

1925. Class A.
1st Prize:

A59

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"How far is the British Empire
a self-contained Economic Unit?"

"England! the time is come when
thou should'st wean,
Thy heart from its emasculating
food"

"How far is the British Empire a
self-contained Economic Unit?"

There is no doubt that, at the present time, the political situation in England is very muddled, and the leading statesmen are finding it no easy task to set home affairs right once more. This chaos may be attributed to several things, but the slowness of England's recovery is due to the time-worn party struggle for Free or Protected Trade.

On one side, the Free Trade Party offers a system of government which proposes to abolish, as far as possible, all taxes on British Imports and Exports, thus promoting an increase of commerce between Great Britain and other nations. On the other side, the Protectionists support a policy which maintains that we must tax all but colonial imports and exports, thus they say will increase British trade with our colonies. The colonies are very rich at present, and an increase in our colonial trade is a very desirable attainment for our Empire, but we must first ascertain whether our colonies can supply our commercial and industrial requirements, and if they can, then it will certainly be better for the welfare of our Empire if we trade

mostly with our own colonies, and permit goods and food from our colonies to come into England free from all taxes.

The things imported into Great Britain fall into two very distinct classes, food for consumption by her enormous and industrious population, and raw materials to be manufactured into finished articles, and re-exported. Some goods are simply dumped in England to be taken away again by other countries, this process is called an 'entrepôt' trade, but this does not affect our case, so we will not consider it in detail.

Relative amounts of the imports of Great Britain.



We will first take the food class, divide it into six smaller divisions, and consider the relative amounts of each food imported into the British Isles from our colonies and from elsewhere, hence we shall be able to estimate the degree in which the British Empire is a self-contained Economic Unit as regards each particular foodstuff

The first and largest of the imported foodstuffs is Grain and Flour, and the sources of the supply are many and varied. Great Britain has a very large industrious population to provide with food, one of the most popular items of which, is bread; hence the great amount of imported grain and flour. The wheat growing countries in the world number a great many, but the grain produced varies with the conditions of culture. The chief colonies which supply wheat to the United Kingdom are:-

Canada, 30 per cent of whose exports is grain and flour.

India, in which country it is the third most important crop produced, and the total amount of exports to Great Britain from India forms 24 per cent of India's export trade.

Australia, whose climate of spring and winter rains with summer drought, is admirably suited for the cultivation of wheat.

These are the three chief colonial sources of our wheat imports, together with small supplies from such places as Cyprus, Natal.

Now the non-colonial sources of grain and flour

The most important of these is the

United States of America, a very large portion of whose wheat exports comes to the United Kingdom, in fact as much as Canada and Australia combined. The average yield in America is, however, very low at present, 15 bushels per acre, as compared with 35 bushels per acre in Great Britain. This is due to extensive rather than intensive farming in the west.

Rumania is the second source of our wheat supply from non-colonial districts. This country exports a large amount of maize as well as wheat, much of which comes to Great Britain.

Argentina, of which country, Great Britain is the chief purchaser of grain and flour, being far in advance of the next country, the United States of America.

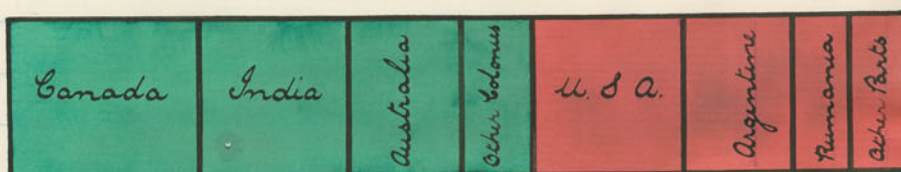
Before the Great War, Germany and Russia supplied a large part of our wheat imports, but as we are considering post-war conditions, these two countries are too busy with their own troubles to export even a small part of their former grain supply to Great Britain.

Most of the countries which supply wheat to Great Britain also cultivate and export maize, barley, and oats, although not to the same

extent as with wheat, so we may assume that the relative amounts of wheat supplied by each country to the United Kingdom are typical of the relative amounts of maize, barley, and oats also supplied by these nations to Great Britain.

As we compare the grain and flour supplies of our colonies with those of the rest of the world, we find that our colonies supply a greater amount than the rest of the world, although not a great deal more. Thus Great Britain depends more on her colonies for grain and flour supplies than upon other countries which are not British colonies.

