



Inaugural Meeting of the Agricultural Research Council.

side India an expert adviser in animal husbandry and veterinary matters who will approach the problems discussed in that Chapter with an open mind.

Before leaving you to your labours, gentlemen, there is one item in your agenda on which I should like to make a brief comment. I have dwelt on the opportunities which this new organisation affords of enabling the Government of India to assist the Provinces and Province to assist Province. But there is wider scope to-day for mutual assistance and advantage in the sphere of scientific research. In drawing up the scheme, of which our meeting is the outcome, the Royal Commission found in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research which has recently been established in Australia a most helpful model. I notice in the second annual report of the Council a statement of the great value attached by it to team work throughout the Empire in exploring and investigating the various problems which confront the agricultural research worker. They point out that the free interchange of information between the component organisations of that team will ensure the minimum of over-lapping and will lead to the most efficient and effective work. I am confident that in its response to the call for collaboration in scientific endeavour India will not lag behind Australia. The most important item of informal business which will be placed before you is the question of participation in the new Imperial Agricultural Bureaux. These Bureaux are being established as the result of the Imperial Agricultural Research Conference of 1927 in the deliberations of which representatives of India took a by no means inconspicuous part. I have every hope that you will decide to share in an enterprise in which India can participate with material benefit to herself and with advantage to the growth of science.



Combined Annual General Meeting of the Indian Council of the St. John Ambulance Association and the Indian Red Cross Society.

Before I conclude, I should like to make an announcement which, I am sure, the Council of Agricultural Research will receive with keen gratification and gratitude. I was informed yesterday that His Exalted Highness the Nizam has sanctioned a grant of two lakhs to the funds of the Council. The Council is empowered to receive contributions in furtherance of its objects, not only from the Government of India but from other sources, and I am confident that the prompt and munificent offer of His Exalted Highness will be dealt with by the Governing Body in a manner befitting the generosity of the donation. For my part, I wish to profit by this opportunity to express my warm personal appreciation of a gift which, besides constituting a substantial addition to the resources of the Council, will, I hope, provide a splendid stimulus to the generosity of others interested in the progress of Indian agriculture.

And now, gentlemen, I must not keep you longer from your serious task. The Council has a great opportunity to improve India's staple industry. It is my earnest prayer that its achievement may equal its opportunity.

COMBINED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
INDIAN COUNCIL OF THE ST. JOHN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION AND THE INDIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY.

H. E. the Viceroy presided over the Combined Annual General Meeting of the Indian Council of the St. John Ambulance Association and the Indian Red Cross Society, held at Simla on the 24th June, and addressed the gathering as follows :—

Chairmen, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is always a pleasure to me to preside at this annual meeting, for it gives me an opportunity for appreciating the interest taken



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by a wide and varied section of the public in the work of our two bodies, and of expressing my own inadequate thanks to all those who in different parts of India are devoting no small part of their leisure hours to the task of alleviating sickness and the relief of human suffering. It is appropriate that your two Chairmen have chosen this occasion to make reference to the health of His Majesty the King-Emperor. The courage with which His Majesty has struggled successfully against a long and serious illness has indeed been an example and an inspiration, and we earnestly hope that a complete restoration to the fulness of health and vigour is at hand. Sir B. N. Mitra has offered the assistance of the machinery of the Red Cross Society in administering the Fund which I am now raising to commemorate His Majesty's recovery. I am very grateful for the offer and shall lay it before those whom I shall in due course consult as regards the allocation of the Fund for their careful consideration.

You will desire that at the outset I should thank His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, Sir B. N. Mitra, and Major-General Sir Henry Symons for the speeches they have made this afternoon. I observe that once again His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and Sir B. N. Mitra have succeeded in selecting the most interesting parts of two very interesting Reports—which I have already had the opportunity of reading—and I feel they have had the advantage of me in having, as it were, the first bite at them. But there are a few points to which I should like to call attention. We may all congratulate ourselves on the recognition which, as Sir B. N. Mitra mentioned, has been accorded to the Indian Red Cross Society as an independent National Society by the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva, and I trust that there will be no quarters



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which will look with jealousy on this early achievement of Dominion Status by the Society. Our obligation is now all the greater to see that the Indian Red Cross Society establishes its place by merit of numbers and achievement among the societies of other nations. It is in the power of all to co-operate towards this end, by voluntary help or by subscriptions, or, as I should prefer it, by both, and I appeal once more to Indians, of whatever standing or whatever creed, to join in this movement which has for many years been one of the true benefactors of the human race.

I had occasion a year ago to refer to the opportunities afforded by national calamities, such as floods or pestilence, for the organisation of relief by the Red Cross and it was therefore with particular interest that I followed the activities of the Society in the serious Punjab Floods of last year. It was fitting that in a Province, which, thanks to many devoted workers, has become the stronghold of Red Cross forces in India, the Society should for the first time have girded its loins to assist in coping with a calamity on a large scale, and I am glad to know that the Provincial Government was able cordially to commend the Society's efforts. This is an illustration of the possibilities of co-operation among the organisations working in the cause of health and public welfare, whether it be between Government Health Departments and private organisations, or between the many voluntary agencies which exist in India to-day. In no sphere of life indeed can truly economic use be made of our resources without friendly co-operation, mutual confidence, and free interchange of knowledge and experience. I believe that in matters of public health this maxim applies as truly as in all others, and I feel sure that any assistance which it is in the power of the Red Cross Society to give to sister organisations will always be



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freely placed at their disposal. Sir B. N. Mitra mentioned the Punjab just now as leading the Provinces of India in Red Cross work, and the Punjab's achievement amply justified him in calling your attention to the record given in the Annual Report of the rapid growth of District Branches in that Province and especially to the fine work done by Mrs. Cuthbert King in Gujerat District.

