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How far has the expansion of the
British Empire been due to colonisation
distinct from conquest?

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2nd Prize

"Per ardua ad astra."

Class B

How far has the expansion of the British Empire been due to colonisation distinct from conquest?

Looking at a political map of the world we see that, leaving out for the present islands and small possessions, Britain controls five great stretches of land, not all of equal size, it is true, but all exceedingly important. In regard to the early history of British influence these may be divided into three different sets, first, Australia and New Zealand, colonies in the original meaning of the word, then Canada and Africa, which have come under us by a mixture of conquest and colonisation and lastly India, taken by the conquest of a whole century. With India, therefore, we are no longer concerned. The great country fell to us by the hard fighting and victories of our soldiers from the years which witnessed the first signs of interest shown in the British East India Company, until, with all that mighty empire under our control, we left weapons and turned to measures for the good of its conquered peoples. The other countries

however, we must examine more closely, and try to show the manner of their growth. We will take the first group, Australia and New Zealand, pure colonies.

For many centuries before the discovery of Australasia there had been a conviction in the minds of the people that a great country lay somewhere south of the land-mass of Euro-asia. There must, they argued, be such a continent to preserve the balance of land in which theory they believed. Accordingly many expeditions sailed from the various enterprising countries, particularly France and Holland, to discover this land, Terra Australis, but they either lost their way among the East Indies, or by keeping too far south, landed at Tasmania or New Zealand. Tasman, the Dutch explorer, has taken the latter course, founded Tasmania, and landed on the coast of New Zealand which he believed to be that of the Terra Australis. Captain Cook, of the Endeavour, however, when sailing in those waters in 1768, found that the land discovered by Tasman consisted of two islands, and then by chance, while intending to sail to Tasmania, he landed instead on the eastern coast of

Australia near the modern Sydney. The sight meeting him, however, was not inviting, as the land was infertile, and Cook apologised to the Royal Society for finding nothing better. It is amusing to notice that our great colonies in the first place did not attract us, much of Africa was lost because of our hesitation, Australia was deemed unimportant, New Zealand was settled only in time to ~~the~~ prevent the French from putting a finger in our pie, as they would have greatly liked to do, and Canada — Canada we wished to barter for a small island which now is scarcely noticeable in a map. Such in the difference in a few centuries. To return to the crew of the Endeavour, we find that one person in it did not form even a small estimate of ~~its~~ ^{the} importance of the newly discovered land. This was the botanist Banks. Although mistaken in his idea that the land seemingly infertile was yet valuable, it was due to his influence that the interest in Australia was maintained. Nothing was done, however, until after the war of American Independence.

This was a deciding factor in the colonisation of the land. For one thing, we had been accustomed to

ship and convicts to America when we wished to get rid of them. This naturally was stopped. The United Empire Loyalists presented another difficulty. They could hardly remain as they were. So finally an agreement was made that they should go to Australia as landowners with convicts to work for them. But in the usual long time taken to draw up the agreement (we Britishers are rarely prompt) the United Empire Loyalists had taken things into their own hands and moved north to Canada, leaving the British government to look after Australia as best as it could without them. Accordingly a party of convicts was sent out alone under the charge of a certain Phillip, and landed on the coast of the present New South Wales founding the settlement afterwards to be known as Sydney.

The first years of colonisation are always difficult but, in this case they were even more so than usual, for Phillip had to deal with men who did not want to work and who were from every class, murderers, thieves, debtors, and even rebellious Irishmen. So difficult was it to keep the settlers in order that a New South Wales corps had to be enlisted and shipped to Australia. This was a

mistake, for the men had joined simply to have a chance perhaps of finding gold in the new land. When they arrived, they established themselves as landowners with the convicts under them, and did much more harm than good. When the Corps deposed Bligh a change was effected in the governorship, and soldiers were sent to keep order instead of sailors. The first of these soldier-governors was Colonel Lauehlan Macquarie, and his leadership marks the beginning of a new era in the early history of Australia. He instituted a system of freeing convicts after a certain time of sentence was over and this, although at first resented by the other settlers, (who chiefly belonged to the old army corps) eventually rendered the country more peaceful and greatly increased colonisation.

