A comparison of the principle motives for migration from the United Kingdom to the Commonwealth countries in 1958, with those of 1858 and 1858.

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Introduction.

Sir Richard Grenville wrote, "To pass the seas some think a toil, Some think it strange abroad to roam, Some think it grief to leave their soil, Their parents, kinsfolk and their home. Think so who list; I like it not, I must abroad to try my lot," and thus caught the spirit of the Elizabethan era. But if fortune seeking and adventure were the operative words of that age, impatience and determination were those of the seventeenth century. The Puritans and other settlers in Eastern America began with a story which is not yet finished - the fascinating one of men who leave their homeland and do so for widely different reasons.

The subject has been related to the economic climate of each period, and the bearing which it has had upon emigration. Where economic reasons have not determined reference has been made to current ideas and events; often provided an explanation of motives. While on one hand conditions at the source of the migration are important, on the other are the conditions in the territory which have received the immigrants. Throughout, we see that commercial interests, religion, politics, and exploration are inseparably linked as explanatory factors for emigration.
In 1858 in particular special attention has been paid to the directions of the emigrations from the United Kingdom. Where mention of parts of the empire such as India and certain regions of Africa has been omitted this is due to the necessity to limit in some way the terms of emigration. Here the emigrant has been taken as one who by leaving Britain has associated himself permanently with the prospects of his new country and this does not include those who went only in order to make a fortune which they hoped to enjoy later in the mother country.

Reference has been made to the following works.

‘Shall I emigrate?’ - Leis and Frazer.
‘People for the Commonwealth’ - Barker.
‘Complete Guide to Emigration’ - Pringle.
‘Let the Great Story be Told’ - Wood Jarvis.
‘The British Empire and Commonwealth’ - Swindge.
‘Economics of Migration’ - Isaac.
‘Migration to and from the British Isles’ - Welshman.
‘Origins and Progress’ - Empire Information Service.
‘The British Empire and Commonwealth’ - Williamson.
‘The Uprooted’ - Oscar Handlin.
‘Peopling the British Commonwealth’ - McLeary.
‘England since Waterloo’ - Manchet.
Somebody once remarked that the British Empire was built through a series of fortuitous accidents, and another suggested that it was acquired in a fit of absentmindedness. It is unwise to reject categorically these ideas, for both contain an element of truth. The Empire was made not principally as a result of the activities of exalted individual in high places but by humble men, the common people who left their rural homesteads for the open spaces. They went, impatient, for one reason or another, of life in England, carried on the wings of their ambition, and helped to perpetuate elsewhere the record of a strong nation, of sea-power, rule under law and sound government—qualities which they took with them. In turn became inherent in the nature of the Empire and Commonwealth. It may be said that the history of this great association is but one facet of the history of the mother country. Generalizations are often dangerous but some general observations on emigration will probably be constructive. The decision to emigrate may result from a variety of motives—economic, political, religious, perhaps purely sentimental. Since the “economic men” who acts in accordance with his own best interests is of some importance as
a likely emigrant, let us look firstly at the economic factors which may be operative.

Considerations such as cost of living differentials will obviously be important and similarly the relative values of real incomes. But it should be remembered that the migrant is rarely motivated by temporary conditions for in leaving his homeland he normally links his prospects permanently with those of his new country. If there is competition in an increasingly imperfect labour market and with it unemployment these too will be causes for migration. If a population should increase out of all proportion to the capital, technical knowledge and natural resources at its disposal, the return per head is likely to diminish with the result that the surplus population will tend to migrate to areas where conditions are more favourable.

New countries and additional trade routes, when opened up if not when first discovered; declines in natural resources; lower costs of production overseas compared with rising costs at home: synthetic substitutes for raw materials - all of these may also in some measure account for migration. Whilst all the factors mentioned are to some extent economic we must not forget that there are others. Religious intolerance may push from behind whilst the
The prospect of freedom to worship where and as one pleases has proved a preferable alternative. In addition, emigration for political and ethical reasons has nearly always been an operative factor.

Looking first at 1652, we should remember the change in economic thought which had taken place since the middle ages. Mercantilism had replaced particularism and universalism and with it had brought the notion that emigration if at all permissible should always be directed towards the improvement of the balance of trade of the mother country. In some cases the American colonists were not so greedy but entirely different reasons.

When James I of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth there was not a square inch of British soil outside the British Isles. But gradually beginning with the Jamestown settlement under Captain Smith and followed by various others, what Kelley has called the "expansion of England" took place. In New England were colonists who, before the Toleration Act of 1689, had found life in England incompatible with their ideals and accordingly had turned westwards. The Puritans of 1620, the Massachusetts Bay Company settlers of 1629 and other refugees in the 1630's were responsible for colonising
This part of the eastern seaboard and
sounding Connecticut and Rhode Island,
whilst Catholics went to the West
Indies where the Earl of Carlisle had
received a charter.