*Relative amounts of grain and flour
exported by various countries to
Great Britain*



The second class of foodstuffs is *Sugar and Rice*. These are also two important foods in the daily meals of the English people, and such that they would find hard to do without. The sugar imports may be divided again into Raw

Sugar and Beet Sugar

The chief colonial supplies of sugar are:-

British Guiana in South America, whose whole export trade is devoted to cane sugar and rice. But for a small population, this colony would be able to cater for the whole of the sugar demands of Great Britain. Half of the total exports of British Guiana come to the United Kingdom, and one quarter goes to Canada.

British West Indies, chiefly from Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Trinidad, and the Windward Islands. Nearly all the exports of these islands come to Great Britain, and they hold a fair share of the sugar trade to Great Britain.

India grows a great deal of sugar, but the major part of it is used for home consumption, and only a small portion is exported to Great Britain.

The source of the rice supply of Great Britain from our colonies form almost the whole amount of rice imported into the British Isles, very little being obtained from other non-colonial countries.

India and Burma hold practically the whole of the rice trade to Great Britain. China grows

an enormous amount of rice, but as it is the native food, almost all the home-grown rice is consumed by the populations of China and Japan.

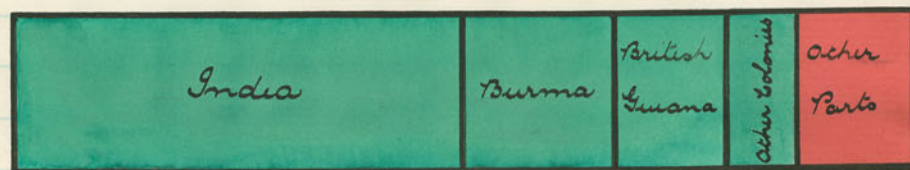
Non-colonial supplies of sugar are mainly of the beetroot kind, and come from West European countries such as *Germany*, from whom Great Britain takes half the sugar so produced in Germany. *France*, *Belgium*, and *Holland* all contribute a fair share, while some raw-cane sugar is imported into the United Kingdom from *Java* and *Brazil*.

When we consider the amounts of sugar and rice imports of Great Britain from the colonies, as compared with those of the rest of the world, we must remember our colonies hold the monopoly of our rice imports, and Central European countries supply all our beetroot sugar imports. Our colonies however supply most of our raw cane sugar needs, and therefore we may say that the United Kingdom is almost entirely dependent upon her colony, India, for rice supplies, while she depends less upon her colonies for supplies of sugar than upon the other countries, although the relative amounts of the two sources show only a slight advantage for non-colonial supplies.

Relative amounts of sugar imported into Great Britain.



Relative amounts of rice imported into Great Britain.



Another very important foodstuff in the daily life of an Englishman is **Dairy Produce**; and this constitutes our third class of imported foods. By dairy produce we mean, butter, cheese, bacon, and eggs. These cannot be brought over from our colonies with ease, for the colonies are a great distance off, and the produce has to be put into cold storage rooms on board ships. To bring such produce from our colonies means a great deal of trouble and cost, this can be saved by importing dairy produce from our near neighbours who produce and export large quantities to the only British colony which exports dairy produce to Great Britain is Canada, and this country only exports bacon and cheese.

Canada produces over £25 million of cheese and butter, but two thirds of this is kept for home consumption. This country also raises four million pigs every year, and an enormous quantity of this remains over for export, as well as being turned into ham and lard. Hence here Great Britain has plenty of dairy produce for importation from Canada, if it were not for the great distance between the two countries. Still it is probable that modern inventions will lessen the distance even more than has been done up to the present time, and that in the future, Great Britain may import almost all her dairy produce from Canada.

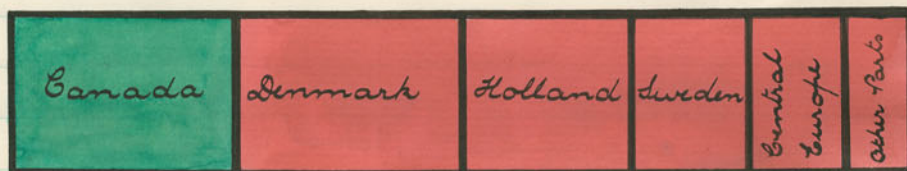
The rest of Great Britain's supply of dairy produce comes from the Continent, from such countries as Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Sweden and Germany.