In spite of this internal turmoil, the work of colonisation continued to be carried out, particularly by two men Bass and Flinders who explored Tasmania thoroughly and were also able to give a fairly definite plan of the east coast of Australia. Such explorations increased under two important governors Brisbane and Darling, names familiar to us through geography.

meanwhile in 1829, far away over the desert, probably unknown to the people of New South Wales, another colony was springing up in Western Australia. There had been many failures at first, but at length the settlers had succeeded, and the colony of Western Australia was no longer imaginary, but real. Victoria also was being colonised from New South Wales, and the year 1837 saw the foundation of its capital Melbourne, named after the Prime Minister of the time. The mother colony had also extended north and Brisbane was founded in 1826, while South Australia also became known by about 1836. In the year 1840 the states objected to convicts still being sent to them and all but Western Australia stopped the transportation. This last colony continued to receive them until 1868 when the population attracted by the gold of Koolgarlie and Balgoorlie was large enough to satisfy the state. In spite of this, the colonies grew rapidly, and the discovery in 1851 of gold in New South Wales created a greatly increased population in that part. Victoria, afraid because of her sadly diminished census,

issued an offer saying that £200 would be given to the who first discovered gold in that state, and soon the glory of Broken Hill and the other mines quite extinguished that of Summerhill Creek.

Tasmania also increased greatly in population especially when her mineral wealth had been discovered and she was able to forbid the importation of convicts in 1846.

and so the colonies continued to grow until in 1901 the Commonwealth of Australia joined together under the British flag the entire continent and Tasmania.

The three islands of New Zealand, North, South and Stewart Island, were naturally colonized about the same time as Australia. Tasman had seen the land in 1642 and Cook landed there in 1769, the next year proclaiming it to be a British possession by erecting a union Jack there. The land was for some time only settled by a few men interested in the whale fisheries of the South or in trade with Australia, so that a band of missionaries going out in 1814, found the results of their work among the white people hardly worth the trouble. In 1825, therefore, a company was established to settle New Zealand.

It was a failure, and the French, encouraged, tried in 1831 to gain power in the islands, this resulting in the institution in 1833 of a Resident to look after them — and the French. The next company formed, a New Zealand association of 1837, failed also, but at last a New Zealand Land Company managed to realise its object, that of buying the land from the Maoris, and selling it to the settlers at a price high enough to pay for schools, churches, roads and other conveniences. This was done against the will of the Government but nevertheless a large party of settlers landed in 1840. Because of another attempt of the French to gain power, the Queen's Proclamation was issued in the same year, making Victoria Sovereign over the islands. At this most of the French settlers, who had been fairly numerous, went home and we were left to enjoy New Zealand in peace. The colony had been joined to Australia but, the year after this it was able because of its growth of population to be freed. To further increase this population, a party of Scots who left Britain because of the Disruption, settled in the region surrounding Dunedin in 1848, and following their example,

a number of English churchmen colonised the Christchurch district in 1850. In the same year the New Zealand Company dissolved, but it had done its work and established a flourishing colony in New Zealand. Immigration still goes on and more colonists are wanted. It is certainly a bright prospect that awaits them, a new fertile land with all the means of building up a peaceful well-governed colony, and so far such a dream has been realised.

The second group of colonies is composed, as we have already said, of Canada and Africa. Of the two, Canada is the more English and the one in ^{the growth of} ~~which~~ colonisation has played the greater part. The French were the first people to settle in it from 1535 when the St. Lawrence was first navigated and, although it fell into our hands from 1628 until it was given back by Charles I, it remained French until 1763, when the struggle for supremacy in India, America and Europe between that country and our own ended in a victory for us. We had before this by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 gained Newfoundland and the Hudson Bay Territory, these gains providing

a way to the total conquest of Canada and helping us greatly in the war. In spite of the establishment of our power over Canada, it remained French in population until the war of American Independence, which, by making the situation impossible for the United Empire Loyalists of the south, led to a migration from that region to the St Lawrence, and the foundation of Upper Canada. This territory continued to expand and settlements in other parts of Canada also arose. In 1792 Mackenzie of the North West Company reached the Pacific over the Rockies and there Vancouver was founded, and in central Canada a small fur-trading settlement made by the Earl of Selkirk afterwards developed into the large town of Winnipeg. The centre of Canada was, however, little settled except by explorers and traders of the Hudson Bay and North West Companies, until the territories around this new settlement was purchased from the traders. Then more and more settlers pushed the settlement further west and north until the state of Manitoba was set up in 1870. Still further west did Upper Canada extend, and 1905 saw the establishment of Saskatchewan and Alberta, which rendered the

bond between east and west complete. The population was naturally greatly increased by the Canadian Pacific Railway finished in 1885, as it made transport and therefore farming generally much easier and so more attractive to settlers.

In spite of the constant stream of immigration into Canada, there are still the great prairie-lands to be colonised, and this will be accomplished when the rearing of reindeers for meat, strongly advocated for by famous Americans, is realised. This industry is beginning. We long to hear of its success.

The country of Africa presents a more intricate problem. Here we have colonisation, treaty and all other manners of establishing British influence. South Africa is of this country the most important regions, and so we will first examine its foundation.

