

KING OPENS COLONIAL MONTH

London - capital of a community totalling a quarter of the world's population greets Britain's Colonies. Gold Coast police form a Guard of Honour at Church House, Westminster, as the King and Queen arrive to open "Colonial Month," inaugurating a new era in Commonwealth relations. A bouquet for the Queen from 4-year-old Shahidah, daughter of Inche Abdul Hasid of Malaya, sets the note for a warmhearted all-colonial welcome for their Majesties.

The presence of the Prime Minister and distinguished guests as well as the King and Queen marks the new significance the Colonies now command. For, as the King says, progress depends upon a true sense of partnership between all society.

SPEECH

And it is as partners in a great and exciting venture that representatives from Britain's 50 Colonies are presented to the King and Queen. For the hall-mark of the Commonwealth, says the King, is the co-operative advance towards freedom with rulers and ruled each giving of its best to the common weal. This almost revolutionary conception of Colonial relations is today being worked out in practice. Typical of the success of British development schemes is the harbour of Lagos - gateway to Nigeria, a rich and productive Colony. The money that is lavished on such plans will be to our benefit and to that of the people of the Colonies. We will gain by Nigeria's increased cocoa, coffee and cotton output. They will benefit in improved health services, new schools and Universities and steady progress towards self-government. In Northern Nigeria, where the drying of hides and skins is the chief industry, that same policy is faithfully carried out.

Nigeria's cocoa and coffee exports total more than £4 million annually. In area four times as big as Britain, her exports are four times as numerous as her imports. Agricultural progress, too, is swift and Nigeria will play an ever-increasing part in the Commonwealth's ground-nut scheme.

As in Nigeria, so in Malaya. Here, where tin ranks high among her exports, the new conception of Colonial partnership is spreading, despite troublesome guerilla warfare. Malaya's rubber shipments to America bring in more dollars than any other export from the Commonwealth.

The Colonies drive to help Britain's economy is perhaps best shown in East Africa, where after years of heart-breaking scientific research, a new start has been made in the rearing of cattle. Thus, Britain's dependence on her Colonies grows every day. "Partners for prosperity" that is the watchword for a great Commonwealth of Nations.