

INDIA

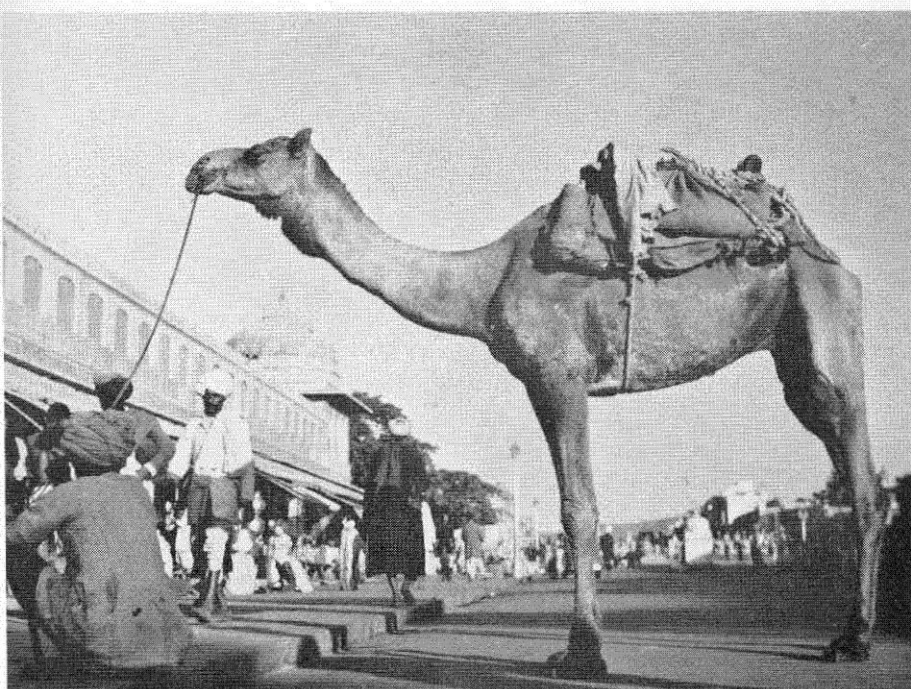
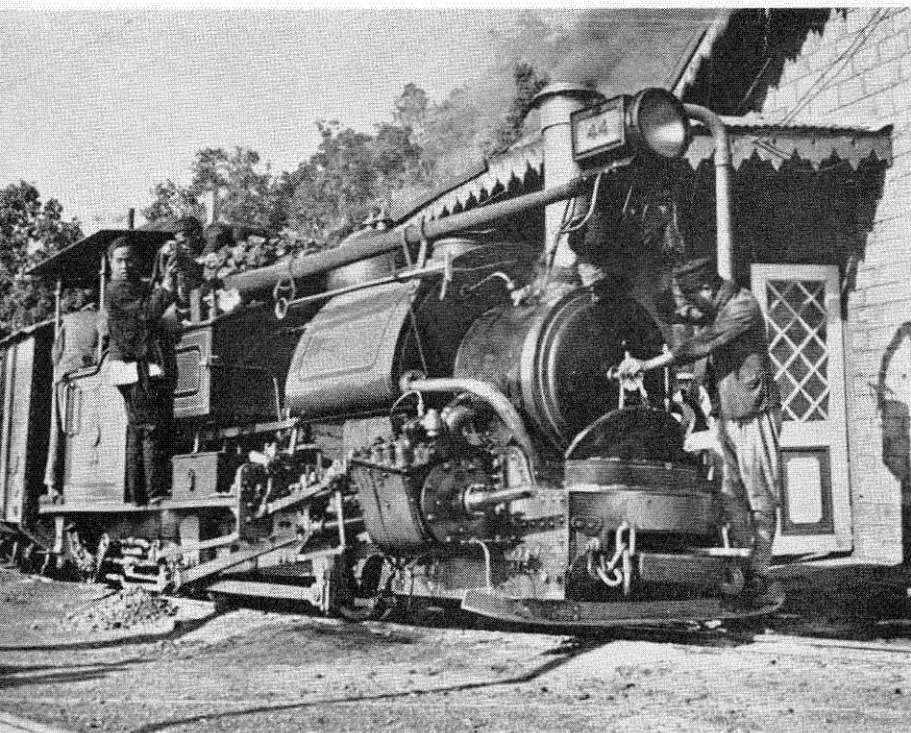
By SID ZIPSER, '30

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles by Mr. Zipser on a photographer's tour of the Orient. The first appeared in the December, 1940, issue.

