Subject: Describe the achievements of three explorers of the Commonwealth and Empire, which of them interests you most.

In the thirteenth century, the thought of someone sailing round the world had never occurred to the minds of those ignorant people. They never thought that the earth was round, for they had the idea that the earth was some sort of a dish, so that if anyone sailed too near the edge he would drop down into some unknown region. This was the constant fear of the sailors at that time, so they were never encouraged to explore.

It was in the fourteenth century that the Renaissance, the re-birth of knowledge, that had a great deal to do with the explorers of the fifteenth century, which started the new epoch. The great learnings or manuscripts of wise men had been taken by the Turks during their constant incursions of Europe. The manuscripts were kept in Constantinople but in the fourteenth century they were taken back to Italy, then started reading or learning the manuscripts which dealt with religion, philosophy, geography, etcetera. This put science to a feeling of curiosity in their minds. “The sphere of
the earth was a doctrine held by all the really learned men of this time. Christopher Columbus supported this statement & proved it by sailing in 1492 to the East Indies. He thought it was the East Indies & he did not know that it was a new continent that he had discovered.

This voyage was followed by many, including Bartholomeu Dias who, in 1486, sailed & doubled the Cape of Good Hope. Vasco da Gama (1497-1499) went slightly further than Bartholomeu Dias & he sailed round the Cape of Good Hope & reached India. He returned by the same route. Ferdinand Magellan sailed round the world from 1519 to 1522 by taking the West-East route.

England at this time was by no means indifferent to all these exciting events happening to her neighbours across the sea. She was also very excited & was rather disappointed that she was not one of the first to send her sailors to explore the world. She was also preparing for this voyage, & her dreams for more lands across the sea were realized when Sir Francis Drake succeeded to sail round the world.

Sir Francis Drake was born near Tavistock in Devonshire in 1545. His father was a yeoman & one of the zealous Protestants who took refuge in Kent during Queen Mary's reign, when all Protestant were executed. Sir John Hawkins was a kinsman of Drake & was responsible for Drake's education. Drake worked on a coasting vessel after he had completed his education. When he
was twenty years old he fought gallantly under Sir John Hawkins against the Spanish in the Gulf of Mexico. It was here that he gained a good reputation.

In 1570 Drake obtained a regular privateering commission from Queen Elizabeth I. He was a thorn in the Spanish flesh; for he was constantly attacking Spanish ships which were laden with great riches. He proposed a voyage to the South Seas through the straits of Magellan to the Queen agreed to equip him.

The voyage began on 15th December 1577 with five vessels and a crew of a hundred and sixty-six men. He cruised down the west coast of Morocco and reached Brazil on April 6th, then entered into his de la Plate. He turned two of his ships adrift after taking the provisions. He was delayed two months because of provision and the execution of Thomas Doughty who had plotted against him. On August 21st he reached the straits of Magellan which was founded by Magellan and situated between the south of South America and Tierra del Fuego. He took nineteen days to pass through it because of a storm. Drake parted with two of his vessels which later returned to England. He continued on to Chile, here he took the opportunity of plundering Spanish ships whenever possible, until he reached latitude 48°. He named one of the countries he went ashore, New Albion and proclaimed it in the name of the Queen.

On July 26th, 1579, Drake made for the Indies. On November 4th he caught his first glimpse of the
island. He arrived at Ternate and was well received by the Sultan. His ship struck on to the rocks in the Celebes but he managed to get it out undamaged. He arrived at Java, but his plans of visiting Malacca had to be abandoned as he was urgently needed in England. He sailed across the Indian Ocean, rounded the Cape of Good Hope and arrived at Plymouth on September 20th. This voyage took him two years and three months. Drake was proclaimed as the first Englishman to sail round the world.

Queen Elizabeth I went to Drake's ship, the Golden Hind, which was later known as the Golden Hind, and knighted him. During this time, England was having much trouble with Spain. Drake was in time to fight in the famous Spanish Armada, which was a crowning victory for Britain. He succeeded to burn ten thousand tons of shipping. This event was nicknamed "Finger of the King of Spain's head." After this he made a trip to the West Indies and died there on January 28th, 1596.

Sir Robert Falcon Scott was an explorer of the early part of the twentieth century. His birth took place on January 8th, 1868 at Devonport, and he received his education at Stowe School and Stubbington House. In 1887 he passed into the His Majesty's Ship Britannia in 1883 and he became a midshipman on the 'Gondola.' His promotion as First Lieutenant came in 1879. Two years later he was recommended as commander of the National Antarctic Expedition. His promotion as can be seen was very rapid after taking duties on the 'Discovery' in 1903.
was promoted as commander. During the following four years he proved to be a brave and able leader and a competent scientific investigator. He was for a time the position of a captain on his return home. He spent six years in the army commanding the ‘Victorious’, ‘Essex’ and ‘Dublinken’ in 1909.

