

NEW OIL-WEALTH FOR IRAQ

To Basra and all Iraq comes good news with the opening of a new oilfield. Iraq is a go-ahead country but there's still much of the old customs - like the hubble-bubble pipe, to interest visitors. And in some outlying districts, water is still dragged by donkeys. They walk backwards and forwards pulling on ropes, at the end of which are containers made of animal hides which scoop up water from the well. Irrigation schemes would make the desert rich land once again but they need money.

Here's the solution. Today the Prime Minister and Mr. H.S. Gibson, Managing Director of the Basra Petroleum Company, open a new oilfield which will bring wealth to the country. Premier Nuri Pasha el-Said turns on a valve and the oil begins its flow to the markets of the world. After many years of extensive search and the spending of many millions of pounds, the Basra Petroleum Co. struck the rich reservoir. Well after well is being opened up. It's a big expensive job to bore down two miles before hitting oil. At frequent intervals the drill has to be pulled up to change the cutter. Then when it goes down again extra lengths have to be added - like a chimney sweep's brush.

From Subair, where the oilfield is, the pipe-line runs across the desert to the Persian Gulf at Fao. There tankers load up with the precious fuel the world needs so badly. Yes, it's a big day for Iraq and there's a feast to celebrate (sheep stuffed with rice and a host of other good things) but that's only the first of the good things that will come to Iraq - thanks to oil.