"Tout est à point à qui sait attendre.

Consider the importance of the years 1850-1870 in the history of the British Empire.

The guiding principles in Europe during the years 1818 to 1870 were those of nationalism and liberalism. To them it was given to repair the disorders wrought by the French Revolution and the war which followed it. By 1870, however, the States of Europe had achieved nationality and in most cases some kind of constitutional government and nationalism and socialism had developed, as a natural result, into the socialism and socialism which have formed the 20th century. The European countries, having settled their home affairs, began to look abroad for colonies, and the result was the great colonizing activity of the years 1880-1914. England had already as many colonies as she could well manage and was both treating her territory, but she was forced into the scramble by the competition of the other powers and by the danger which this caused to her lands across the seas. So it happened that in Africa during this time she gained 3,500,000 sq. miles of land, three times as much as the entire German Empire, and a larger tract of land than that gained by any other power except France whose empire was partly desert. The country thus gained was inhabited by backward peoples and represented entirely different problems from those among in the other parts of our Empire.
This departure was therefore doubly important. The extension of territory did not mark the whole of the imperialist movement in England; it was characterized also by a desire for greater unity among the existing colonies. Since the granting of responsible government to Canada, New Zealand, and most of Australia, there had been a wide-spread belief in England that nothing could prevent the breakup of the Empire. The result was a great lack of interest in it, even by Canada, whose enthusiasm at a later date is well known, referring to them as a milestone around our centres. But this indifference faded especially after 1878, for about that time the European countries, and especially Germany, adopted a protective policy and England was thrown back on her colonies for trading purposes. These suggestions for increasing the unity of the Empire were made but the first Imperial Union was hardly practicable. It would have meant that the Colonial Parliaments would become subordinate to the Imperial Parliament which was now impossible, and that Colonial representatives would interfere in the local affairs of Great Britain which would be very inconvenient. This scheme had little support and died out as Imperial Federation became popular.

The idea of a Federation of the Empire arose from the success of the examples set in Canada in 1867 and in Australia fourteen years later. The increased facility of communication, particularly the laying of the Atlantic cable in 1866 made it possible. So during the seventieth...
The English people had become more and more accustomed to the idea and by 1883 it was fairly wide-spread. The publication of Selby's "Expansion of England" in that year gained many more converts and as a result the Imperial Federation League was set up in 1884. This society made use chiefly of propaganda, and in 1890 Sir Charles Dilke was sent on a tour to the various colonies to create some enthusiasm there. It found, however, that they favoured an alliance or closer co-operation rather than federation, and this being so, the ultimate failure of the scheme was certain although it was not absolutely abandoned until 1917.

Co-operation had also been suggested as a means of increasing unity, and the question arose as to whether consultation should be carried on between the Governments of the colonies direct or through intermediaries such as High Commissioners, Residents and the like. But while this was being considered France and Germany were gaining territory in Africa and pushing onto the Pacific until they came dangerously near to Australia. Since no agreement was likely to be made for some time, the Imperial Federation League suggested that a conference should be summoned in 1887 to consider some of the most pressing questions relating to the Empire. This Conference was not formal and had no constitution, it consisted only of men from the governments and the colonies who had come to England for the Queen's Jubilee, but interesting discussions were carried on about...
various matters such as trade, defence and the Pacific Cable. This was an exceedingly symptomatic event, the example was followed in 1877 at the Second Jubilee and in 1902 at the Coronation of King Edward, and a special conference was called at Ottawa in 1894 to consider peace issues only. As it were by chance the only possible way of advantageous co-operation was found and the beginning of the wonderful system which now unites the Empire came within the ten years 1880 to 1890.

It would be well now to consider in greater detail the extension of our territory. The greatest expansion was in Africa, for with some islands in the Pacific and the American continent which was barred by the Monroe doctrine, there was the only land as yet free from European domination. A survey falls easily into three parts, Egypt, British East Africa and Nigeria which were conquered because of the competition with the other countries, and Rhodesia, an extension of the older colony in the Cape.

At the beginning of our period Egypt was governed with the advice of the Talat Pasha which was established in 1878. In 1881 a rebellion under Arabi Pasha broke out and forced the khedive Tewfik to put the government into his hands but was met by a protest from the English and French in 1882. Shortly afterwards France withdrew, owing to the downfall of Gambetta, and England was left to suppress the rising. Arabi Pasha was defeated at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir.
1882 with the result that the Local Control ceased and British occupation of Egypt was begun. It was intended to continue only for a short period until, as Lord Dufferin said, we could teach the Egyptians to govern themselves, but it was found that to abandon Egypt would be difficult, and year after year the occupation went on. In spite of the delicate position of the British officials, who were nominally only advisers to the Egyptian government, useful reforms, such as the reorganisation of the army were carried out and Egypt generally had prospered.