Sir B. N. Mitra also referred in his speech to the Child Welfare work done by the Red Cross in different Provinces, and particularly to the results achieved in the Central Provinces and Berar. We shall all agree with him in singling out Mrs. Tarr for special commendation for her valuable work in training midwives and extending the scope of Child Welfare Centres, and I have no doubt that great credit is also due to Lady Butler, who has never spared herself in her endeavours to improve the condition of women and children in those Provinces. Practice is better than precept, and work such as this if persevered in cannot fail to achieve by force of example its ultimate object of raising the level of public opinion and public knowledge on these matters and of teaching people to follow approved methods of hygiene, not because they are told, but because they have learnt by experience and believe, that they are right. Few of us are convinced of anything in this world so easily as by our own personal experience, and by visible proofs of what others tell us. If, as a result of the work these Societies do, mothers see that their babies live when they might have died, if parents see their children growing up into strong and healthy boys and girls, it will not be long before they realise the value of the principles we teach, or pass on the discovery they have made to others. It is difficult, I think, to stress too strongly the need for an extension of this and



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similar types of endeavour in districts and villages all over India. As a result of the Royal Agricultural Commission's Report, the Government of India have, as you know, just instituted a Council of Agricultural Research, which may be expected in the fulness of time to bring great benefit to India's country side. But, as the Commission also pointed out, hand in hand with such technical work must go an awakening of a public health conscience if the lot of the villager is to be permanently improved. For no satisfactory or lasting solution of problems such as this can be based upon anything but a sound and broad public opinion. Could we but visualise the time when every village of considerable size has a health centre of its own, radiating its example and its teaching to the country round, we should be not far from a state of real prosperity throughout India. For good health, apart from all else, is good business. I was interested recently to read a pamphlet issued by a well-known New York Life Assurance Company which in 1909 started general welfare work amongst their policy-holders. Since then they have spent over 31 million dollars in health literature and nursing in the areas where their business chiefly lies. They claim that, when compared with statistics for the general population, the figures for their policy-holders show a total saving of over a quarter million of lives on the expected mortality and a saving in death claims of more than 64 million dollars. This is proof of the value attached to health propaganda in what is not one of the least go-ahead countries of the world. I might mention here the interest with which I have watched the efforts of the Railway Board to disseminate public health propaganda by means of their demonstration trains. One of these trains on the North-Western Railway started on its tour on the 10th October 1928 and finished on the 18th April 1929 ; it visited 83

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stations, and over 500,000 people visited the train. More than a million and a half people moreover came to see the films dealing with health matters exhibited in railway cinema cars. There is a clear indication here of the power for good which such means of propaganda possess, and I wish the Railway Board all success in their endeavour.

When we turn to the Report of the St. John Ambulance Association, it is satisfactory to see that a larger number of persons have attended courses of instruction in First Aid, Home Nursing and hygiene during the past year than at any time since the Great War, and, if there has been a slight falling off in the number of certificates granted, this is no doubt due more to the sternness of the examiners than to shortcomings of the candidates. There can be no doubt that the substantial addition which is made every year to the knowledge of Ambulance work in the Army, the Railways and the Police, in schools, and mines, and prisons, means a steady increase in the sum total of the nation's capacity to meet efficiently the calls which may at a moment's notice be made upon any one of us to help injured or suffering humanity. The main function of the Association is educative, and it cannot always be possible for those invaluable helpers—professional men and others—who assist us by lecturing and examining in an honorary capacity to see the practical results of their work. I particularly welcome therefore the innovation made in the proceedings of this meeting by the statement which Major-General Sir Henry Symons has given us of the working of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. For the activities of the Brigade are the organised translation into practice of the instruction provided by a large band of workers all over India, and I feel sure that the story of its work which the Acting Chief Commissioner has just given us will give pleasure to many and will stimulate other qualified persons to lend their active assistance to this



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branch of the Association. We all regret that this will be the last occasion of its kind when Sir Henry Symons will be with us, and the Association in India will be the poorer by his retirement.

Since our last meeting the Order has sustained a loss from among its ranks which should not pass without reference at this meeting. Colonel A. C. Yate, who died recently, was a Knight of Justice of the Order, and it was very largely by his efforts that the St. John Ambulance Association was established and organised on a permanent basis in India at the beginning of this century.

It is very satisfactory, as His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has said, to be able to acknowledge the generous response received from the Central Indian Chiefs to his appeal for funds made last year. The interest which many Indian States show in the Association's work is no new story, and it was a source of great pleasure to the India Council to be invited to hold their All-India competitions in a State whose late ruler—Maharaja Sir Madhav Rao Scindia—was so prominent a figure in the Association. You will read an interesting account of the competitions in the Report, and I need not say more on this occasion than that we are sincerely grateful to His Highness the Maharaja of Gwalior and to the Dowager Maharani for the invitation they so kindly extended and for the assistance they gave to make the competitions a success.

I have to thank you, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion for the good attendance at this meeting, which has meant for some of you, I fear, a journey of no small trouble and discomfort. I trust that you will leave it satisfied that another good year's work has been accomplished, and determined to relax no efforts in extending the membership and the activities of the two organisations which we have the honour to represent.