

2nd Prize

α =  
1936

Margery Keys,

27, Mayles Road,  
Milton,  
Portsmouth.

Throughtful

2nd  
1936

School Attended. Southern Secondary School for girls,  
Portsmouth.

Date of Birth. [REDACTED]

What can culture do to strengthen the links between  
the different parts of the Empire?

Summary.

Introduction.

All cultured men and women strive towards one goal and thus have many sympathies in common. The presence of such people in the Empire will greatly help to strengthen the links between its different parts.

Paragraph I.

Cultured men and women in all parts of the Empire will be united in support of humanitarian movements.

Paragraph II.

The gift of self-government to the colonies was one of cultured statesmen, and prevented any break-up of the Empire such as that in 1783. If India is given full self-government the Empire will be strengthened by the gratitude of the Indians.

Paragraph III.

Cultured Englishmen have given potential equality to coloured races in the Empire. The gift of real equality to these peoples would strengthen the Empire by the acquisition of their affections and capacities.

Paragraph IV.

The part which Imperial Conferences have played and can play in the future.

Paragraph V.

The methods by which culture can be attained.

Paragraph VI.

The argument that considers that culture can do little to unite the different parts of the Empire, and the answer to this argument.

Conclusion.

## Essay.

Michael Angelo, one of the finest of artists and greatest of Italians, is said to have written that "nothing makes the soul so pure, so religious, as the endeavour to create something perfect." The attainment of perfection, physical, mental and moral is the supreme object of life, but it can only be even partially acquired by way of culture which Matthew Arnold has defined in one concise but adequate phrase as "a study... of perfection". Nothing unites men into strong and effective groups as much as the striving after a common goal: all the greatest and most influential parties, religious, political, literary and artistic, have been formed by men who, however much they may have differed as to the best and quickest methods of attaining it, <sup>have</sup> all sought one object alone, the emancipation of a people, the conversion of all men to the worship of one God or the establishment of one particular code of beliefs or mode of worship. Thus men of all nationalities and of all races may be strongly united by a common desire and determination to acquire culture and ultimate perfection, so as to form a strong and compact group in a world where, even at this advanced stage of civilisation, only a small proportion of the population of the world are truly cultured. A sense of all that is noblest and best in the fine arts, in ethics and in religion is characteristic of such men: their bodies and minds are well-developed, controlled and adjusted, their judgment finely-tempered so that, having a similar sense of values, they rarely differ on questions of great import. It is apparent that such men will be united

in many and various ways in pursuit of ideals which are not commonly found amongst those less cultured. Thus if all peoples in Canada, Australia and other parts of the Empire can become, as many have already, understanding and cultured men and women, each Dominion and colony will be strongly linked with its sister Dominions and colonies since all have the same great aims which individual Canadians, Australians and others strive to attain. All members of the British Empire will thus be united in support of liberty of every kind since without liberty perfection cannot be attained: they will abhor dictatorships under which no liberty or culture can exist and which, if they were to arise in any of our Dominions or colonies, would seriously threaten the continuance of unity in the Empire. As lovers of culture, citizens of the Empire will always prefer moral to physical force, so that the British Empire will form a strong supporter of the League of Nations which is a cultural idea in practice. It is not difficult to imagine the effect on the unity of the Empire and the power and influence which this unity would have had in world affairs if the different parts of the Empire had united recently in one strong body either to enforce sanctions against Italy, during her recent war in Africa (or <sup>even</sup> to approve without hesitation of the policy of the Duce). If all members of the British Empire <sup>had</sup> ~~were~~ been sufficiently cultured the whole Empire would have been united in making its presence felt at Geneva in support of justice, whereas, since the different parts of the Empire <sup>had</sup> ~~were~~ differed as to the right and wrong of the case the links between the different parts of the Empire have not been strengthened by common action on an international problem.

Cultured men and women in the Empire desire

for the most part to support the work of the League of Nations which deals with the social welfare of peoples: the re-patriating of prisoners, the care of invalids and young children, the control of traffics in dangerous drugs and the setting up of better conditions of labour in the countries of the world. By expounding at Geneva these desires of their fellow-countrymen, the representatives of the different parts of the Empire will again feel how strong a unity is the result of the pursuit of common ideals.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century statesmen in England and in America held power who, although their virtues and talents were often of the highest order, nevertheless lacked a certain spirit of generosity and forbearance which true culture might have given them and which would have enabled each to see and understand the opposite point of view and act accordingly. The result of the deficiency was the War of American Independence and the Treaty of Versailles of 1763 by which the United States of America was established. Cultured Englishmen of the nineteenth century were resolved that this phase of history should never be repeated, and during the last century Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand were given first representative, and then, as the interest and capacities of their peoples increased, full responsible government, so that no other parts of the Empire have tried to follow the example of the American colonies. It is to be hoped that when India acquires full responsible government by the India Act which has been passed recently her peoples will feel themselves bound to the Empire by other ties than

political ties.

