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in spite of weak composition L-

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DATE OF BIRTH

NAME OF SCHOOL Raffles Girls' School

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How Empire Day is observed in my district and how I think the celebrations could be made more effective.

Empire Day is observed in all the Government Schools in my district. The celebrations take almost the same form in all the schools, so I shall describe how we celebrate it in our school. We make elaborate preparations in good time each year, before the approach of Empire Day. The younger children are taught songs, dances and marches while the bigger girls rehearse plays dealing with the lives of the Empire Builders. Thus all the girls have their parts to perform when Empire Day comes. Stories, taken from the lives of the great Empire Builders, are read to us on Empire Day by our teachers, who also teach us to honour and respect the King and to be loyal and good citizens when we grow up. At the close of the celebrations we sing the National Anthem and salute the Union Jack as we march past it. These celebrations last for about two and a half hours, after which we are dismissed from school for the rest of the day. In the Boys' Schools where there are Boy Scouts, the Scouts conduct parades in addition to the usual celebrations. The celebrations are about the same each year, so after a child has been in school for a few years, his interest in them flags. He takes them for granted, and loses his earlier enthusiasm. Variations in the celebrations are thus necessary to hold the interest of the older children.

Before any suggestions how to make the celebrations

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more effective are offered, it is necessary to know the objects of the observance of Empire Day. The British Empire was built by courageous and heroic men with foresight. It is chiefly to commemorate the memory of these Empire Builders, and also to teach the children of the Empire to be loyal and good citizens when they grow up, that Empire Day came to be observed, but I think other worthy objects of Empire Day should <sup>be</sup> to encourage the peoples of the Empire to know more about each other and the Empire, and to live peaceably among themselves.

✓ With regard to remembering the Empire Builders, the present form of celebrations is quite suitable. To encourage the children to grow into loyal subjects of His Majesty, I think they should have more personal knowledge of the King. This can be achieved if His Majesty will graciously deliver a message to the children on Empire Day. The King's message can be recorded on a gramophone record and copies of the record sent to the schools throughout the Empire in time for Empire Day. The message is reproduced through gramophones or loud speakers to the school children on that Day. The thrill to hear the King's voice will enable his message to have a deep and lasting impression on the children. If the message is a nice and kindly one, as no doubt it will be, the children will know what a good and kind man the King is and their love <sup>for</sup> and loyalty to him will surely increase. I hear that ~~impressions~~ of youth persist through a person's life. This being so, the children are bound to grow into loyal subjects of His Majesty.

To encourage greater knowledge of the Empire among the children, I suggest ~~suggest~~ the distribution to them, on Empire Day, of a folder containing



facsimiles of British Empire stamps. Short descriptions of the countries in which the stamps are used and of the peoples living in such countries should be printed under the respective stamps. Such a folder will help the children to know more about the various parts of the British Empire. It need only to be distributed once every few years, since a child should receive only one copy during his school days. It will also be a memento of Empire Day. Films, showing scenes and views of the British Empire, could also be shown in the schools to teach the children more about the greatness of the Empire.

My last suggestion is that Empire Day should be an occasion for exchanges of letters between specially chosen school children of the different parts of the Empire. The children of certain parts of the Empire should be invited to write letters describing the lands they live on and the customs and beliefs of their respective peoples, before the approach of Empire Day. These letters should contain the names of the writers and the names and addresses of their Schools. The teachers should collect the letters and despatch them in parcels to the Schools in other parts of the Empire. On arrival, these letters should be distributed to the selected children in the Schools, who would be asked to reply to them. Special envelopes, marked "Empire Day Service", should be issued to the children <sup>in which</sup> to post their replies. The excitement of writing to each other ~~whom~~ they have never seen, will thrill the children who may be of different races, and they will marvel at the usefulness of the English language, through which medium they can make themselves understood by each other. It may be reasonably expected that many of the children who have thus <sup>with</sup> exchanged their first letters will continue to correspond.



each other and become real friends when they grow into men and women. Their friendship means their unity and unity means strength.

A strong British Empire with its unflinching British justice and tolerance is a great factor not only for peace within the Empire but peace among the nations of the world. What can be a worthier object of Empire Day?