India is renowned as the land of infinite contrasts and extremes. Riding a train across its hot plains, I roared past roads where camel caravans and ox carts stopped to stare at the iron monster. There were palaces and temples of astounding beauty, size and riches, and mud-walled villages and slums where whole families lived in a single room and as one Hindu explained to me, "They do not have a window because there is an old saying among the poor that 'a window would mean another blanket which they can't afford'."

The trains, too, are varied. Among other things, three different gauges add to the confusion. And the beds are absolutely individual, in fact, each person brings his own, a servant usually being hired to take care of the roll and luggage. At night, the bedding is unrolled on the long, thinly upholstered seats and you have the choice of leaving the windows closed and suffocating, or of opening the window and having a torrid blast of unconsumed carbon blown down your neck, ears and throat.

Of course, there are a few better trains, a very few, and many worse ones. Probably the most inefficient and charming one ascends from the plains of Bengal and twists and pants and squirms up a narrow gauge track that turns on a 49-foot radius, describes figure eights, spirals, and in the



Above: The Taj Mahal at Agra—surrounded now, as originally, by a beautiful garden.

Center: Toy-like locomotive of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Company — a comic opera affair which climbs and twists as no respectable locomotive would dare.

Below: A camel lends an atmosphere of enchanting unreality to the pink-walled city of Jaipur.

Above: *Singh's observatory at Jaipur—with two marble elephants made for the present Maharajah.*

Center: *Jaipur—a corner of the brass bazaar.*

Below: *An entrance to the Pearl Mosque at Agra.*



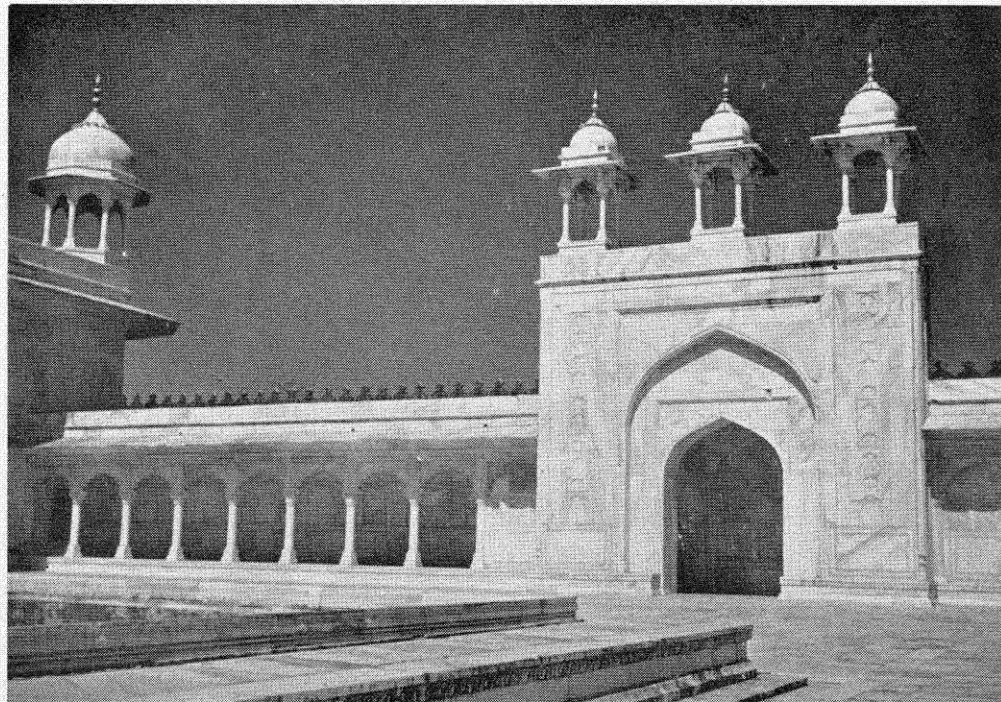
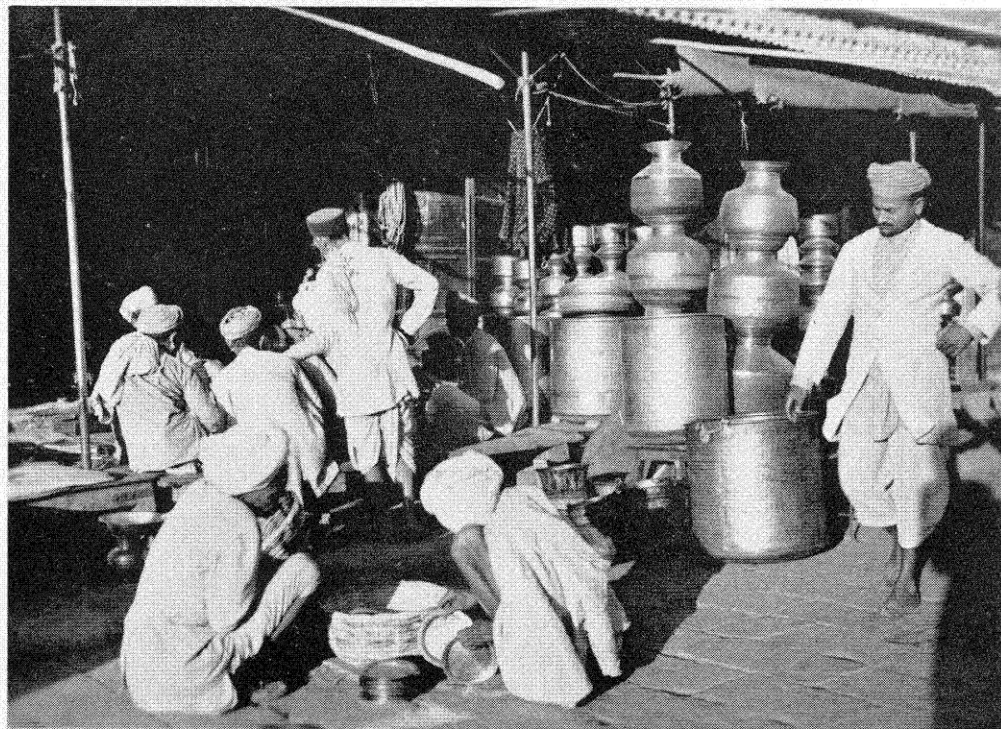
steepest places, zig-zags backwards and forwards up "Y" sections. One attendant rides the cow-catcher to work the sand-box and console any animals or children that might be frightened.