The cultured mind of the nineteenth century statesman prompted him to grant in the Empire the potential equality of blacks and whites. If all the white peoples in the Empire can become sufficiently cultured as to set up a real equality between the two races, the links between the different parts of the Empire will be doubly strengthened by an increase in the loyalty and allegiance of men and women who are already rapidly acquiring every right to equality with the white races. This consideration also implies the freeing of the Indians from the chains of the caste system, a system which has brought untold misery to thousands whose love and devotion would enhance the unity of an Empire which should free them from so oppressive and unjust an organization.

At the time of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 a Conference with the representatives of the Dominions and Colonies was held in London. Since that date Imperial Conferences have been held at varying intervals until the members of the 1907 Conference ~~decided~~ <sup>decided</sup> that these meetings should be held every four years. At these conferences foreign affairs, economic affairs and defence are discussed, as well as a host of minor matters which require the attention and united action of the whole Empire. That these conferences should be continued is the wish of every true and cultured Imperialist who desires the furtherance of that mutual harmony and unity between the different parts of the Empire which was inaugurated by the setting up of a plan for conferences with the colonies of a far more cultured and liberal a type than that allowed by any other country.

It is thus evident that education can effect the unity between the different parts of the Empire to a great extent; but even to-day culture is not so widespread as would be wished, and unless at sixty or seventy per cent of the public, whose views guide the policy of the home and colonial governments, are truly cultured, greater unity in the Empire than exists to-day may not be achieved. There are two great influences in life which, by producing more cultured, that is, more perfect men and women, need to be widespread in the British Empire, if for no other reason than that they can indirectly further Empire unity. These powers are religion, that is, Christianity and education: Christianity, since it sets lofty and noble ideals before men: education, because it trains and develops the mind. Of the place of Christianity in the Empire little need be said since it is already so widespread in most of the Dominions and Colonies, while missionaries are carrying on an invaluable work in India, Africa and Australia. It is to be hoped that education in the Empire will become as widespread and universal as should be the case in the mother-country in the future. Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand have already established systems of primary and secondary education, but much yet remains to be done in India. "Seven children out of eight in India," says Mr. Lokhale, "are growing up to-day in ignorance and darkness, and four villages out of five are as yet without a school-house." That education will soon embrace all classes and creeds in India, and that higher education, which is found extensively in the rest of the Empire, will succeed, together with the dissemination of the doctrines of Christianity in producing in the future a highly

cultured and intelligent population is the earnest wish of every Imperialist who desires the maintenance of the unity and integrity of the Empire.

There are, doubtless, other methods by which the unity of the Empire may be strengthened than those already mentioned in favour of culture. Many have considered that the <sup>power</sup> strength of the British navy and the contrasting weakness of those of the Dominions and Colonies would form a sufficiently strong link between the different parts of the Empire, but now when the Dominions are rapidly building their own fleets this argument no longer avails. Some consider that if the mother-country adopted a system of preferential tariffs the Empire would be strengthened: others have suggested an Imperial Customs Union for the same purpose. While a policy of colonial preference would undoubtedly strengthen the Empire it surely could never have so powerful an influence as that of culture. There are a few who would argue by precedent that culture can do little to strengthen the links between the different parts of the Empire since Greece with all her culture was never united by any other ties than those of race and religion: since in spite of the existence of cultured Germans and Italians in the last century it needed the hard realism of two practical statesmen, Bismarck and Cavour, to unite Germany and Italy. But it is obvious that the parallels are by no means exact, so that the argument is somewhat <sup>false</sup> ~~true~~.

Finally it should be remembered that the states of Greece or Italy or even of Germany with her Emperor could not claim to be united, as are the different parts of the British Empire, by the rule of a sovereign who is known to many of his subjects and universally beloved and

7.  
respected. Culture can do much towards strengthening the links between the different parts of the Empire, but the sovereignty of King Edward VII must always form the strongest of all chains binding the Dominions and Colonies inseparably to the mother-country.

---

#### Books Consulted.

- "Culture and Anarchy" by Matthew Arnold.  
"The Expansion of England" by Seeley.  
"The British Empire" - edited by A. F. Pollard M.A.  
"The British Empire" by J. C. Somervell.  
"The British Empire" by C. S. S. Higham.
-