India which has been interested in this problem much more than Nepal. The devastation caused by floods of the Kosi river are regular occurrences of tremendous magnitude. The Kosi river changes course over an area up to 200 miles wide, and it has been found impossible hitherto to control it within a particular channel. Every attempt to do so has failed and the engineers in India—and they are very fine engineers indeed—have been working on this subject now for years. The latest position is that they think that they have got a good project which entails the hydro-electric development scheme on the Nepal side of the frontier which I mentioned in my talk. It means, in the first place, controlling the flow of water from Nepal into India; removing the silt which comes down at a tremendous rate when the snows are melting, and generally when the river is in spate. What happens with a river of that type is that, if you make a channel, shall we say, with bunds on either side, thinking that you will thus force the water to go down it, before you know what is happening, silt has accumulated in this channel and the bed of the river has risen to the top of the bund—there is now no channel left at all! That is what happens in China with the Yellow river; it happens with many such rivers which are difficult to control, and the only way to solve the problem is to prevent the silt coming down. If there is no silt in the river then you can have a channel which will stay clear. The Indian

Government and the Nepal Government have been discussing an agreement between the two countries which will be beneficial to both. The latest information is, I think, that no work has yet been started but the project is there on paper.

Dr. DUNNICLIFF: Is there a University in Nepal?

Dr. YOUNG: No. There is a college, the Tri-Chandra College at Kathmandu which gives courses up to BSc and BA standards. The students have to sit for the examinations of Patna University, to which the College is affiliated.

VOTE OF THANKS

Sir GEOFFREY BETHAM: I wish, Sir, on behalf of this body to propose a vote of thanks to Dr. Young for the way he has spoken and also to you, Sir, in taking the Chair. I take this on myself as I had the great fortune to be a Minister to Nepal during the War. I know the generation who worked in Nepal with the Ranas and with the aim to win the War. The Ranas helped us, the Gurkhas helped us, Nepal helped us and we won the war. I have heard to-day a very great deal that I did not know about, a great deal that I have wondered about and what I have thought would likely take place. I think we have been told these things in a most learned manner by a very learned young man. He is a student whose vision takes in not only what he has seen but what will take place. We are very fortunate in having Sir Christopher Summerhayes in the Chair. He is the most recent Ambassador who has been through the last five years and has seen a great deal more than I was ever privileged to see. I do want to thank both Dr. Young and you, Sir, on behalf of all present.