In the same year 1882 there was a revolt in the Sudan under U. Mahdi who gained several successes which greatly increased the strength of his followers. The English were unable to defeat him and it was decided to withdraw from the Sudan. The man chosen by Gladstone's government was General Gordon whose good qualities were many, but who was inclined to charge his men and to disregard his orders. He decided on his arrival in the Sudan to hold it against the Mahdists, but at the time he needed help from England which arrived just two days too late to prevent his death and the fall of Khartoum. The Sudan was then abandoned but the Khalijs, the Mahdi's successors, were continually giving trouble to Egypt and at length in 1899 he was defeated and the country subdued by Kitchener. The region inland from the island of Zanzibar was under the Dukhan of that country but both England and Germany had influence.
In 1876 the Society for German Colonization obtained from the German Emperor a charter of protection over a large part of the Sudan mainland territory. England was alarmed and in 1886 an agreement was made with Germany defining the dominions of the Sudan of Fankut and recognizing that a certain tract of land was under the British sphere of influence. In the following year the British East Africa Association was formed and a grant of land given out. This association became in 1888 the British East Africa Company which began to settle the land which it had gained. Trouble arose with Germany over the boundary between this colony and German East Africa but in 1890 an agreement was made. The limits of the colonies were finally settled, Delagoa ceded to Germany and in return the protectorate over Fankut and Pemba was recognized.

The other most important gain during this period was British Nigeria. In 1884 the National African Company had bought out two French commercial companies on the Sudan Niger. In the following year an agreement was made with Germany defining the British sphere of influence and in 1890 the boundary between this land and the Cameroons was settled. In 1886 the Company received the royal charter and became the Royal Niger Company. It did much good work in relation by developing new markets and preparing the way for direct imperial control. In all it added 350,000 sq. miles, a tenth of the British gains in Africa, to Great Britain.
Possessions. Finally the limits of Nigeria were settled by an agreement with the French defining the northern border. This was signed in 1890.

Among these gains we must mention also the British Somaland protectorate which was set up in 1884 and governed by India. The expansion into Rhodesia originated from the Cape, and in fact from one man there, Cecil Rhodes. During the early eighties the Boers from the Transvaal were again trekking north, south, and west. They formed an Zululand, the new republic which was recognized by Great Britain in 1886 and incorporated in the Transvaal two years later. In Boshuashe also they established the Republic of Natal and Land of Griqualand West. Rhodes did not wish to allow this and Sir Charles Warren was sent out in 1884 to defeat the Boers. The republics were then dissolved and in 1886 South Boshuashe became a Crown Colony.

It was finally annexed to the Cape in 1878. At the same time, in 1885, a protectorate was declared over the remainder of the land. Rhodes wished to close Natal and the Boers, and accordingly in 1888 he concluded a treaty with Botswana which barred the country to foreign enterprise. In the following year the British South Africa Company was set up to colonize and develop the country and in 1890 frontier expeditions went out and ports were established at Salisbury, Victoria and Harare.

In the same year the Transvaal withdrew.
all claim to the land north of the Limpopo.

At the same time Rhodes had concluded a treaty with the African Lakes Company which had gone bankrupt. This gave him the right of trade in that district. He then asked the Imperial Government to proclaim a protectorate over Bechuanaland and to allow the Company to administer the rest of Central Africa. This was done and the Lake country prospered. In 1875, however, the Company dishonestly took over its administration.

Rhodesia and also desired British protection. It had been refused and a man named Von Wissel bought Levensburg's claim. With him Rhodes made a contract and the control of this territory was handed over to him.

In 1895 all the land which had thus been gained largely through the influence, wealth, and energy of Rhodes, was united under the title of Rhodesia, a magnificent tribute to his work for the Empire.

The same expansion of France, Germany, and England took place in the Pacific. During the eighteen British rule in Sirnow had been extended until most of the islands of Borneo had been acquired. Both of these countries were placed under British protection in 1885. In the same year a protectorate was placed over British North Borneo which had been governed by the British North Borneo Company since 1881.

In 1883 the German Colonial League agitated for the annexation of New Guinea which alarmed Australia. She protested, but great
Britain worked at all costs to keep on good terms with Germany and as a result Germany gained most of the island and Australia only the southern part known as Papua.

