

1st Prize 1930  
Winner  
Class A.

A38

F.G. 1

The most original  
future so

Veni, Vidi, Vici.

## Britain in the Pacific. - Past - Present - Future

The Pacific was the last great ocean to be charted. It was far from the great homes of civilisation, the East and the Mediterranean, and though it had a civilisation of its own in Mexico it was not progressive. Until Columbus discovered America the inhabitants of Europe knew nothing of the Pacific and until 1547 it remained the monopoly of Spain. In that year Drake made his renowned voyage around the world and it is fitting that such a man should lay the foundation of 'Britain in the Pacific'.

After the great age of Elizabeth British interest in the exploration of the Pacific faded. The Stuarts were friendly with Spain and Englishmen were engaged in a great struggle for liberty. Pym and Hampden were greater names in those days than Raleigh.

and Drake and the attention of British  
statesmen was taken by wars in Europe.  
The Seven Years war, however,  
confirmed our mastery of the Atlantic and  
the Pacific began to attract attention.  
The pioneer was Captain Cook the  
distinguished, self-educated son of a labourer  
who had run away to sea. In 1769  
the Royal Society wished to witness the  
transit of Venus across the Sun from  
Tahiti, and sent out Sir Joseph Banks  
and Dr Solander with Cook, then a  
lieutenant, in charge of navigation. After  
the transit Cook began exploration on  
his own account. He sailed first to  
New Zealand and spent six months  
in examining and circumventing both  
islands. Then he continued to Australia, where  
Sir Joseph Banks bestowed the name  
'Botany Bay', and afterwards charted the  
Barrier Reef and rounded the northern  
point, proving that New Guinea and  
Australia were separate. Cook made a  
second voyage to the Pacific in 1772 and  
proved that there was no inhabitable  
southern continent. In 1780 he started

a third voyage. One year was spent charting various island groups, the chief of which were the Sandwich Islands and then Cook set out to try and find a north-west passage from the Pacific. He was forced to turn back at Ley Lake and was killed by natives of the Sandwich Islands. He was the last of the old pioneers.

Cook discovered land from the deck of a ship and it now required internal exploration and colonization. The American War of Independence had stopped the exportation of convicts to that country and Sir Joseph Banks persuaded the government to send them to Australia. Captain Philip landed with the first party of convicts and soldiers in 1788 at Botany Bay but soon moved to Sydney. It was an inauspicious beginning to one of our greatest dominions.

The early years were full of hardship but gradually the colony became self-supporting. Soon other settlements were made along the coast and in Tasmania. New South Wales was hemmed in

for twenty - five years by the Blue Mountains but a pass was discovered in 1813 and this opened up a new field for exploration.

The years 1810 to 1860 were the great years of exploration of Australia. People began to realize its tremendous possibilities. Bass and Flinders continued the work of Cook and charted the coastline while Captain Sturt explored the Murray - Darling basin. Oxley and Eyre explored the Great Bight and in 1860 the continent was crossed for the first time by Burke and Mills.

When the other settlements in Australia increased in size and importance they wished to break away from New South Wales, Tasmania was the first in 1825, followed by Victoria in 1851 and Queensland in 1859. In spite of a commercial crisis in 1841 Australia made steady progress. Then came the discovery of gold at Ballarat in 1851 and the ensuing 'rush'. This discovery of gold advanced the condition of Australia by fifty years. Victoria doubled its population in one year.

and trade increased ten-fold during the years 1851 to 1853.

The various Australian states pursued their own paths until a common danger made them realize their weakness. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Germany, made united and strong by Bismarck began to look for colonies and cast eyes on the East Indies. The German government began to take an interest in Samoa and Papua. Gladstone said "God speed her" but Australia was faneeling and in 1900 all the States united to form a commonwealth. Unfortunately it is a weak arrangement and the States have reserved many subjects for their own jurisdiction.

It took many years after the first settlement in Australia before the importance of New Zealand was realized. The Reverend Samuel Marsden began missionary work in 1814 but it really began as a colony in 1835. Under the influence of Gibbon Wakefield a New Zealand association was formed in 1834 and when colonization began the government was forced to appoint a Lieutenant-Governor.

in the person of Captain Hobson. He made the Treaty of Waitangi with the Maoris. The chiefs had to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Queen and were conferred in possession of their land. When they wished to sell the first offer had to be made to the Crown. Trouble quickly arose over land already sold but Sir George Grey, on his arrival in 1845, restored peace with a mixture of firmness and sympathy. He drew up the New Zealand Constitution consisting of a Central Parliament with two chambers, and a council for each province presided over by a superintendent who is assisted by a miniature cabinet. However, all trouble with the Maoris was not yet over. The 'King' movement was started in North Island and there was a dispute about land at Waitara. In 1860 the Second Maoris war began. Grey was summoned from South Africa and the belief that he had great influence with the Maoris was well-founded. But the war left strained relations between Britain and New Zealand and cast a shadow on the end of the career of one of

our greatest Empire Builders.

