



THE



BRITISH EMPIRE

A STUDY IN COLONIAL GEOGRAPHY

ALBERT DEMANGEON



THE BRITISH EMPIRE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

ON MERCATOR'S PROJECTION
Steamship distances are given in Nautical Miles
Principal Railways shown thus



N T A R C T I C A

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE translator has endeavoured to provide an exact English version of Professor Demangeon's *L'Empire britannique*, which was published in 1923. No changes have been made in the text, except the turning of metric measures into their English equivalents and the occasional correction of an obvious slip or misprint.

In the footnote references the number in black type following the author's name is the number of the book in the Bibliography at the end of this volume, where details as to title and publisher will be found.

E. F. R.

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE

INTRODUCTION

THE best way to obtain a real understanding of European colonization—one of the most impressive of modern migratory movements and commercial enterprises—is to study the British Empire. From the enormous number of its colonists settled beyond the seas, the vast trade to which it has given rise, and the changes it has effected in native customs and civilizations, we may obtain a picture, on a huge scale, of the colonizing spirit in action. The contrast, moreover, between the smallness of the mother country and the enormous extent of the lands she has gathered round her is so strong that this phenomenon seems the more unique and unprecedented.

No other subject yields richer or fuller material for the study of colonial geography, properly understood as an independent branch of knowledge. It is no part of our business to tell the story of colonial conquests, which is the affair of the historian; or to describe the countries themselves, which is a matter of regional geography. Our main object is to study the effects arising from the contact between the two types of peoples who are called upon to associate with each other in a colony: the one civilized, well provided with capital and material goods, in search of new wealth, thoroughly mobile, and alive to the spirit of enterprise and adventure, the strange and the unknown; the other isolated and self-centred, faithful to its ancient modes of living, with a limited outlook, and ill equipped with weapons and tools. Our task

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is to explain how the colonizing race has gone to work to exploit its new territory, to create wealth, and to rule and employ the natives, and how the colony has reacted, in virtue of its physical formation and the degree of civilization attained by its inhabitants, to the breath of the new spirit. We propose to show, therefore, within the broad framework, as it were, of human geography, how a group of men has succeeded in setting to work its faculties of invention, adaptation, acclimatization, and propagation in a very peculiar and very varied sphere of action.

British colonization as a national phenomenon has reacted profoundly on conditions of life in Great Britain itself; but it is also a world-phenomenon, inseparable from the life of other nations. We may well ask what Great Britain would be like without her Empire, and also what the world would be like without it.

Of all the countries in this Europe of ours, which has done so much in the way of exploring, exploiting, and populating the earth, it is Great Britain whose colonizing instinct has contributed most toward giving it form and life. There is no British family but has a son beyond the seas; no newspaper but keeps its readers informed of events in the far-off lands of the Empire; no household that does not consume Imperial products; no career for which the colonies can offer no outlet; no industry that does not work for a colonial market; no great seaport that does not trade with one or other of His Majesty's possessions; no capitalist or *rentier* without colonial stocks and shares in his portfolio; no security for the homeland unless the way to the colonies is open and free to the British Navy; no war that has not extended the Empire or defended it from attack. The conception of the Empire is familiar to every Englishman, while to the British Government it is the supreme national interest—an interest of literally world-wide extent. Without its overseas possessions the United

INTRODUCTION

Kingdom is merely a small group of islands off the coast of Europe ; with them, it has become one of the poles of the human race. The Englishman has property everywhere, and everywhere the English tongue is spoken. The Englishman never feels alone in a foreign land, and no journey can take him far from the sight of his own flag. When he thinks of his country, he sees her wherever her ships are sailing. He is hurt if he feels that Continental affairs are checking her or absorbing her ; he is at ease if her outlook is upon the ocean. No other land has a greater portion of her body and her soul beyond theseas. Business houses, factories, merchant shipping, banks, and bookshops —what would Great Britain be without her Empire ?