Denmark concentrates on the best methods of dairy farming, and experts upon the subject go to Denmark to watch and imitate the clean and wonderful Danish methods. Hence it is not surprising to find that Great Britain takes almost half Denmark's exports for her own consumption. Belgium and Germany suffered severe war losses,

and their export trades are not nearly as vast as they were before, so the exports from these countries to Great Britain are comparatively small and unimportant now. As regards Sweden and Holland, from Holland we get large quantities of butter and cheese, and condensed milk, for Holland supports nearly two million head of horned cattle, pigs, and sheep, while from Sweden, Great Britain buys large quantities of all kinds of dairy produce.

Thus we see that the United Kingdom depends almost solely upon European countries for dairy produce supplies, but, if necessary, she could draw a very large amount of dairy produce from her own colony, Canada.

Relative amounts of dairy produce supplied to Great Britain by various countries.



Everyone knows that meat is imported, for such meat has to be marked 'imported' when it is hung up in the shops for sale,

but it is not everybody who knows that live animals are also imported, and later killed for consumption. So we will take as our next class, meat and Live Animals. The meat is naturally, stored in cold storage rooms while it is brought from the various countries to Great Britain.

By the term meat, we mean mutton, lamb, pork, and beef. We will first consider the various colonies which export to Great Britain, first live animals, second frozen meat.

The chief colonial source of live animals in quantity is Canada, from which we get cattle, pigs, and bullocks. This colony is able to supply a great deal of live animals because the rearing of such animals has reached an enormous magnitude in Canada, so great that there are two pigs to every person in Canada, the largest ratio in the world. Canada also exports frozen meat to Great Britain after the animals have been slaughtered at Montreal. This meat chiefly consists of beef, and the export of this is valued at £3 $\frac{1}{4}$ millions.

Most of our lamb supplies come from New Zealand, which does an enormous amount of frozen meat exportation. Cattle, sheep, and bullocks

are yearly killed to the extent of $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions hundred-weights. Thus we see that this country could almost supply all our meat requirements if necessary.

The great British colony for sheep is Australia, the southern and eastern parts of which is devoted almost entirely to the rearing of merino sheep. This country disputes with the Argentine the position of premier sheep country, for the number of sheep slaughtered annually is about ten millions. Thus another of our colonies is particularly well off as regards meat exportations, for the value of Australia's meat exports is £7 millions.

Now to turn to our non colonial supplies of live animals and meat; we find that the chief country for both is the United States of America. This country is rapidly becoming one of the chief sheep-rearing countries in the world, much lamb being exported as meat. Cattle and pigs are also reared, the number of sheep is less than the number of heads of cattle, hence there is a large export of live cattle and meat, of which Great Britain takes a great deal.

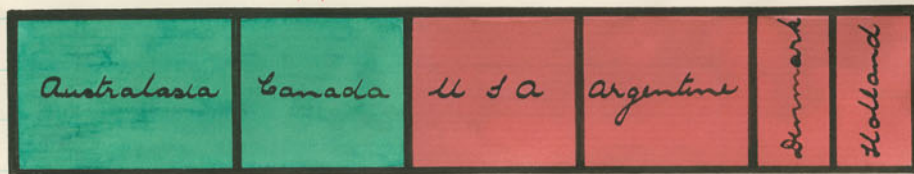
Holland and Denmark also export live animals and meat to the United Kingdom, their position,

comparatively near to the British Isles, has proved a decidedly helpful factor in this respect.

Another country which forms a source of Great Britain's meat supply is the *Argentina*. From this country we import large quantities of tinned beef, which is packed very scientifically at Buenos Aires and La Plata. Great Britain is the chief customer of the Argentina in this respect, the imports from this country into Great Britain being over £1 million in value.

Now we see that Great Britain has a wide and varied range for her live animal and meat imports, and we cannot say that she is solely dependent upon her colonies or upon non-colonies, for the relative amounts of such imports from the colonies, and from other nations are about equal, but we can say that the colonies could supply all our animal and meat demands if necessary.

Relative amounts of live animals and meat supplied to Great Britain



It is common knowledge now, that a human being cannot live for more than three ^{days} without some kind of a drink, hence drink is a vital necessity of life. There are many kinds of drinks in Great Britain, but two of the most popular ones are tea and coffee. Neither of these plants are grown in England so they must be imported, and therefore we will take *Tea and Coffee* as our fifth class of foods, for that tea and coffee are foods, can be taken as an established fact.

Both of these plants are sub-tropical ones, but tea can be grown in a wider range of countries than coffee. Hence we shall expect the imports of tea to be greater, and more varied than that of coffee.