Both Australia and New Zealand have developed far from older civilisations and have been the refuge of oppressed people. It is only natural therefore that they should be the pioneers of the Labour movement. The eight hour day, now universal, was first made compulsory in Australia and a Wages Board has been instituted to try and regulate wages and avoid disputes. In both Australia and New Zealand such things as railways, gas and electricity are State controlled.

Canada like the United States has only recently begun to take an interest in the Pacific. It was populated from the Atlantic and for a long time British Columbia was distinct from the rest of Canada, inasmuch as it could only be approached from the sea. British Columbia, like Australia, was populated by the discovery of gold. The 'rush' began to California in 1849 and gradually spread up the coast until it ended in Yukon. British Columbia joined the Dominion in 1871 but only when the Canadian Pacific

Railway promised to extend its line to the Pacific coast.

In addition to the three great dominions of Australia, New Zealand and Canada Britain holds innumerable islands in the Pacific. Fiji, which is composed of two very fertile islands, together about the size of Wales, asked to become a British Protectorate in 1854. East of the Fijis are the Samoan and Tokelau Islands. The latter are entirely British and the British part of the former are administered by New Zealand under a mandate from the League of Nations. To the east of New Guinea are the Solomon group including both coral and volcanic types. The larger volcanic islands are extremely fertile. Britain has also secured Singapore, one of the key towns of the world.

The late attention given to the Pacific has retarded its development. At present it is only thinly populated in comparison to the rest of the world and is therefore agricultural rather than industrial.

The British dominions in the Pacific buy enormous quantities of manufactured goods and send in return raw material and foodstuffs.

In the past our Pacific Dominions have been forward in democracy. Unfortunately, but not unnaturally, the Labour ideal has not has not worked as well as it might have done. Employer and employee are still too antagonistic and strikes cost many millions of pounds each year showing that a country cannot be governed by unions. In this respect New Zealand is better situated than Australia. It is compact and the more even distribution of the population enables it to preserve its nationality. Many people in England consider New Zealand ideal for the British emigrant. Possibly British Columbia is a little more developed than Australia or New Zealand. The Canadian Pacific Railway has taken emigrants and trade and the salmon canning industry on the banks of the Fraser is important. Vancouver, the capital, has a splendid harbour and a rapidly growing trade.

The huge number of unemployed in Britain is drawing many people to the dominions. It was the farmer of the past who built up the Empire and our dominions are encouraging his descendants to

people at. They are trying to attract him by advertisement and assisted passages. There is no gainsaying that this class of people are the best in Britain. Through living in the open air they are ruddy and hardy and are not afraid of work.

In the British dominions of the Pacific there is no native question in any way comparable to that of South Africa. The introduction by white men of their vices and diseases has practically exterminated the black. In Tasmania they are extinct and are fast dying out in Australia. The Red Indian of British Columbia is in reservation. Only in New Zealand are the natives holding their own. The Maoris are an intelligent and muscular race and have become amenable to Western civilization, possessing the vote and members in Parliament.

With regard to our possessions in the Pacific many natural disadvantages have been overcome. The question of distance is decreasing in importance with rapid inventions in transport, and wireless and the telephone have alleviated the isolation

of many farms. At the present day the British Empire in the Pacific owes a very great deal to the engineer. By means of artesian wells, often reaching a depth of three thousand feet, the drought question is being rapidly overcome in the Murray-Darling basin. It would be useless rearing thousands of sheep in Australia and New Zealand, and cattle in Canada were it not for the refrigerator. A very recent and useful discovery is a type of wheat that will flourish with less than twenty inches of rain.

Britain has been a Free Trade country for the last fifty years but all the colonies have adopted Protection as part of their fiscal policy. They have infant industries which must be protected against old and well-established firms. At present there is a movement for absolute Free Trade within the Empire in place of the small preference already given to Imperial goods. This ideal is quite possible and will benefit the Empire tremendously in the future.

There is one great question that concerns both the present and the

future of 'Britain in the Pacific' It is Oriental emigration. For many hundreds of years East and West have pursued separate paths and developed in an entirely different way. Now they are facing one another across the Pacific. The real seat of the trouble lies in the difference between Eastern and Western models and standards of living. No British colony in the Pacific, as well the United States, allows orientals to enter unreservedly; in Australia they are banned entirely. These States argue that the Oriental by his low standard of living undercuts their own nationals and that his type of morals are undesirable.