And now what would the world be without the British Empire ? There is no ocean without a British coastline ; no continent without some inhabitants of British race ; no coming and going without British means of communication. In every settlement of British colonists there are the same forms of civilization, the same domesticated animals, the same cultivated crops, the same kind of material existence, the same methods of exploiting the soil, and the same spiritual needs. Without the British Empire we should have a different distribution of the races of the earth, for it has altered the field of expansion of negroes, Indians, and whites. Europe faces the other peoples of the world with an Anglo-Saxon front : the yellow races in Oceania, in North America, and in the monsoon region of Asia ; the blacks in North America and South Africa. Without the British Empire the political map of the world would be differently drawn ; it is a fact of world-wide import that Anglo-Saxon races dwell in both continents of the Northern Hemisphere and in two of the three continents of the Southern. The Empire supplies the whole world with goods whose production has been created, developed, or organized by its planters, colonists, engineers, and

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merchants: the gold and diamonds of South Africa; the wool, wheat, butter, and meat of Australia; the wheat, fish, and timber of Canada; the sugar of the West Indies; the rubber and tin of Malaysia; the wheat, cotton, jute, rice, and tea of India. Few nations contribute so largely to the maintenance and increase of the inheritance of the human race.

Other nations are but ill acquainted with the extent and vigour of these centres of British activity. Occasionally, however, they do perceive them, and measure them in the light of the great events that are agitating humanity. It was not without astonishment that the people of France saw squadrons of Hindu cavalry and Anzac and Canadian battalions marching through their villages—advancing right into the heart of our old Europe, to the rescue of the British Empire. And, when peace had come, it was with surprise and some measure of embarrassment that the French diplomatists found seated in the council chamber of the Allies the representatives of those far-off dominions which they were accustomed to regard as lying at the uttermost ends of the earth, and which now seemed close at hand, watching over the restoration of the civilized world. This widening of the circle of the nations is a British achievement whose origin, development, and structure we have to study. We have to see how Great Britain, after remaining for so long an agricultural country, with no other outside ambitions than her French provinces, at length settled down in her island, turned her back on the Continent, sought fortune beyond the seas, founded a province in the tropical zone, settled multitudes of her children on new lands in the temperate zone, added to her possessions from generation to generation, and ended by assembling beneath her flag the largest, the richest, and the most populous colonial empire that the world has ever seen.

APPENDIX

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

| — | Area in Sq. Miles | Population | Chief Exports |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|--|
| EUROPE | | | |
| United Kingdom | 121,400 | 47,230,000 | |
| Gibraltar | 2 | 16,000 | |
| Malta | 120 | 225,000 | |
| Total | 121,522 | 47,471,000 | |
| ASIA | | | |
| India | 1,802,000 | 315,156,000 | Jute, cotton, rice, hides, tea, cotton goods, oil seeds, wheat, wool |
| Cyprus | 3,600 | 311,000 | Carobs, potatoes, wheat, wine, raisins, cattle, barley, tobacco |
| Aden, Perim, Socotra | 10,400 | 60,000 | Coffee, gum, hides |
| Ceylon | 25,000 | 4,686,000 | Tea, rubber, copra, coconut-oil |
| Straits Settlements | 1,600 | 846,000 | Tin, rubber, spices |
| Federated Malay States | 50,000 | 1,280,000 | Rubber, tin |
| Other Malay States | | 930,000 | Rubber, tin |
| Borneo | 77,086 | 840,000 | Rubber, tobacco, timber |
| Hong Kong | 400 | 561,000 | |
| Wei-hai-wei | 285 | 150,000 | Ground-nuts, cotton, sugar |
| Total | 1,970,371 | 324,820,000 | |
| AFRICA | | | |
| Ascension | 34 | 250 | |
| St Helena | 47 | 3,650 | |
| Nigeria | 330,000 | 16,750,000 | Almonds, palm-oil, tin, ground-nuts |