The Cape was first settled by Dutch traders and farmers when it first came into our hands at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and was not thought important except as a port of call for our ships on their way to India and the far East. But gradually colonisation took place in the Cape region because of the

unemployment produced by the war and the Industrial and Agrarian revolutions, and soon difficulties began to crop up between the Dutch and British settlers for many reasons, but most important because of the English treatment of the natives, whom we regarded as equals, while the Dutch or Boers thought them inferior. This was naturally intensified by the abolition of slavery in the British Dominions in 1834, and so the Great Trek took place in 1836, when the Boers marched east and founded the new colony of Natal. English settlers followed them, however, and the Dutch were forced on to establish the Orange river and Transvaal States. These also were annexed ^{but were freed} in 1854 and 1852. By 1877, however, they were again annexed because of the danger impending from the Zulus and other native tribes whom the British defeated, only to lose the colonies once more as soon as their difficulties were over by 1881. From this time until the end of the century the Dutch had two grievances which led to the Boer War of 1899. The first of these was the discovery of gold in the Boer states which led to British

"Mullandees" settling there and being subject to the harsh treatment of the Dutch; and the second was because the colonisation of Africa by the British was leading to a total surrounding of the Boer states, and thus was dangerous to them. The war lasted till 1902 when in May the Boer republics became British colonies. During this time, as we have seen, many new colonies were founded, most important of these being Rhodesia, founded by Cecil Rhodes and colonised by the British South Africa Company of 1889. These new states continued to increase in population and indeed are still doing so, Bechuanaland being essentially a black man's state, and Rhodesia just as essentially being that of the white men.

In British East Africa and Somaliland our influence came first by treaties made with traders, and then gradually spread further inland until a large amount of land was under our protection. This can hardly be called colonisation, but it is certainly distinct from conquest, and is a much more pleasant way of establishing British influence over a certain piece of territory than

by knocking the natives over the head and taking it. The results are better.

We now come to another division of Africa, ^{the} small territories of upper Guinea, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia. These states were in the first place, small trading stations, for the wealth of the Gold Coast attracted trade in spite of the difficulty of reaching the interior. The traders then began to gain influence and to spread their power further inland until a certain limit had been reached, perhaps a part of the dry desert blocked their way. We see the same methods used in India, only on a much larger scale. There also trade began the desire for power, and therefore, if we count trade a factor of colonisation, we might say that India was, at least in the beginning, colonised! Such a view is not common, the later conquests obscure its beginning and India is said to have been gained by conquest.

We have examined now the four great spheres of British influence and only one thing more awaits, — the islands. There are many of these for supremacy on the seas leads to coaling-stations, food-

stations, islands to guard the seas and islands established for trade. we find in looking once more at the map, what an innumerable amount of small unimportant islands, being useful for these ends became British possessions. we cannot give a detailed account of the history of each, we shall instead name various ways of establishing influence in them and cite examples.

The same three ways of establishing influence are found, by colonisation, by conquest and by treaty - or perhaps by a mixture of all three or of two of the three.

In the North Atlantic we find that most of the islands were colonised, the attraction being the Spanish Americas. In regard to this we may mention that British Honduras was colonised by retired buccannery and British Guiana ceded by treaties with France and Italy. These are not islands, but small territories in this region.

The South Atlantic islands however seem to come under the second heading, obtained by conquest. St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, and the Falkland Islands were all taken from other nations the Dutch in the case of St Helena

In the Indian Ocean we have two very important islands taken by conquest, Mauritius and Seylon, both given to us by the treaty of 1815. There are other small islands of little importance also in this ocean.

We now come to the Pacific, where we have the Malay Peninsula and the East Indies. These were all ceded to us by treaty, with no bloodshed except in the case of Malacca. We are left, then, with the Fiji, Solomon, Tonga and Pitcairn Islands, more important than the others not mentioned. The first of these was colonised, the second and third ceded by treaty, and the last colonised.

In turn then we have taken all the seas except the Mediterranean, in which Malta was taken by conquest and ceded after the Napoleonic wars and Cyprus was ceded by a treaty with Turkey in 1878, and now we shall be able to form an estimate of the extent of colonisation in the British Empire.

We see that it has taken a great part in the building up of our empire. We are, on the whole, good settlers, for our bracing climate produces a quality of endurance not found in the hotter more relaxing South. This, no doubt, accounts

for the great stretches of territory colonised by the British, when we compare it with the small amount settled by other countries new Zealand and Australia were colonised; Canada though first taken by conquest from the French yet has grown greatly in size and importance because of the immigration of settlers, parts of Africa also became allied to us by colonisation; and many islands were added to our Empire by being settled. It is seen, then, that without our colonies, used this time in the strictest sense, our Empire would be small and unimportant. The only large country left would be India, and that, as we have shown, must perhaps also be said to have first come under our influence by colonisation---

we can say no more, but we remember in speaking of the colonies, those who by their hard unceasing labour made them what they are, true, pure, intensely patriotic --- "Hurrah for the British Empire," say we, "and three cheers for the colonists."