bound to think of the canal in terms of the world, even though it was built, owned and operated by a private company. So at his prompting the Suez Convention of 1888 ruled that it "shall be always free and open in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war without distinction of flag." There have been evasions, even violations of the principle, but the Compagnie Universelle has itself adhered to it as strictly as it could. The ideals that Ferdinand de Lesseps cherished and that were more or less successfully converted into realities by the company that he created should be preserved and restated. They originated in a happier world than this, but they express and carry into action beliefs that are part and parcel of the democratic West.

SUEZ CENTENARY

The centenary of the signing by the Viceroy of Egypt of the concession that enabled Ferdinand de Lesseps to carry out his great conception of the Suez Canal is worth commemorating. The canal, a dream as old as the Pharaohs, shortens the route from Britain to Bombay and Calcutta by 4,500 and 3,600 miles respectively. It was Britain's life line to the Far East.

An extraordinary man was Ferdinand de Lesseps, the canal builder. Until he was 50 he had never undertaken an engineering task. Palmerstone treated the idea of "sailing ships through the desert" with contempt and did his best to crush it. Supported at first only by his friend the Viceroy of Egypt, Mohammed Said, the "grand français," as he has been fittingly called, a remarkable combination of promoter, born engineer, diplomat and financial genius built a waterway which means as much to the commerce of the world as the Panama Canal.

A man of such large vision was

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