The territory thus gained by Great Britain during the period of colonial activity was large and wealthy, but the sole importance of these annexations does not lie there. It was our expansion in Africa which led to the strained relations with other countries, especially France and Germany.

Imperialism may therefore be said to have shaped the course of European foreign policy during these most interesting years until the outbreak of the war. The rivalry between England and Germany as world-powers was bound to end up in war, and it so happened that this came in 1914. Again it was the imperialistic ambitions of France and Germany in the East which led to the federation of the Australian colonies, who felt the danger to themselves by the nearest of these countries. They had been told in regard to the German question that more attention would be paid to her demands if she would unite, and the pressure from without lent, by giving the separate colonies with the varied differences an common interest, made this possible.

We have now dealt with the general importance of these years to the Empire. There remains to consider the most important events in each separate colony during the period.
Canada was by 1850 a strong federation and the chief interest of these years is her increased prosperity. In 1871 the Canadian Pacific Railway Company was formed, and four years later the great railway stretching across the continent was finished. The corn lands and the interior cattle now be made profitable and agriculture progressed in the Central Provinces. In 1877 also the Sault Ste. Marie Canal between Lakes Superior and Huron was begun, and two years later the Canadian Pacific Railway began to run steamers from Vancouver to Yokohama, cutting out much of the American trade from San Francisco. One incident in these years shows the advance made in a few years by the United Colonies. A ninety-five foot block took place in the West in 1874.

It was much more dangerous than that of 1850, but was put down by Canadian volunteers alone, while fifteen years earlier British regulars had been called in to help. All these facts show the growing colonisation and prosperity of the Canadians.

As a contrast to Canada the chief question in Australia at this time was the possibility of federation. In 1861 an Intercolonial Conference was called and Henry Parkes suggested a Central authority to deal with such matters. In 1865 therefore, an act passed the Imperial Parliament enabling a Federal Council to be established, but it was not to be representative of the people and
its powers were to be restricted, so forbids
offenct, and now South Africa stood atop.
Significant of defence against the European
countries now began to be pressing, and in
1887 the colonies united to share the cost of
buying a small squadron from the British
admiralty. They were advised at the same time
to take similar joint action in regard to
their land defence. In another question,
Chinese immigration for this agreement was
made
between the colonies. These isolated events
created a desire for co-operation in the
colonies and a National Government for
Australia seemed near at hand. It was
delayed by the rise of the Labour party
who were against it, but in 1901 the
Commonwealth of Australia at last came
into being.

The year 1885 was significant for a
considerable departure. In that year the first
colonial contingent of troops was sent to fight
on the side of the mother country in India.
The example thus given was followed, to the
surprise of the European wars in the Boer
war, and to an even greater extent in the
Great War of 1914 to 1918.

During this period 1880 to 1890 New
Zealand was in a state of depression, but
the effects of this were in some ways good,
for new fields of enterprise were opened.
Coal mines were more energetically worked,
new manufacture were set up, and the
export of frozen mutton, now so important,
was begun. There was besides these remedial
measures little of interest in the country.

South Africa during this period is chiefly important because of the expansion into Natal and elsewhere, but the growth of a spirit of nationality is also very interesting. This was chiefly by the Afrikaner Bond Congress in 1881 and in the setting up of a Bond party in Cape politics. There was also a movement towards federation, seen in the Conference of delegates from Cape Colony, Natal, and the Orange River Free State, to discuss federation on a basis of internal free trade and a uniform tariff on imports from other countries. Nothing was done however, as the Transvaal held aloof, and in 1887 at the New Convention at Bloemfontein Pretoria also withdrew as she did not wish to raise her low tariff.

Opposed to this spirit of African nationalities was the national sentiment of the Boers, particularly those in the Transvaal. The country had been annexed in 1877 because the trouble caused there by the Zulus. After the defeat of Settlers in the Zulu war of 1879, however, they revolted and won back their independence by the Pretoria Convention. Soon after this the Transvaal became very important as a mining district owing to the discovery of mines at de Kaap in 1882 and gold in Wolwadranzand in 1884. The Hebe mine was also found in 1885 and the town of Johannesburg quickly sprang up. This meant that miners from all the European countries flocked into the Transvaal, which until that time had been almost
exclusively Dutch. Among these were many English. The Boers feared that they nationally would be absorbed and adopted the expedient of making five and later ten years residence a necessary qualification of voting. This bore very inviting to the immigrants, the Boers, as they were called, many of them being used to free institutions. It was their position which led to the Boer war and the final expatriation of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State which were given self-government in 1905 and 1907 and which were included in the Union in 1910. Thus we may say that these ten years saw the making of modern Africa.