Our two main sources of tea and coffee imports from the colonies are *India* and *Ceylon*, both of these countries grow and export these plants in large quantities because their hot, wet summer climate suits their cultivation admirably. India exports 90 per cent of her tea product to Great Britain and the United States of America. Ceylon also sends most of her tea and coffee to the United Kingdom or to other British Colonies, and in this respect Great Britain has a plentiful supply to draw upon in times of need.

The chief non-colonial source of our tea imports is China; but the demand in Great Britain for China tea is not very great now, chiefly owing to the high price, due to the duties on it, and the old fashioned methods of packing.

Brazil and Central America are the chief countries which supply us with ordinary tea, excluding our colonies, and Brazil sends us a great deal of coffee. Almost half of Brazil's export trade is coffee because the climate is admirably suited to the growing of coffee. This plant is chiefly grown on the mountain slopes especially in Central America, but Great Britain imports very little coffee from this land.

Thus Great Britain is entirely dependent upon her colonies for tea and coffee imports. Another popular drink is cocoa, but this plant generally grows where tea and coffee grow, hence we may take the relative amounts of cocoa imports as the same as those of tea and coffee imports, whence we find that our chief sources for tea, coffee, and cocoa supplies are our own colonies

Relative amounts of tea, coffee, and cocoa imported into Great Britain.

India	Ceylon	Brazil	China	Other Parts
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"An apple a day keeps the doctor away" is a very popular saying in England, and there is no doubt that fruit is really a very necessary food in the daily life of an Englishman. A food which comes from fruit is wine, a liquid food it is true, but nevertheless it is almost as important if not as universal as fruit. Therefore as our last class in foodstuffs we will take Fruit, Wines, and Spirits, partly because they are all produced in similar climates, and partly because wines and some spirits are made from various kinds of fruit.

There are many different varieties of fruits, but in the majority, fruit needs almost a Mediterranean type of climate, that is a warm, wet winter, and a hot, dry summer, in order to be grown extensively. Later on it will be noticeable that places which export fruit to the British Isles have an approximate Mediterranean type of climate.

There are three important colonial sources of fruit, Canada, Australia and Tasmania.

From Canada and Australia we get large supplies of apples, and from British Columbia all kinds of fruit including peaches, grapes, and cherries. In Australia the vine grows in southern and south-eastern districts

parts, while all kinds of fruit are grown in the tropical parts of Queensland and New South Wales. There is a large surplus of such fruit after home demands, and much of this surplus is exported to Great Britain. Tasmania produces similar fruits to those of Australia, while a fair quantity of bananas is exported from the British West Indies annually to Great Britain, especially Jamaica whose export in bananas is worth about £1¼ millions.

The non-colonial sources of the British supply of fruit are many and varied, but the amounts are small compared with our own colonies. A good deal of fruit is imported from the Mediterranean Lands such as Spain, Greece, Turkey, France, and Italy, where all kinds of fruit grow abundantly, without artificial labour, and without any trouble at all. Hence the export of fruit from such countries is a natural one, but it is not very large because a lot of the fruit is turned into wines and spirits, and we will consider these later on.

The Canary Islands, belonging to Spain, export a great deal of bananas and oranges to Great Britain, where they find a ready market for sale. The United States of America export a large

quantity of apples to this country especially from the Californian Valley.

So we see that the colonies take a share in supplying the Motherland with fruit, and although the colonies send more fruit to England, than other countries do, we cannot say Great Britain is dependent upon her colonies because if such a supply stopped, there would be plenty of countries only too willing to send fruit to Great Britain.

Sources of British supply of fruit.

Canada	Australia	B. W. Indies	U S A.	Mediterranean Lands	Canary Isles	Other Parts
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The industry of wine making is generally found where the growing of grapes dominates. Hence wine making is a product of countries in the Mediterranean, or ones having a similar climate where grapes grow abundantly.

The sole colonial source of wines is Australia, and then the export trade to Great Britain is very small. Wine is not favoured in Australia, and the wine made there cannot compete with success against famous Italian or French brands.

The main part of our wine comes from Mediterranean Lands, where grapes grow easily, and the wines of France, Italy,

and Spain are famous all over the world. It is quite plain that the colonies have hardly any say in the wine and spirit trade with Great Britain, and therefore she is independent in this respect of her colonial supplies.

Wine and spirit imports into Great Britain

Australia	France	Italy	Spain	Portugal	Other Countries
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We have finished our discussion of the foodstuff imports of Great Britain, let us now turn to the raw materials supply, and see how the colonies fare in this respect.

