Special Prize C

Marguerite Pretorius.

DATE OF BIRTH: [redacted]

90, HADEN ROAD,
Berea
DURBAN.

SOUTH AFRICA.

School - Durban Girls' College.

TITLE:

If you could choose to invite 4 young people to your home from other countries, which 4 would you choose and why?

ROYAL EMPIRE SOCIETY ESSAY COMPETITION
CLASS C.

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13 yrs.

If I could choose to Invite Four Young people to My home From Other Commonwealth Countries which four would I choose and why?

My home is near the Southern most tip of the vast continent of Africa. We live on the crest of a hill overlooking the city of Durban, an important seaport in Natal. From our sunny front garden, with its semi-tropical plants and shrubs, we have a splendid view of the sea and harbour entrance. Often I watch, fascinated, the different ocean going lines inching majestically in and out of the bay preceded usually by the fussy little tug-boats. The sight stirs my imagination and my mind follows the ships to their various destinations. One day I hope to travel and see the world and in preparation for that exciting time I would welcome all the information possible on the countries, I plan, if possible, to visit such as Canada, Australia, Britain and New Zealand. ✓

The British Commonwealth of Nations, to which we in South Africa are very proud to belong, consists of the following countries: Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, numerous islands in the British West Indies, East Indies and other parts, British Honduras and British Guiana, the Republic of India and Ceylon, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Basutoland, British East Africa, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Australia and New Zealand.

If I could choose an ambassador from any four of these to welcome as a friend in my home for a visit my choice would be a young boy or girl from Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand

The British Isles, is so small in contrast to our country, yet with so large a population and so long and interesting a history, fascinates me most. I would listen spell-bound to all accounts of the big cities, London and Edinburgh in particular and the overpopulated green countryside. How exciting and different London must be with its vast network of underground railways, its Hyde Park, its Buckingham Palace, its television, its Houses of Parliament, its Big Ben and Westminster Abbey! Descriptions of the famous, history-steeped Tower of London, the river Thames, the great Art Galleries and museums, would hold my interest and I in turn would take

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great pride in showing my visitor the South African scene and scenery.

During the present series of cricket test-matches between Australia and South Africa, my interest in Australia has been deeply aroused and I would certainly like to meet someone who could tell me more about that interesting country. Australia like Africa is a large continent made up of deserts, vast tracks of very sparsely populated farm and grazing lands and large modern cities

In Australia many of the same fruits and crops are grown as in South Africa, but her sheep population is the greatest of any country, and the output of wool the largest. I would love to hear about the lonely sheep ranges where each farmer is nearly a hundred miles away from his neighbour. So great are these distances that contact is made by radio and in the case of an emergency the Flying Doctor service is used. Nowhere else in the world is this wonderful, humane service to be found.

In contrast to our many problems concerning the native population in South Africa, where indeed there is one white man to six black, the Aborigines are only a small percentage of the population and they are very primitive and backward and did not even know how to cultivate soil until the white man introduced it to them. Yet even to-day these people are the world's foremost trackers, and can read like an open book the signs of the earth they tread.

I would love to discuss with my visitor the similarities and dissimilarities between our countries and to hear about the beautiful city of Sydney with its famous and beautiful harbour and its colossal bridge that links the North shore with the South. I would also like to hear from my Australian friend about the chain of coral islands, the Great Barrier Reef, with its tiny vivid coloured fish and coral every shade of the rainbow and by contrast, of the Winter sports held in the Australian Alps.

Australians are fond of outdoor life and sport and being also in the Southern Hemisphere, their climate is similar to ours. On their popular bathing beaches they also have had shark fatalities similar to the ones along our Natal South Coast which recently shocked the whole world. As in South Africa the discovery of gold in Australia caused many new settlers to hurry to the country. Australia has many unusual and beautiful animals, birds, and plants that are found nowhere else in the world.

I look forward also to welcoming into my home a young

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Canadian. I have learnt enough from my Geography books and the newspaper reports of the highly successful Royal Tour, to make me anxious to know more about that wonderful country and its people.

One day I hope to see the Niagara Falls and the Great Canadian Lakes. One day I hope to skate there and ski on the snow-covered slopes and to wander down the streets of the great capital city of Ottawa. One day too, I hope to see the beautiful and magnificent Canadian scenery.

Canada, like South Africa, is a bilingual country and many of its problems may be similar to ours. It will be interesting to compare notes and experiences and instructive, too.

In the Southern part of the Pacific Ocean lie the large, lovely islands of New Zealand. Here one can see rugged mountains, great glaciers, geysers, and rolling valleys. A friend from New Zealand could tell me all about the sheep and cattle farms, the tall intelligent Maori natives and the New Zealand way of life with its extreme shortage of Domestic help.

Some children from overseas are so misinformed that they think all South African children are black and that wild animals prowl around our homes at night. I would welcome an opportunity to show them our bustling modern cities, our native and wild life, our beautiful farms and scenery, and our famous gold mines.

I am sure a British boy or girl or a child from any part of the world for that matter, would be most thrilled and interested to be taken on a tour of the Kruger National Park. In this huge Game Reserve, which is as large as Wales, all species and kinds of animals imaginable are allowed to roam about unmolested in their natural surroundings. Our native life and customs are also of great interest to any tourist.

Our visitors from overseas will be amazed at the tremendous strides this country has made during the white occupation. It is only three centuries since van Riebeeck landed at the Cape of Good Hope to found a colony there

Visits such as I have described would, I am convinced, do much to help foster a spirit of goodwill and tolerance between countries and be a step even though only a small one, towards the goal of world peace.

Books consulted: The British Commonwealth, A family of Peoples.

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