Finally, in a little more than twice the time required by the bus, or three times the period of a private car, you arrive at Darjeeling, gateway to Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan. The "most marvelous scenic view in the world" is supposed to unfold before you but all I saw were thick clouds that completely engulfed us. Hopefully, I arose at three the next morning, and it was raining, but I climbed higher until I was on the snowy crest of Tiger Hill and there I was fortunate enough to have the clouds break apart for the most glorious sunrise I've ever seen: far across the valley before me, and above the churning clouds, rose the great glowing chain of the Himalayas, 28,000 feet high.

CONFUSION ON THE GANGES

While most of India's great religious thought seems to have originated within the impressive humbling sights of the Himalayas, it is at Benares on the sacred Ganges that one finds the most fanatical ritualistic aspects of Hinduism. The water is supposed to be so holy that bathing in it will cure any disease or difficulty, and if a Hindu dies there he is supposed to go straightway to paradise. Naturally, with such inducements, the stone steps or ghats along the river are as crowded as Coney Island on a warm Sunday morning. Side by side, you see people bathing, drinking, washing clothes, and pushing in the charred remains of a departed relative. Within the city as well as along the ghats, you see hideously deformed beggars torturing themselves for alms and celestial favor, and dung-smearing pilgrims rolling on cobblestone streets completing journeys of sometimes hundreds of miles in this manner.

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Then there is the serene beauty of the Taj Mahal which in itself would easily justify a trip around the world. Moslems and Hindus, more than white people, make continual pilgrimages to this tomb of Shajahan's wife which is also a shrine to the glory and beauty and rich emotion of India. A score of miles away is the vast red sandstone city of Fate-phur-sikri, carved like a jewel but suddenly deserted by the great Emperor Akbar, several hundred years ago. I met a wise Canadian missionary later who told me that he took

a group of native boys upon one of the splendid pavilions to camp for the night, all of them enchanted by the sunset and sunrise and fine surroundings, and there he told them of the glory and great humanity of their Akbar. You rarely meet the narrowminded missionaries you read about.

Delhi, the Imperial City, is the traditional and present capital of India. Moslems look not too proudly upon the new capital buildings of the British which form the seventh or eighth successive capital of the conqueror, and they recall that old saying with a gleam in their eye, that

"He who builds a new city in Delhi, shall perish in its ruins." I never realized that "ruins" could be so fascinating as they are in Delhi, and when it comes to that exquisite marble palace of Shajahan which housed the famous Peacock throne, the inscribed words alone do it justice, "If there is a paradise on earth, Oh Lord, it is this, it is this, oh it is this!"

