

Dr. Ralph W. Cummings, Field Director,
The Rockefeller Foundation, India.

The problem of hunger in the modern world can only be solved through the application of science and technology to agriculture. Agricultural research and education form the keystone of this new approach to agriculture in the developing nations. It is significant and visionary that his immense contributions to the progress of Indian agriculture have been concentrated in these two areas.

Soon after he came to India in 1957, he enabled the setting up of the All India Coordinated Maize Improvement Scheme, realising that in order to make rapid progress, crop research had to be integrated in approach, cutting across state boundaries and the barriers of institutions and scientific disciplines. The success of this pattern of research has led to its being adopted as a model for crop improvement research in all the major crops, and the same model has now been adopted in several other countries also, and also for inter-national projects. With great practical wisdom and emphasis on realistic possibilities, he made the core of this programme the concept of making the maximum use of existing resources, a philosophy which is profoundly relevant to countries like ours which are often short of materials and equipment. This philosophy, put into practice with quite thoroughness, has had a striking impact on Indian agriculture in the short space of nine years, both in terms of the productivity of agriculture and of the evolution of new patterns of research.

Equally deep and far-sighted has been his continuing interest in education at all levels. He was intimately concerned with the establishment of the Post-Graduate School of IARI in 1958, and acted as its first Dean. In this area too, he has been

a path-breaker, evolving a flexible system of education which has been adopted as a model by the Agricultural Universities set up later on, contributing also to their growth and development, and to the growth of a philosophy of agricultural education and to the continuing improvement of programmes in this field. Typical of his deep concern with all aspects of education is the fact that he has been closely associated with the growth of the American International School, one of the best educational institutions in the city of Delhi, and were for many years the President of its Board of Management.

His interest in agriculture has been as wide as it is deep, and has concerned itself, in the manner of the truly great, with both the highest and the lowest. He has been closely concerned with the reorganisation of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and with the making of policy decisions at the highest levels. At the same time he ~~showed~~ showed a deep personal interest in the provision of fellowships for scholars, amenities for students, supplies of textbooks, farm machinery and laboratory equipment and many other details which form part of the programme of the Rockefeller Foundation in India.