

3

The Influence of Aviation on the Development of the Empire.

References :

- ① "Britain must rule the air" - by Robert Blatchford.
- ② "Empire of the Air" - by Capt. Norman Macmillan.
- ③ "Empire Aviation" - by C. W. A. Scott.
- ④ "Would John Bull be better off without an empire" - by C. Patrick Thompson.
- ⑤ "History of England" - by Warner and Martin,
(2) Tout, (3) Carter, (4) Shearman & Plaskitt.

Outline.

- ① The British Empire - Introductory.
- ② How it is developed and defended.
- ③ How aviation helps in development and defence.

Not

altogether
relevant

The development of the British Empire is no easy problem to England. Queen Victoria regarded the British Empire as a benevolent institution. To her and the enlightened statesmen of her age, the British Empire was not an Empire according to the old conceptions of empire, that is, a number of races and peoples held together, largely held by force under a strong centralised government. To them it meant a trusteeship. The British Empire - or as it is now called the British Commonwealth of Nations - extends over a quarter of the globe and includes a fourth of the population of the world. It counts men of every colour - white, brown, yellow and

and black; and men of most varieties of religion - Christians and Buddhists, Hindus and Moslems, Jews and Parsees. It contains self-governing dominions, territories with semi-responsible governments; territories with wholly elected or partly elected Assemblies or legislative councils; territories with no Assemblies or legislative councils; territories under Chartered Companies and territories under international mandates. To develop such diverse units of the Empire and to govern the backward races in ^{the} interests of the governed rather than that of the ruling races, and to make every country a "daughter in her mother's house and a mistress in her own," is England's mission today. In discharging this paramount duty, England has given her colonies and dependancies freely of her civilisation, education, culture, liberty, freedom, justice and the art of firm and benevolent administration. In this task aviation is helping her in no small measure.

Whether in the development of the country's agriculture or industry, exports or imports, credit or prices, capital or labour, literature or philosophy, architecture, painting or music, science or religion - transport plays no mean part as a means by which progress can be attained. Communications have played a large part in the structure of each empire the world has seen. The Roman Empire was built on a system of roads. The Empire of Spain was built by sea transportation with
 crude

crude types of sailing ships. Both these empires disintegrated and collapsed because the central government could not keep itself in close touch with the governors it appointed over the different parts of the Empire.

Today we have in the British Empire not only the greatest empire of our time but the greatest the world has ever seen. Unlike most of its predecessors, which were created out of military conquests, the British Empire has grown more out of commercial conquests and colonisation than any other empire, past or present. During the nineteenth century, England's power to hold her empire intact may be ascribed to the inventive genius of such men as Watt and Stephenson, Cook and Morse. Railways, steamships and telegraphs did much to annihilate space and bring the different parts of the empire into closer touch with one another. About a century ago, Macaulay in a sailing ship spent about four months in travelling from London to India. But now the British government has laid down the greatest commercial ^{airways} air fleet in the world, and the Imperial has just announced to us that from April 1937, one can travel from Croydon to India in two and a half days and to Australia in eight days, also that a letter weighing half an ounce will be carried to any part of the Empire for the ordinary postage.

The principal effect of this
wonderful

wonderful improvement of communications is that the peoples of the different parts of the Empire will know far more of one another than hitherto. The speedier and safer the transport, the faster, the progress in civilisation will be. A great impetus will be given to Empire trade which will stimulate the productive energy of the people in every unit of the Empire. The mutual knowledge gained will do much to dissipate false ideas of foreign nations and the various members of the Empire will become an association of peoples united by a common loyalty to the British throne. Different nations being brought into closer ~~communi~~ connection will learn to recognise each others' good and qualities and to shake off the old-fashioned suspicious hatred of foreigners which is the result of ignorance. The aeroplane will thus bring about a rapid revolution in men's habits and intercourse as the world shrinks in size. In this aviation will help much.

In the last few years we have seen colonial airlines developed and run between London and South Africa and London and Australia. There is also an experiment at present in extending the airline from Singapore to Shanghai and Hong Kong where England has empire interests in China. There remains still one great gap — that between Canada and Great Britain. It is hoped that this gap will be filled very soon. These Empire routes will then provide yet another link.

link. There is also the American air-route which spans the Pacific from Californian coast to the Philippines. There is but a small gap, and a jump of six hundred miles to link that route with the British Empire routes to HongKong. When the North Atlantic gap is spanned, as it will be by combined British, American and Canadian planes it will be possible to circumnavigate the earth in aeroplanes run by English speaking peoples. The English language which followed the Mercantile Marine flag around the sea ports of the world, will now follow these empire and American air routes around the sea air-ports of the world. This would promote the knowledge of the English language and hasten forward the day when the language will be the "lingua-franca" of the world.

One thing which stands above all is the girdle which aviation will place within our hands. By that means the Empire units will be drawn together; their inter-unit trade will be facilitated; their personal inter-communications between individuals will be speeded up; and if Empire Aviation is developed towards that end it will be possible for the mother country to launch help swiftly to the succour of any of her children countries.

If Empire Aviation is seized ~~as~~ ^{as} a connecting link, the dream of some Empire-builders to hold an Empire Parliament right in the hub of the Empire will soon

soon be realised. The Royal Empire society will then hum with activity and become the greatest society the world has ever seen. An Empire Parliament meeting in London occasionally with members from Canada travelling in one day, from India in two days, from Africa in three days, from Australia in four days and from New Zealand in five days, will make the Empire stand like a solid rock incapable of being shaken by the aggression of even all the rest of the world put together.

So much for times of peace. But it is in the conduct of war that aeroplanes will bring about the greatest revolution. Aeroplanes played an important part in the latter part of the Great War, although although when the war began, the invention was only a few years old. It has played its part in the recent Abyssinian war and in the present Spanish Civil War. When the next World War comes it will largely be a war in the air. The British trade routes and colonies all over the world will have to be protected by aeroplanes. Frontiers, fortresses, wire entanglements, the ocean itself with all kinds of dreadnoughts and submarines will then be no protection to any country. An effective development of the empire would mean an efficient defence for ensuring peace and happiness in every spot of the Empire and this will be accomplished hereafter
mostly.

mostly by aeroplanes. Britain must rule the air to preserve her Empire. When thirty five years ago the Wright Brothers played with box-kites, little they knew that they were playing with the destinies of nations. A fleet of battle air-craft loaded with anti poison gas and tons of explosive bombs will be able to wipe out great cities and countries in a few minutes. And then man's wonderful conquest of the air, that should have been nothing but a blessing will prove a curse and his undoing.

Name: Devarajan Bhagiratham (Master).

Class: Pre-Matriculation
Manipal Hindu College,
Manipal.

Age, 14 years.

Date of Birth [REDACTED]