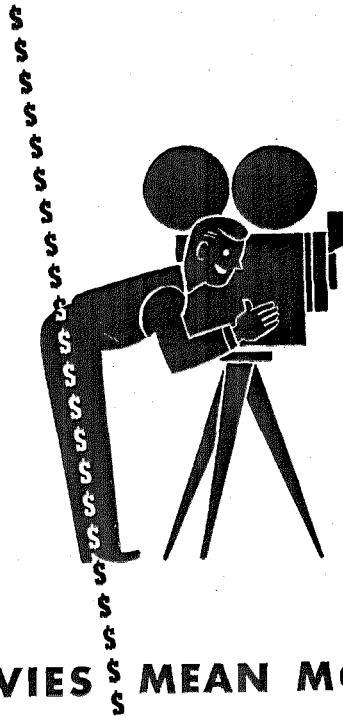
Next, I wondered down to Jaipur, the exotic capital of a rajah's province, where camels and elephants and splendidly mounted troops pass by the fantastically pink buildings of the city; and where girls and women anxiously wait for animal droppings which they eagerly scoop up in their hands and carry away in baskets on their heads, for dried dung is a precious fuel, and it also serves as a disinfectant and cleanser when sweeping out their hovels.

RAJAHS RELICS OF PAST

The rajahs are a feudal disintegrating relic of India's past, humored and publicized by Britain to help keep India divided. A few enlightened ones hardly justify their general existence, and much of their vain and vulgar display would look crude at an American circus.

I traveled southward now towards the tip of India and the island of Ceylon where I was to catch another Dutch freighter home. Bombay, Bangalore, Mysore, Ootocumund, Madura, Kandy and Colombo were visted enroute. Vast dry plains, giant valleys, crumbling fortresses, enormous carved temples were seen. Everything in India seems big, on the grand scale. Numerous sun-baked villages reminding me of Mexico were passed. Most of India's three hundred and fifty million people do not live in the cities but in countless poverty-stricken little communities of mud huts, eking out a living from the soil, taxed beyond all hope of payment even into the next generation.

From Mysore to Ootocumund, I traveled the blistering 99 miles by native bus, not seeing another white man during the entire trip, and having plenty of time to explore the wayside villages while we waited for passengers or the driver repeatedly overhauled a worn-out carburetor. I bought bananas and cocoanuts from roadside vendors who couldn't understand English and frightened one little tot who acted like he'd never sen a white man before. But the heat, the delays, the



MOVIES MEAN MONEY

\$200,000,000 or more is spent annually in the production of motion pictures and allied industries for wages, salaries, materials, supplies, electrical energy, etc. The availability of low-cost Edison electric power is one of the factors influencing the centering of the motion picture industry in Southern California.

A Community Enterprise



noise, and the gas fumes became almost unbearable. Eight long hours were required for that ordeal. Then when I longed for a bath as never before, the young grandson of twenty generations of blind goats urged me to come to a hotel where they had a "modern bathroom." It was a small room set apart by a curtain. In it were two identical five gallon pails, one on a table beside some soap and a towel, the other on the floor below an obvious framework. What upset me was the boy who blithely removed the buckets and reentered carelessly, setting one here, the other there, with no apparent discrimination.

TOURISTS SENT BY GODS

Tourists, to many Indian guides and servants, are multi-millionaires sent by the gods to dispense alms and tips to their wretched selves. And a more skillful group of wheedlers, chiselers, flatterers, and outright thieves hardly exists anywhere.

Contrasting the petty, the wretched, the fanatical, and the hateful, are many Indians of brilliant mind and tolerant outlook. From students, lawyers, business representatives, doctors, salesmen, and soldiers, I heard many poetic tales of Indian religion and history, of her scenic beauties and her industrial problems. And most of all, I heard of India's growing nationalism, of elective provinces and a National Congress representing two-thirds of India, of her great admiration for America which also rose against unjust taxation and became free, and used her resources to develop herself as a nation and to uplift the people to a more just way of life.

The two most popular leaders of democratic India are Gandhi and Nehru, two brilliant statesmen who refused the soft jobs and subsidies that have lured so many Indian intellectuals and rajahs to see Britain's viewpoint. Tempered with a respect for their worthy opponent, and with gratitude to the many fine Englishmen who have devoted their lives constructively to India, they believe now that democracies must overcome the limitations of empires and the degradations of dictatorships. They appreciate democracy even more than we do for they see age-old tragedies of intolerance and exploitation and fanatical leadership.