The raw materials may be subdivided into seven parts, raw wool; raw cotton; raw silk; flax, hemp, and jute, timber, leather, metals, chemicals and seeds. We will, as before, consider each in turn.

The chief colonial source of raw wool is *Australia*, where the number of sheep reared is between eighty and ninety millions. The wool comes mainly from merino sheep, whom the dry climate of the interior suits very well. Great Britain takes half the total Australian exports of wool, and this source is three sevenths of our total wool

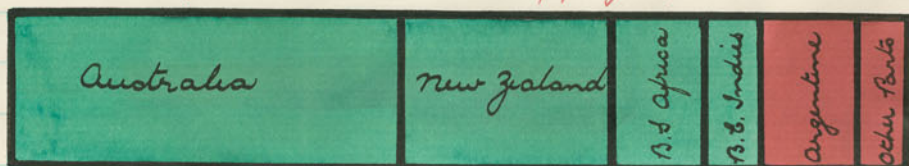
imports.

New Zealand is the second colony exporting raw wool to England, not to the same extent as Australia, but still it is a very large amount, and four-fifths of the total exports come to Great Britain. Some of this wool is re-distributed on the Continent.

British South Africa and British East Indies both export raw wool to this country. The dry climate and large tracts of natural pastures make sheep-rearing easy in South Africa, while the East Indies export a large amount as compared with their size.

The sole non-colonial source of raw wool is the Argentine, where 45 million sheep are reared annually. The exports of the Argentine to Great Britain in raw wool is valued at £1 million annually. Some European countries send raw wool to England, but the quantity is very small compared with that of our colonial supply, hence we estimate that the United Kingdom is dependent upon her colonies for the importation of raw wool.

Sources of the British supply of raw wool.



Our next class is raw cotton, which is imported into Great Britain to be manufactured in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and is then exported to towns and ports in every part of the world.

There are very few British colonies which export cotton to Great Britain, the supply is divided between *British West Indies* and *India*. Although India grows an enormous amount of cotton, the cotton is of short staple which is not wanted by English manufacturers because the thread easily snaps during the manufacture. More of the other varieties of cotton can be grown in the Punjab, and the Government are about to start to utilise this land.

The Leeward and Windward Islands export 'continental' raw cotton to Great Britain, and this trade is very important.

Great Britain imports most of her raw cotton from a non-colonial source, the *United States of America*, which is the premier cotton growing land in the world. It is calculated that this country supplies 85 per cent of European cotton demands, as well as using a lot for home manufactures.

Brazil and *Egypt* both supply the United Kingdom with raw cotton, the long, hot, wet summers of Brazil being admirably suited to the cultivation of cotton; while Egyptian

cotton is regarded as the finest in the world, and forms the sole economic crop of Egypt.

Some raw cotton is grown in Africa, but the industry is young, and without a doubt it will flourish later on when other countries keep their cotton for their own use.

We see that Great Britain gets very little raw cotton from her colonies, the major part coming from non-colonial sources, hence Great Britain does not rely on colonial supplies for her cotton manufacturing.

Sources of the British supply of raw cotton

India	B.W. Indies	United States of America	Egypt	Peru	Other Countries
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Raw Silk is a fiber which is produced by the silkworm which feeds on the leaves of such trees as the mulberry, hence we shall expect to find that only countries where such trees grow easily, export raw silk in large quantities.

The only British colony which exports raw silk is India, but it is a relatively small and unimportant trade, and India does not rank as a large exporter of raw silk.

Japan is the most important

country as regards the production of raw silk, because the long, warm summers promote the growth of mulberry trees. The distance between Japan and England does not facilitate trade, and Continental countries have supplanted Japan in exportation of raw silk to England. *China* exports more silk to us than Japan, and it forms the bulk of trade between China and Great Britain.

Italy produces a fair amount of raw silk, and supplies some to us in exchange for coal, but the bulk of Italian silk goes to *France*. This country grows some silk, but is forced to import from Italy. *Afghanistan* is a growing silk country, but at present the exports to Great Britain are not very great.

The silk trade in Great Britain is not very important, far inferior to those of cotton and wool; and the invention of artificial silk has done much to decrease the trade. Still it is a trade carried on by Great Britain, and one in which the colonies do not take first place, and England does not rely on colonial supplies for her silk manufactures.

Our next class of raw materials is *Flax, Hemp, and Jute*. Many countries grow flax and hemp, but

India is the only country where jute can be grown easily.