The history of India during these years is of great importance. It ceases to be merely a list of wars and becomes a story of peaceful development. The year 1851 saw the last great border fight with the Afghans and 1855 the last annexation of land to India. The Birmese Government had as usual been ill treating and merchants and on protest refused to give compensation or improvement their methods of government. War broke out, Mandalay was occupied and Upper Burma annexed.

More important that this was the development of India's agriculture and its political history. Most of the Indian men agriculturists had produced only enough for the village community, but they began now to grow cotton, tea, jute and cash crops for export. Irrigation schemes were also being carried out, and the method of melting snows
were finally settled in 1883. Acts in 1861, 1885, 1886
and 1887 examined the Land tenure in the
various parts of India revising them so as
to prevent the tenants being cheated and giving
them fair rents and fixed tenure in some cases.
By these measures the social conditions in India
were bettered.

At the same time the effects of Western
civilization in India were now beginning to
be felt. A new movement was growing up
among the youth in the country which had
as its aim ‘freedom’ government for India, a larger
share in the administration and a protective
tariff on manufactured goods to encourage
Indian manufacture. Lord Ripon who was
Viceroy from 1880 to 1886 was inclined to
encourage these ideals. In 1883–1885 he set
up district boards and subordinate bodies and
extended the powers of the municipal boards.
The chief work of the district boards was to
the roads, but they were expected also to take
an interest in education, sanitation and female
reform. The result of these bodies was not
so successful as might have been wished, but
they showed that England was ready to give
concessions to India if she thought her ready
for them. By the Indian Bill in 1883 Ripon
tried to do away with distinctions of race in
regard to criminal procedure, and gave to the
native judges the power to try Europeans. A
great outcry greeted this and the bill was
modified. One other good piece of work was
undertaken by Ripon, the taking of the first
general Census in 1881 which was of great interest.
Because of the facts and observations made on the numerous difficulties in Indian sentiment and so on, Lord Dufferin, Lord beforehand successor at Quebec, carried on the Traditions. He it was who saw the setting up of the first National Congress in 1876 and who encouraged it in its work. This body met annually to discuss social reform and even more vital questions. It grew to deserve a share in the administration but never proposed any practical reform. The importance of these years 1885 to 1890 which first inaugurated the gradual development of India in the way of self-government can easily be realized.

It is in England that the socialism which characterized the end of the nineteenth century as chiefly found during this period. The socialist doctrines affected all the Empire, and Australia and New Zealand are the most up-to-date countries in this respect, but the development did not come to them until the nineties whereas it is clearly seen in England ten years before.

The beginning of the definite Socialism movement is traced to Mr. Henry George who advocated in his book "Progress and Poverty" the progressive taxation of land values as a remedy for private ownership of land. This was in 1879. One year later Hyndman founded the Social Democratic Federation which followed closely on the doctrine of Karl Marx that capital will concentrate till it is in the hands of a very few, and that the conditions of the employed will grow worse until there
well come a Revolution to change everything. Working for the same end but with vastly different means was the Fabian Society founded in 1883. The Fabians desired to collect information and by pamphlets and speeches to stimulate the government with their views. Their Socialist state was to be accomplished by constitutional means. Just within the eighteen there came also the beginning of the Independent Labour Party formed of the Fabian Socialists and the Social Unionists who realised that only Parliamentary action was now possible and since the entry of unskilled labourers into the unions. It resulted that two Labour members entered Parliament in 1892 and the Party is now exceedingly important.

But the influence which went to form Socialism were felt in a less definite way perhaps, in all the works of Parliament. They can be perceived in the small reforms of Gladstone's second ministry, in his great work for Ireland by the Land Act of 1881 above all in the Third Reform Bill three years later and in his concession to Irish sentiment which led him to introduce his First Home Rule Bill of 1886. In the imperialist ministry of Salisbury from 1886-1892 this was even more apparent, for he was definitely influenced by Gladstone and the Radicals and many parts of the unauthorised programme were carried through under his auspices. The famous saying of Sir William Harcourt “We are all Socialists now” is very true in this uncle sense that no
one was exemple from the desire to better the condition of the lower classes.

It would not be too much to say that no decade in the history of the British Empire has been of greater importance than the one 1880 to 1890. In the internal affairs of the Empire as a whole, in its relations with foreign countries, and in each separate colony within it, great changes were working. The forces which have formed for us the wonderful Sisterhood of States which we know as the British Commonwealth of Nations.

"Tout vient à point à qui sait attendre."