The southern territories of Virginia,
Maryland and the West Indies, although
less suitable for White settlement
than the New England states, were to
some extent to gratify the ambitions of
the mercantilists. They were the plantation
colonies which provided England with
raw materials for her industry and
with the consumer goods which otherwise
she would have had to import
from elsewhere. Large supplies of
labour for these colonies were neces-

sary but the available native labour
was insufficient. The answer was twofold;
to import negroes from Africa and also
to introduce White indentured labour
from England. The composition of this
White immigration was very diverse.
Thus we find that whilst some
went through compulsion-political
criminals, prisoners of war, vagabonds,
and the children of vagabonds, others
were kidnapped or induced to go
under false pretences. Yet others were
true immigrants and often could not
afford the passage money and were
prepared to undergo a period of servitude
in order to recompense those who had
paid it for them.

England could well afford to
let so many emigrants go without endangering the home industry, as changes in agricultural organization, particularly enclosures, had created a surplus rural population whilst wages had come down to subsistence level providing a large reserve in the labour market.

Despite this, the government was not sympathetic towards emigration and the mercantilists of the period expressed general disapproval except where their aims were realized. The ideas circulating in 1638 were a decade later expressed by Child in a “New discourse on Trade.” Here it was held that colonization was harmful owing to the loss in population incurred and was effective only if it was directed to a colony where the immigrant labour provided work for Englishmen at home. Thus whilst migrations to Barbados, Jamaica, and the Antilles were useful there to New England were not.

The great criticism which may be made of this mercantilist viewpoint is of course that it failed to recognize that an emigration of free and loyal subjects from the motherland was in the best way - and still is - of retaining the colonies and that colonial prosperity might in the long run be more important than immediate trade advantage.
By the middle of the nineteenth century, all the necessary conditions for an increase in emigration existed and with them new territories. By the early 1840s, the British flag was flying over four large countries - Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa - vast in area, immensely rich in resources and requiring a considerable number of settlers from the United Kingdom. Gradually, mercantile ideas had given way to more liberal doctrines and the government looked far more favorably on emigration than it had done previously. This was bound to mean an end to that kind of migration which was found prevailed in 1653 - emigration as a result of religious intolerance. The disadvantages of religious persecution were recognized and the new conception of individual freedom could leave such matters to the individual and his conscience.

Indeed the gates of economic prosperity were now open - a prosperity which went hand in hand with the emigration which took place. Neither could have occurred without the other. The missionary activity which followed the religious revival, the exploration which was characteristic of the period, and the commercial prospecting - these three were bound so closely together that it is often difficult to say which had more importance. And at home the
The year original provision of the Domination are in blue.

500 miles

CANADA in 1867
population had doubled itself between 1800 and 1850 and had increased from 5½ millions in 1780 to over 21 millions a century later. This sharp increase, despite the remarkable progress of the Industrial Revolution meant unemployment and a surplus working population.

The history of the development of the Commonwealth countries is a separate subject and need only concern us here in so far as some background to the direction of immigration is necessary. Whilst many, particularly the Irish, were still going to America, a steady stream now followed in the wake of the United Empire Loyalists to Ontario and New Brunswick. These new colonists “the quiet, dull men with ploughs and plodders” who went to break in the virgin soil were finally accepted and overcame the tensions which their arrival had provoked. They became in the process a tough and worthy stock - the foundation of the great Canadian people.

The independence of America meant amongst other things, overcrowding in English prisons, since it had previously been the practice to transport convicts to the American colonies. West Africa having been rejected as an alternative, Sir Joseph Banks suggested New South Wales. Phillip’s landing at Sydney with eight hundred convicts in 1787; a
Succession of Governors - Bligh, Macquarie, Brisbane, Brough; the miners and sheep; the vine and wheat. These told the story of the development of Australia whilst she divided into separate States, each of whom had achieved independent self-government by 1855-59. But while the farmer's boy was crossing the Atlantic, it was the farmer's son who turned northwards, for his passage was longer and more expensive.

In 1829, a book entitled 'A Letter from Sydney' was published. While the development of the North of Australia had, to some extent, been a test of its authors' principle, Edward Gibbon Wakefield worked to far greater purpose in the cause of New Zealand. Early in the century a trickle of immigration had begun, the newcomers being mostly men, which no country wants, but by 1853 the picture was different. Various schemes, the most notable of which was Wakefield's New Zealand Company, were instrumental in persuading the government that if the country was not peopled by the right kind of colonists, it would be populated by the wrong kind. Difficulties which followed the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, when New Zealand was annexed, were gradually overcome. Once more, as in Australia, the sheep may be said to have carried the country on its back towards prosperity, but the successful settlement of New Zealand will take another century.
Zealand was largely due to the exceptional ability and energy of the immigrants who were carefully selected in Britain before going out to help build up a nation whose character was now quite distinctive.

The acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope had come about as a maritime adventure in the French War and without any presence of the fact that it would lead to the establishment of British South Africa. After the war, emigration to the Cape began and in 1819, assisted passages were approved by Parliament. Comparison with the other colonies shows that the problems of the Cape - it was by no means an "empty" area, meant a competitively smaller volume of immigration but we paid both the farmer's son and the farmer's boy going to Natal and Cape Province - the first as an alternative to Oceania the second having been diverted from Canada.

Some of the general trends of the nineteenth century which were influential factors in emigration from Britain in 1858 have already been noted. Largely they were economic and nowhere more pressing than in Ireland. The birth rate had always exceeded the death rate by a wide margin and between 1700 and 1840, for example, the population had grown from 1,250,000 to 8,000,000. The great famine of the forties hastened what was an inevitable
migration which continued until 1914. Most of it was to America but some was directed at South Africa and Canada where also were found many Scottish settlers. Changes in the agricultural system and the gradual break up of the farms had accounted for considerable transatlantic migration. Those who like to remember the middle 50's of the nineteenth century as a revival of the age of the first Elizabethans will point to those emigrants who have not been mentioned, those whose motives cannot be defined and limited and whose inspiration was a pure love of adventure. Without them and their progenitors there would have been no story to tell.

Then we came to 1888 and the reasons which prompt a man to apply for an assisted passage, pack his belongings, and start afresh in a Commonwealth territory. Only too often in writing on this subject, the political views of the author are apparent and this is surely wrong. One must, to be objective, take an detached a view as is possible. Since the would be emigrant is a comparatively young man let us look at his motives in particular.

The younger generation has found several reasons for discontent much of which is justifiable. But some is not and it is his which produce the man who
wants to leave Britain for entirely negative reasons. He will not make a good immigrant for motives of this kind are never enough. This content is not always divine and only too often turns out to be a chronic disease which a change in latitude and longitude will not cure. One must look forward to all that is good on the other side from back to all that is bad here for positive aims are seldom necessary. Fortunately the average emigrant forsakes them and that is why he succeeds.

The majority of those leaving today are not cotton pickers (as it is said here every reason for emigrating) but wage earners, not executives but craftsmen. The worker, man who has never before been so prosperous in emigrating with hope and knowledge that in return for hard work and co-operation even greater prosperity will be found.

When an austere Budget cuts Britain there is always more talk of emigration, especially among the young and talented who threaten to emigrate and take their talents with them. Why they should regard this as a threat is not easily understandable for there are surely the people the Commonwealth needs. Other material considerations such as housing difficulties often account for emigration and indeed there are a proportion of emigrants in whom the idea to leave
springs from desperation rather than inspiration. Less tangible reasons also exist and there are many who feel genuinely in Britain and decide to emigrate. The over urbanization of the country and the conditions which have brought partially account for feelings of this kind. In the Autumn of 1956, many viewed the Suez affair as a catastrophe forewarning Britain's decline and spoke of emigration from a land of which they preferred to be ashamed. But few in fact did emigrate and those who did had been considering the project for some time previously.

Despite this, the average new Australian or new Canadian is not a pipe dreamer but has his feet firmly earth bound. He has energy, enthusiasm and hope. He will need all of these and more besides. Initiative, strength of purpose, resilience, adaptability, courage; all of these qualities will be necessary in the emigrant. And most will possess them. That is why the proportion of failures in is so small and so few return to Britain.

This success is also partially attributable to the immigration schemes which are operated by many Commonwealth countries. Through these schemes unsuitable migrants are detected and in one way or another, discouraged.
From making a mistake. The emigration were earlier then we should find a larger proportion of failures.

Various schemes for mass emigration have long been desirous. They suggest that mass emigration from Britain to the Commonwealth would be beneficial in many ways, and support their arguments by reference to the fact that we now have an optimum population whilst parts of the Commonwealth, Australia especially, badly need more people. Further, if new Australians do not come from Great Britain they will come from other European countries and this would hardly strengthen the Commonwealth.

In 1938, we are faced with a very different sort of association from that of the Old Empire or Cromwell's time or that of the Victorian era. Similarly the motives which are taking men to the Commonwealth are different from those of the mid-nineteenth century and different again from those of three centuries ago. But there is no reason to suppose that the story is by any means finished and the difficulties facing us today will be remembered only as illustrations of the British and Commonwealth ability to conquer circumstances. Perhaps indeed the most important chapters have yet to be written and that as the association matures the role of the Commonwealth in world
affairs will increase. As it does so and its vital influence is felt we shall feel an even greater satisfaction in what is probably our finest achievement and shall remember the advice of Sir Winston Churchill when he told us that "it is only by reading the story of the British Empire that one may feel a well ground sense of pride to dwell in these islands."