


Excellent - good use is made of sources consulted

ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ESSAY COMPETITION, 1960.

CLASS C

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TITLE OF ESSAY:

If you were going to live in another Commonwealth country which would you choose, and why ?

The vast British Commonwealth of Nations is a free association of several important states and dependencies. All the member countries owe a great debt of gratitude to Great Britain, the Mother Country, for aiding them in their development. Now they are repaying this debt by their fealty and co-operation. Many have already gained their independence, but they are still closely connected with the Mother Country.

The total area of the Commonwealth is approximately twelve million square miles and the population is approximately six hundred and fifty millions, which gives an average density of population of only fifty to sixty per square mile.

But here, in our little Colony of Hong Kong, the area is only about four hundred square miles and the population is approximately three millions. This gives a very big density of about seven thousand per square mile.

Hence I find myself living in very overcrowded surroundings. Opportunities in the future will become fewer and fewer and competition keener and keener. For instance, the chances of pursuing higher studies in Hong Kong are very limited at present and will become more difficult in the future. And later on, a suitable position in life will be very hard to obtain.

So if I were going to live in another Commonwealth country, I would choose Canada. Canada is a young country. It is therefore not over-populated. It has an area of approximately three and a half million square miles and a population of about twenty millions. This gives it an average density of only four to five per square mile. So compared with Hong Kong, Canada can be called an "empty" country.

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Although large areas of Canada will never be able to support a large population, for example the snowy northlands, and the Rocky Mountains, yet there is still a very large area under-populated and which will support many millions more.

Education facilities in Canada are excellent. There, public education except for that of the native Indians and Eskimos (for which the Federal Government is responsible), is under the control of the provinces. The cost is met by local taxation aided by grants from the provincial governments. While the provincial systems differ in particulars, the general plan is the same for all except Quebec where there are two systems - the Roman Catholic, which has developed in the French tradition, and the Protestant system, similar to that of the other provinces.

Besides good academic facilities, the space and the grounds for sports are wonderful. Here in Hong Kong, recreational and sporting facilities are very inadequate. So from a student's point of view, I would prefer to to to Canada for studies.

Going further, there are about two hundred and ninety institutions of higher education in Canada, including universities, junior colleges, technical and professional institutions and independent theological colleges. Of these, about fifty are degree-granting universities and colleges. Each province has at least one university except Prince Edward Island and Quebec - the former has a provincial junior college and the latter has three provincial professional schools with university affiliation.

The total number of students attending the Hong Kong University, including those taking the extra courses is only about one thousand five hundred whereas in Canada enrolments are estimated at one hundred thousand students. A population of three million people in Hong Kong and only one thousand five hundred university students gives a proportion of one student to every two thousand of the population.

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The number of university students in Canada being one hundred thousand and the total population being twenty millions gives a proportion of one university student to every two hundred of the population. This clearly shows the great difference between the chances of admission into the Hong Kong University and a university in Canada. And also in Canada, there is less difficulty in gaining admission into the faculty of one's choice than there is in Hong Kong. The facilities for higher studies are decidedly far more advanced in Canada than in Hong Kong.

Then after graduating from a university in Canada, one is nearly certain of obtaining employment. Canada being a young and growing country, needs trained men and women. Opportunities, therefore, are great.

Canada too is a wealthy country. Its extensive prairies grow an enormous amount of wheat. There is too much for the people of Canada to consume. Therefore much of it is exported. Canada's industries and mines are developing very rapidly and bring much wealth to the country. Its fruit farms, its furs, lumber and fisheries are also earning millions of dollars for Canada per annum.

But besides her material wealth, Canada is extremely wealthy naturally. By this is meant her natural beauty. For example, the Niagara Falls, the rugged beauty of the Rocky mountains, the national parks and other lovely sights and spots.

Some say that the climate of Canada is too severe for people from tropical areas. But this can only be said of the winter, for the summers are warm, or even hot. Winter, too, is made more bearable by central heating. Light clothes are worn in the well-heated homes, but very heavy, warm clothes are worn outside. Besides, it is a 'dry' healthy cold that even a person from the tropics can easily get used to.

/But.....

But above all these reasons, one which is more important than all the rest, is the goodwill of the people of Canada. In Canada, there is no racial prejudice, a misfortune which dominates so many other Commonwealth countries. Students who have gone to Canada from Hong Kong, write back and say that in Canada, they are treated very well. The hospitality and friendship extended to all strangers in Canada is wonderful, and it is these little acts of kindness, hospitality and friendship which help to bind the peoples of that great association of nations, the British Commonwealth of Nations together.

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