There is much to be said, however, for the Oriental. India, China and Japan are suffering as much as Europe from overcrowding and the Pacific countries are almost the only inhabitable unpopulated districts in the world. Australia, New Zealand and Canada are being held back through lack of man-power and no one can deny that the Oriental is very industrious. At the moment Japan is the real trouble. In the short space of fifty years she has risen from obscurity to become one of the great world powers. With her nationals

eager for education. The wars against China and Russia have made her proud and resentful of insult. It is only entanglements on the continent, legacies from the two successful wars, that are preventing Japan fulfilling her destiny on the sea.

China and India are in an entirely different position. Centuries must pass before the masses of the people can be educated and the question of a national and stable government will occupy many years in both countries.

Thus we see that it is Japan who will cause trouble in the Pacific. Recently there has been a gravitation of naval power to the Pacific. The United States built the Panama canal in order to control two fleets, and the question of Dominion co-operation for a British Pacific Fleet was raised at the Imperial Conference of 1909 but had to be dropped because of the German menace. Now the need is imperative. Though Australia, Canada and New Zealand have a strong national feeling they are much too interested in internal development to spend much money on defence. The British Parliament

should see to it as the time is not far distant when we shall be subordinate to a united British Pacific Empire. New Zealand should be our present watch-dog in the Pacific. Canada is stilling looking to the Atlantic and the vast inland resources of Australia require all her attention. New Zealand breeds natural sailors and will provide the navy for our future Pacific Empire.

good  
In the past the Mediterranean carried the world's commerce, today it is the Atlantic, in the future it will be the Pacific. Britain has for long been the centre of the world's trade, as the pioneer of the factory system she had no competitors. Now, through competition from countries who are better situated for raw materials than ourselves and who sell at prices we cannot quote, trade is depressed and unemployment rife. Soon Britain will only have a trade for special finer goods which require less raw material but more highly skilled labour.

The rest of the people must go to the Pacific colonies where there are vast natural resources and thousands of

square miles of virgin land they already produce a large proportion of the world's food and with more emigrants will make possible the ideal of a self-supporting Empire. After this the first step will be Empire Free Trade, made possible by our unique self-supporting qualities and binding our Pacific colonies closer together. We read of Monsieur Briand's idea of a European Federation similar to that of the United States. This is not impossible and a United British Empire in the Pacific would hold the balance between the two.

It is certain that something will soon have to be done to weld our Empire in the Pacific closer together. The vast open spaces of Canada and Australia encourage individuality. It is hard for the backwoodsman to be interested in petty European politics. Closer trade regulations would help these people to realize their responsibilities as members of the Empire, but the time is not far distant when the Imperial Conference will assume some kind of constitution. The Crown is too small a land and is merely symbolic and these colonists need a more

maternal connection. Recent tours of the King's sons have been very popular. But it would be far better if each colony had a member of the Royal family as its Governor-General.

The attitude of the colonies to Great Britain has been described "daughter in my mother's house but mistress in my own". Soon, however, the daughters will outstrip the mother in population and importance and then it is only right that the wishes of the mother shall become secondary in importance to that of the daughters. Also the capital of an Empire should be situated in the most important area, though at the most impregnable point of that area. London has never been in a central position for the Empire and not be nearly so important when the Pacific becomes the great world trade route. Its splendid isolation ended when Blenot flew the channel. The future capital must be in New Zealand. By virtue of its position it will continue our splendid naval tradition, from New Zealand easy communication can be maintained

with both Canada and Australia without asking permission to go through any patrolled area.

Evidently then, 'Britain in the Pacific' can face the future with confidence. There will be in that ocean a collection of the finest race of people, reared in the open air and bound together by trade and a common Parliament in New Zealand. By reason of the unique position in virgin land and the control exercised over such strategic positions as Singapore the British Empire will maintain its superiority. Now our Empire is a guarantee of peace and it will be more so in the future when we will hold the balance between East and West; a position we are qualified to hold by reason of our vast experience in dealing with Oriental races. It will fall to our new Pacific Empire to educate the masses of India and China and to checkmate the growing ambition of Japan. Our descendants will see the emancipation of the Orient and his acceptance of the British

code of freedom.

"We must be free or die who spoke the tongue  
that Shakespeare spoke, the faith and morals hold  
that Milton held."

---

---

List of Books Consulted.

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| History of the British Empire       | Higham           |
| The British Empire                  | Williamson       |
| Builders of the Empire              | Williamson       |
| The British Empire                  | Bulkeley         |
| The English Speaking Nation         | Morris and Wood. |
| The British Empire and its Problems | Unstead.         |

---