We will first deal with jute. The deep, moist soil found in Bengal and the Ganges delta suits the cultivation of jute, and as it is the only place where it can be extensively grown, *India* holds a monopoly of the jute trade, and Great Britain is entirely dependent, as regards jute, upon her colony, India.

There is however another tale to tell as regards flax and hemp, for the only British colony to supply us is *New Zealand*. The flax is grown in large quantities, and the export to Great Britain is valued at £1 million. New Zealand does not cultivate any hemp.

Many non-colonial countries supply us with flax and hemp. *Russia* is recovering from the Great War, and taking her place as premier flax and hemp growing country. Great Britain takes a great deal of Russia's exports.

The Philippine Islands grow hemp which has been found to be ideal for ropes, and as this commodity has not been grown elsewhere with the same excellent qualities, the islands do a great deal of trade with us in hemp exports.

The limestone soil and light rainfall of the Yucatan Peninsula are suitable for the cultivation of sisal, so *Mexico* is the chief source of our supply of sisal

hemp, while *New Guinea* also grows and exports real hemp. Large plantations have been laid out, and it is probable that this will be the leading industry in the future.

As only one colony sends us supplies of flax, while four non-colonial countries send flax and hemp, Great Britain does not depend on her colonies for such supplies in large quantities.

Sources of the British supply of flax and hemp.

New Zealand	Russia	Mexico	New Guinea	Philippine Islands	Other Parts
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Furniture and cabinet making is a very important industry in this country, and timber has to be imported because home supplies are not sufficient for the demand.

Our only colonial supply is Canada, whose vast forests, with cheap water transport makes her lumbering the most important in the world. *Canada* on the average sends us about £4 millions annually, the only disadvantage is the distance between the two lands.

The United States of America, Russia, Norway, and Sweden all do a lot of exportation of timber to England, but America's supply is rapidly decreasing, and

very soon she will stop exporting and start replenishing her forests. Timber exporting is the main trade of the Scandinavian peninsula, but the wood is partly sawn before exporting, and is not real raw materials.

Great Britain depends about equally upon colonial and non colonial sources, but in the future, she is sure to draw more upon Canada, and hence become dependent on her colonies.

Sources of British supply of timber

Canada	U. S. A.	Norway	Sweden	Russia & Others
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The last two groups may be taken together because the sources are mainly colonial.

For our supplies of seeds we look to India especially, while some are imported from the Argentina. The discovery of mineral oil has been a set-back to this trade, for now the process of purification of mineral oil is easier than the crushing of the seeds in order to obtain the crude oil.

For our metal supplies we import gold, tin, and copper from South Africa, Australia, and Canada, the total imports from these countries being valued at a very large figure as compared with non-colonial metal

imports, the main part of which come from the United States, and South America.

By leather we mean hides and skins which are manufactured into leather in England. Our chief sources are India, New Zealand, South Africa, for the colonies, and Argentina, Brazil for non-colonies.

India is our main source for chemicals in the form of dyes, but some is obtained from South America. Artificial manufacture of dyes has decreased this trade, and turned it into an industry to be worked in large towns in England.

For a summary of these raw materials, we may say that Great Britain depends on her colonies for metals, leather, dyes, & seeds; for the supplies of such from non-colonial sources are far outnumbered by those from the colonies.

Let us now make all complete, the summary of our data, we have found that Great Britain depends upon her colonies for grain and flour, rice, tea, coffee, fruit, wool, fute, timber, leather, dyes, seeds, and metals. Hence for these things the British Empire is a self-contained Economic Unit. Imports coming mostly from non-colonies are sugar, dairy produce, flax, hemp, wines and spirits, and cotton; so at a first glance it seems as if the

British Empire is lacking in these commodities, but it is not so, because either the distance between the two countries, England and her colony, is too great to make the trade a financial success, when we can obtain such goods from countries near at hand, or else the colony is too young at present to grow the commodity in the large quantities needed here.

Looking at the British Colonies' Trade Chart on the next page, we see that most of the food and raw materials grown in our colonies come either to Great Britain, or to other British Colonies, hence the British Empire is bound together in such trade, while Great Britain provides the manufactured articles.

If all the non-colonial countries were to refuse to send us any goods or foods whatsoever, the British Empire would soon get over the shock, and carry on without them, and this is surely a real test of an Economic Unit. Hence the British Empire will be, when all the colonies are completely opened up, a self-contained Economic Unit.

Comparative Trade Chart of British Colonies.



Exports to Great Britain.



Exports to other British Colonies.



Exports to the rest of the World.

"This precious stone set in a silver sea!"

The End.