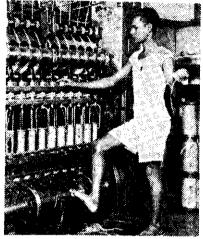


MOHATTA PALACE, Karachi, which houses the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations

Colombo Plan

THE other day H. C. McQueen, head of New Zealand's Technical Assistance Unit under the Colombo Plan, had a letter from C. R. Reddy, chief inspector of factories at Madras, now back home after a visit to New Zealand under the plan. Mr. Reddy wrote: "I met my Minister . . . and vividly described my visit to New Zealand. He is greatly impressed and promised to help me to incorporate some of my ideas to improve our labour conditions." Mr. Reddy, with G. M. Kalhatkar, a Bombay factory inspector, will be interviewed by Mr. McQueen on the YA-YZ link at 9.15 p.m. on Thursday, January 24. On the same link at the same time on the two following Thursdays, he will interview three Indian highway engineers and three Pakistan agricultural experts. All came to New Zealand under the technical assistance scheme.



INDIA HELPS HERSELF: Work in a jute research laboratory, Calcutta

(continued from previous page) over their shoulders, splashing in single file through the mud. They stop occasionally to catch the little green frogs that hop across the road in front of them. . . .

THE last sack has been dragged back from the pit and the pale cloud of steam has risen to join the smoke and warm breath under the iron roof. There is no light in the barn. The one window has a manure bag stapled across it, and the only entry is the small doorway through the closed double doors. The men move about restlessly in the dimness, talking only a little, thinking of food. Children crowd round the chimney, watching as the women pile pork on plates and surround it with puha and kumara. Somewhere a baby wails.

Charlie Topu pounds the table with a knife. The men sit, either at the table or on the ground, suddenly content. Speeches are as much part of the hangias the food. Charlie speaks in Maori for twenty minutes. Only the women and the baby are indifferent.

There are more speeches, and then the food is handed round. Three men go and draw beer from the keg on Charlie's verandah; they come back with it in buckets and set them along the table. Eating begins in earnest, Plates go back to the hangi, return, and go back again. When the buckets are baled dry they are refilled. There is plenty of talk, but only as an accompaniment

to drinking and eating. Trifles and jellies begin to disappear; so does the Christmas cake.

Then there is a slackening of pace. Nearly everyone talks more, picking at the food on their plates. A few lean on the table silently, too heavy to move or even speak. Down by the fireplace the women begin to eat.

AT two o'clock some pakeha from the school-house arrive, Everyone shakes hands with them. They are given seats at the head of the table and plates of food. One of Charlie Topu's sons starts on a speech of welcome, partly in English and partly in Maori. The guests listen politely, nodding their thanks when a bucket of fresh beer is put down in front of them. At the end of the welcoming speech one of the men speaks in reply.

Then they eat, Three young men talk to them while the rest watch. Their plates are taken away by a slim, ageless woman with the face of an Egyptian queen, who moves about the barn in a man's sleeveless pullover and a pair of pyjama trousers. When she has erved plates of trifle and jelly she dresses her baby at the other end of the table.

Time goes on. The rain stops and the visitors leave. The last bucket of beer is drawn, the last of the pork eaten. The men drift out of the barn and go back to their beds, while the women, sleepily, gather up the plates and glasses. The children play outside in the grey dusk.

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