He announced his intention of organising an Antarctic expedition for the continuation of the work of the ‘Discovery’ and reaching the South Pole. Scott was financially supported by the British Government.

Scott set sail on June, 1911, on the ‘Terra Nova’. In November 1911 he began his southern sledge journey. Though Scott and his four companions were delayed because of bad weather, they reached the South Pole on January 16th, 1912. Disappointment met them in the form of Amundsen, who had reached the Pole a few days earlier than Scott.

With the insufficiency of food, mixed with severity of weather and disappointment made travelling on the return journey very slow. On February 17th, Petty Officer Evans broke under the strain and died. A month later, Oates, another member of the expedition was very ill and could not travel. Hoping that his sacrifice could benefit his companions, he walked out into the blizzard. He did not want to delay his companions and thought that they could use his provisions. His great sacrifice proved to be effortless!
On November 12th, 1912, a search party found Scott’s tent. In it were the bodies of Doctor E. A. Wilson and Lieutenant H. P. Bowers, and also the diaries and records of Scott, giving a detail of his brave journey. They proved to be very useful for other explorers later on. On February 14th, 1913, a memorial service took place at St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, in memory of Scott and his party. The book given their hero for the glory which was Britain.

David Livingstone was born on March 19th, 1813, at the village of Blantyre Works in Lanarkshire in Scotland. When he was young he was compelled to work in a cotton mill, to help his family financially, but he was ambitious. When Livingstone was twenty-two he undertook a medical curriculum. He took up medicine, first at Oxford and then at Anderson’s College in Glasgow. In 1835 he was accepted by the London Missionary Society as a candidate. In November 1840, he received the medical degree in the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons. His one ambition was to go to China and he was bitterly disappointed when he was told to go to Africa; however, I think that he never regretted going there!

Livingstone sailed from England on December 5th, 1840, from Algiers. He arrived at Kurrum, a mission station. The next two years he spent looking for a suitable outpost for settlement. He found it in the valley of Matabele, which was on one of the sources of the Limpopo River. It was here that he brought his family. Two English-
men joined Livingstone & they undertook the journey to
Lake Nyasa, which had never been seen by white men.
They crossed the Kalabari Desert in 1851 & Livingstone
went back to England.

Another expedition took place. When Livingstone reached
the Lake Dika he was ill with dysentery but on
recovering he undertook the journey back to England. He
went back to Africa, then set out for the Zambezi
Expedition. He was accompanied by Mr John Kirk &
Chief Livingstone, his brother. They explored the Luvu Tete,
especially the Kambakatse Rapids. In 1859 they explored
Lake Nyasa, then proceeded to Mwene where they found
the horrors of the slave trade rampant. Livingstone
decided to arouse the civilized world to put down this
trade. He returned to England.

On returning to Africa he was appointed as the
British Consul to Africa. He organised yet another expedition
with the chief object of the suppression of slavery by
means of civilizing influences. He met many slave traders
& discovered Lake Bangweulu. He was joined later by H.M.
Stanley but Livingstone had another attack of dysentery.
He died on April 13th. On the next day the African
boys found his body kneeling in prayer. His preserved
body, with other instruments were sent to Zangbian &
later brought to Westminster Abbey in London.

Livingstone in his thirty years in Africa did
a splendid job for the world. He explored one third of
Africa & found important African hydrography. He found
useful geographical and scientific materials. It was only
the civilized world which benefited from Livingstone but
he helped the poor and the down trodden people of Africa.

Rey found in him the simple trust, for he was constantly
sympathizing with their joys and sorrows. His memory was
cherished by all those ignorant people who treated him
as a superior being.

Although Britain gained all the power and the
success of Sir Francis Drake’s journey round
the world and Sir Falkon Scott’s achievement to the
South Pole; I feel that David Livingstone was more
glorious to England than any of these. He showed the
people the nature of the British people. The tribes of Africa
at that time looked on white people as one race. They
were in constant fear of the white men. They had
reason to fear, for the Portuguese slave traders
carried havoc in Africa. David Livingstone helped the simple-

minded people to understand that all white people were not
the same. He was gentle, kind to them and showed them the
British nature.

No one could have been more fitted than
Livingstone to do this great work, for he was a doctor and
missionary. The people always called him the “great doctor.”
He told them about religion and filled their minds with more
civilized ideas. The people had always been worshipping the
sun, moon and other objects. They were in constant fear of
making the gods angry, but Livingstone told them about
the one God. He planted the seeds for the abolition of the
slave trade and most of all his death was an inspiration to other explorers and missionaries who followed in his footsteps. His one great motto in life was "Fear God, + work hard," which he had lived up to in his life!

References from:
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