Patiently and skillfully, respected and

TECH "Y" ACTIVE

The Tech branch of the Y.M.C.A. has continued its expansion program during the current year, making several significant strides in the direction of assisting students on the campus to build useful, well-rounded lives. Under the direction of General Secretary John Price, several innovations have been tried out and many of the traditional activities amplified and extended.

The program got off to a fast start this Fall when one hundred forty-two members of the Frosh Class attended the three day conference at Camp Arbolado, near San Jacinto. Some twenty upperclassmen and

TELESCOPE PROGRESS

Testing of the 200-inch telescope at Palomar Mountain will be started next summer. Dr. Max Mason, chairman of the Caltech Observatory Council, reported recently. The giant telescope is to be tested with a dummy 12-inch mirror in July or August.

The huge "eye," now being polished, is not expected to be installed until the end of 1942, Dr. Mason said.

The dome and telescope mounting has been completed. The drive and control mechanisms that will operate the world's largest telescope now are being installed.

In the summer test the telescope will be counterweighted so that the test will be under true conditions — conditions that are to exist when the "eye" is finally installed.

Superintendent of construction at Palomar is Byron A. Hill, '25.

SCIENTISTS MEET

For the first time in history, the world's leading men of science, who meet in Pasadena in June, are going to open their sessions to the lay public for a brief peek at the scientific wonders of the earth.

Three night meetings, to be held in the Civic Auditorium, June 17, 18, and 19, will be open to the public without charge. Some of the country's most distinguished scientists will discuss scientific subjects of interest to all people in language understandable by all.

Two subjects already have been chosen. The first will concern the significance of the world's largest telescope at Palomar Mountain. Some idea of what astronomers expect to learn with this "super-eye" will be given the public.

Another evening will be devoted to a scientific discussion of the Pacific Ocean and its potential value to mankind.

Arrangements for the meeting of the Pacific Division of the American Association for Advancement of Science were completed at the Civic Auditorium recently by Dr. Paul Merrill of the Mount Wilson Observatory and Dr. W. B. Houston of the California Institute of Technology.

followed by many diverse factions, Gandhi and Nehru are adapting their country to the great hope of democracy and to a new world-wide federation of self-respecting nations which they believe as many people do is so essential today in an industrial world.



Above: YMCA Secretary John Price offers advice.

faculty assisted as leaders at the largest camp held in the history of the Institute. The Frosh tea dance also set an attendance record when one hundred thirty-five new students turned out to insure themselves of an excellent beginning in the social life of the school. Many of the Class of '44 insist that these two events immediately made them feel welcome as a part of the student body.

Three new groups have proved quite popular. The "Town Hall" discussion group meets in some nearby home for dinner Thursday evenings to listen to the broadcast. Some faculty member or community leader is invited to meet with the group to contribute to the discussion. The Junior-Senior "Y" meets bi-monthly for luncheons where speakers are presented on topics of current interest. Especially organized for Freshman and Sophomores was the "Friendship Seminar" lead by Dr. Hildreth Caldwell. Some one hundred thirty-five students were regular in their attendance at these four meetings.

The intercollegiate calendar has been a busy one. The practice of joint dinner meetings with the Y.W. and Y.M. students before football games proved to be very popular. Meetings were held with Whittier, La Verne, Redlands, and P.J.C. Eleven students attended the mid-winter conference at Asilomar. The Tech "Y" acted as "host" to over one hundred students from the four year Southern California colleges for a get-together in February.

Greatly used are the "Y" services. Over one-half as much money was loaned from the loan fund during the first term as was loaned all last year. Eleven hundred dollars of books were sold for students last year and more than seven hundred dollars worth have already been sold this year. Although the part-time employment is lagging a little behind last year's record of two thousand dollars, some twenty students are getting substantial help.

The professional leadership and direction given by the full-time General Secretary, John Price, has proven how essential it is to the development of a program to have qualified leadership.

Last year an increased number of alumni added their financial support to this program and the "Y" is currently soliciting contributions from all alumni who are interested in seeing the activities continue. The alumni members who are giving leadership on the Advisory Board in the direction of the activities of this organization are: Markham Salisbury '25, Donald Macfarlane '26, Stan Johnson '33 and Charles Thomas '35.

Below: Scene at 1940 Frosh Camp.

