

Life in the Terai Section - Fourth Report From Nepal

By Peggy Wallaston
Chester County IFYE

As I sit here in Tulsipur enjoying the sunshine and warmth of this tiny village, my thoughts turn toward Pennsylvania where you are deep in winter's cold.

At the present I am experiencing life in the Terai Nepal is divided into three sections the Hills, including the Himalayas with the world's highest mountain peaks, the Valley, in which Kathmandu, Nepal's capital city, is located, and the Terai which borders India.

Everything is very different here in the Terai as compared to the Hills. The Indian influence is very much in evidence, as one might expect, due to the proximity of this country to Nepal.

One everyday example is the way bundles are carried. In the Hills, baskets of grass, and vegetables and bundles of rice are carried from the fields on the stooped backs of everyone—from young children to the senior citizens of the village. In the Terai, jugs of water, bundles of grain, and bags of grain (weigh-

ing from 100 to 150 pounds are carried with apparent great ease on the heads. Oh, such steady heads and straight backs these people have!

Methods of agricultural practices are one step ahead of those in the Hills. Due to the level terrain, animal labor can be utilized in the Terai.

Yoked oxen, pulling plows, are able to turn more sod in a day's work than a man using a short-handled hand plow. I have even seen a few tractors in use, however, the cost of tractor as well as the gas to run it are prohibitive to most Nepali farmers.

Their average annual income is 700 rupees or \$70 U.S. currency.

Much of Nepal's agriculture production is grown in the Terai, rice and wheat being the main crops. Improved varieties of both are being introduced. However, acceptance of these as well as improved techniques using lime sowing, commercial fertilizers and irrigation are slow to take hold.

Although still in the infancy stage of development, 4-H Clubs



Peggy Wallaston
4-H Begins in Nepal

are doing their own small part in raising the agricultural level. Demonstration plots of rice and wheat both local and improved varieties and techniques are being planted by the clubs in the hope that their fathers will realize the value in terms of increased yield and profit of the improved varieties.

Char pate (4-H) Clubs were started by an IFYE to the U.S. in 1955 when he returned to Nepal. Most of the members are boys between the ages of 12 and 21.

The projects available include rice and wheat cultivation, and vegetable gardening.

Last year, competition was begun in each of the 12 4-H districts of Nepal. Vegetables and grains were exhibited and prizes awarded.

Char pate Clubs are at the same stage of development now in Nepal as they were in the U.S. in 1914 and 4-H was first organized. They have a long way to go in organization, record keeping, and variety of projects

offered, but at least a start has been made.

Char pate Clubs are more active in the Terai than the Hills due to the accessibility of transportation. There are not mountains to inhibit or discourage travel as there are in the Hills.

As this letter travels to America, life in Nepal's Terai is moving at its usual slow, leisurely pace. Wheat has been planted and is growing steadily; gardens are past their prime, and people are awaiting the hot, dry season which begins next month.

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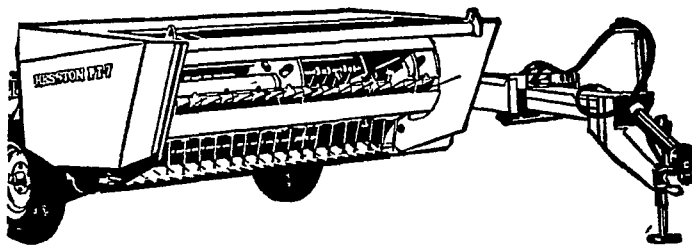
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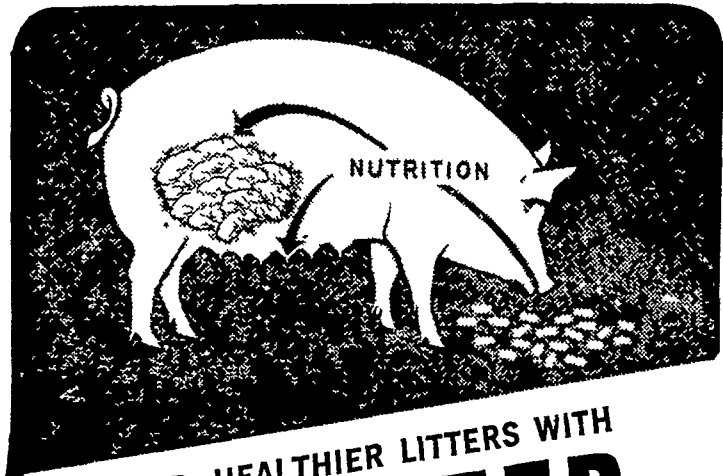
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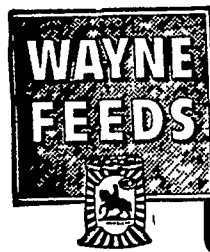
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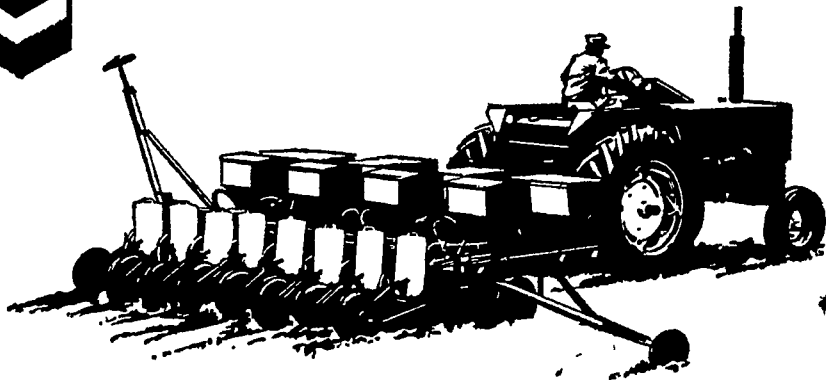
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