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE—*continued*

| — | Area in Sq. Miles | Population | Chief Exports |
|--|----------------------|-------------------|---|
| AFRICA—<i>continued</i> | | | |
| Gold Coast | 80,000 | 1,500,000 | Cocoa, gold and gold dust, cola-nuts |
| Sierra Leone | 32,000 | 1,404,000 | Almonds, palm-oil, cola-nuts |
| Gambia | 4,000 | 208,000 | Ground-nuts |
| Mauritius | 800 | 385,000 | Sugar |
| Seychelles | 156 | 25,000 | Coconuts |
| Somaliland | 68,000 | 300,000 | Hides, gum |
| Kenya Colony | 250,000 | 2,807,000 | Cotton, coffee |
| Uganda | 110,000 | 3,318,000 | Cotton, coffee |
| Zanzibar | 1,019 | 200,000 | Cloves, copra |
| Nyassaland | 40,000 | 1,218,000 | Tobacco, cotton |
| Union of South Africa | 473,000 | 6,000,000 | Gold, wool, diamonds, hides, mohair, maize, coal |
| Rhodesia | 440,000 | 1,699,000 | Gold, copper, seeds |
| Swaziland | 6,712 | 100,000 | Tin |
| Basutoland | 11,000 | 406,000 | Cattle, wool |
| Bechuanaland | 275,000 | 125,000 | Cattle |
| Egypt | 350,000 | 12,751,000 | Cotton |
| Sudan | 1,000,000 | 3,400,000 | Gum, seeds, cattle |
| Total | 3,471,768 | 52,599,900 | |
| AMERICA | | | |
| Canada | 3,745,000 | 8,360,000 | Wheat, flour, timber, paper pulp, bacon, cattle, cheese |
| Newfoundland | 163,000 | 259,000 | Fish |
| Honduras | 8,500 | 42,000 | Timber, gum |
| Guiana | 90,000 | 311,000 | Sugar |
| Bermuda | 20 | 22,000 | Vegetables |
| Jamaica | 4,200 | 891,000 | Sugar, coffee, bananas, timber |
| Turk's and Caicos Is. | 224 | 5,600 | |
| Cayman Is. | 89 | 5,400 | |
| Barbados | 170 | 192,000 | Sugar |
| Windward Is. | 500 | 180,000 | Cocoa, sugar, cotton |
| Leeward Is. | 700 | 128,000 | Sugar |
| Trinidad and Tobago | 2,000 | 381,000 | Cocoa, sugar, oil |
| Falkland Is. and South Georgia | 7,500 | 3,250 | Wool, whale products |
| Total | 4,021,903 | 10,780,250 | |

APPENDIX

THE BRITISH EMPIRE—*continued*

| — | Area in Sq. Miles | Population | Chief Exports |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| AUSTRALASIA | | | |
| Australia . . . | 2,974,000 | 5,141,000 | Wool, wheat, flour, hides, meat |
| British New Guinea | 90,000 | 200,000 | Copra, rubber |
| New Zealand . . . | 105,000 | 1,200,000 | Wool, butter, cheese, meat, hides |
| Fiji Is. | 7,700 | 163,000 | Sugar, copra |
| Tonga, Solomon Is., etc. | 11,460 | 205,000 | Copra |
| Total | 3,188,160 | 6,909,000 | |
| FORMER GERMAN COLONIES | | | |
| Tanganyika . . . | 380,000 | 7,660,000 | Sisal, cotton |
| South-west Africa | 320,000 | 150,000 | Diamonds |
| Togoland | 33,700 | 1,032,000 | Almonds, palm-oil |
| Cameroon | 32,800 | 500,000(?) | Almonds, palm-oil, rubber, cocoa |
| New Guinea. . . | 70,000 | 500,000(?) | Copra |
| Bismarck Archi- pelago | 15,800 | 190,000 | Copra |
| Samoa | 1,260 | 41,000 | |
| Total | 853,560 | 10,073,000 | |

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