

2nd Prize
Sensible

B + 4

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Suppose you had to go and live in another Commonwealth or Empire country, which would you choose, and why?

I think that if I had to go to live in another Commonwealth or Empire country, I would choose to go to New Zealand. It seems to be a country like my own; the people have strong ties of kinship with my own people and it altogether seems to be such a homely place, where one need not be too homesick for very long.

I am very fond of England and after living for years in such a green country I should feel stifled and not at home in a drier and less green land. The New Zealand countryside is different to England without ^{being} too strange. There is a great variety of very beautiful scenery, and the weather is very equable, which is really quite an important consideration for someone from England. In the South Island, there is a stretch of lovely fiordland on the south-western coast and a great line of the Southern Alps capped with perpetual snow. There are lovely lakes and fast moving glistening streams. Also, in the North Island there is the unique and fascinating Thermal region, with hot-springs, geysers and boiling mud, and the glow-worm caves of Waitakei. At no point is New Zealand wider than one-hundred and fifty miles so that the sea is always within less than a day's driving distance.

New Zealand seems to be a free and happy country, and the people to be warm-hearted, kind and friendly; they are proud to be called British and are mostly of British descent. They keep in touch with world-

news by reading newspapers and listening to the radio, and they have also a good working-knowledge of British customs and life. They are fond of sport and the open-air and they travel about a lot in their own country, they have a spirit of self-reliance inherited from their pioneer forefathers. The few New Zealanders, I have seen or heard about seem to be very pleasant people with a sense of humour and love of their own country and people.

I have always longed to live in a rural district and perhaps if I went to New Zealand I should be able to do so. Some of my reasons for disliking living in a town are, a love of nature and the open country, a hatred of noise, smoke and dirt, the cramped feeling of a home in a town and the loneliness which one can experience living among so many people, who do not wish to know you and you do not wish to know. My greatest wish for several years now has been to own a dog, but my father says that it would be cruel to keep a dog in a flat like ours. It may seem strange that living in a new country should be any better, but the New Zealanders seem such a warm, friendly, welcoming people and their land is so lovely; and as most of the houses there have only one floor I could have a dog, maybe. All New Zealand's scenic qualities attract me greatly; I love beauty in any form and New Zealand would fill most of my greatest longings, the space and fresh-cleanliness, the variety of scenery and the compactness of this country altogether, whilst in the towns and in the country every house has a garden, and the roads are wide and good, the towns have not yet been built long enough to have become really dirty.

Because only a third of the small population

of New Zealand live in the country some people say that it would be unbearably lonely to live in the countryside; for farmers and their families I believe that there must be compensations even if at times the loneliness is oppressive. The company of friends must be more valuable and satisfying; parents and children must be more united, and there should be some satisfaction in growing good crops and rearing fine stock. I do not think I should be very lonely, but, I am not usually lonely when alone, perhaps because it is a contrast to my usual town life.

As New Zealand is a new country with need of more people, although I am not a boy, who seem to be welcomed more than girls, I should like to go there and try to help a little the advancement of this new land to world importance in some sort. I am very interested in agriculture and forestry and maybe I could train there for a career in one of these fields, fruit-farming perhaps; I may train for something like that if I stay here anyway.

New Zealand is not a very, very new country although it has only been inhabited by the Maoris for six or seven centuries; it was visited first by a Dutchman, Abel Tasman and then by Captain James Cook, but Europeans have only inhabited it for not quite two centuries. It has most of the comforts and benefits of Britain and other countries; and is at an advantage because it has no dirty, untidy, old, or shum, or bomb damaged areas to clear, but as yet many fewer inhabitants to enjoy them, perhaps, because it is not in the land-hemisphere and quite a long way from most other countries —

The Maoris are a brown-skinned people who sailed to New Zealand from their legendary Pacific home on the island of Hawaiiki. They are an intelligent.

and pleasant people, with a store of old legends; one of their traditional dresses is a cloaks made of feathers; they are masters of their own special type of carving, with which they decorate their houses and ~~the~~ totem-poles. Many of the place names in New Zealand come from the Maori language, such as Whangarei, Oamaru and Timaru, and slip off the tongue in a very musical way, which I love. I am not prejudiced against people with dark skins, I do not really think that they are any different to people with any other coloured skins, so I should not at all mind living in a community where they have the same positions and standing as people with European descent. I rather like the idea it shows a broadness of mind of the New Zealanders and no unreasonable prejudices.

I am sure that I should very much like to go to New Zealand even if it was not absolutely necessary that I should. For several years now I have been interested in New Zealand, at first it seemed rather like a wonderland, all the pictures I saw of it seemed so beautiful, now I have learnt a little more about this country I find it is just as beautiful but it is clean and different and rather alluring, I feel rather 'drawn' to it. If I went to New Zealand I do not think I should be very homesick, and I know I should be very excited, there is something friendly and homely about New Zealand, which I cannot describe but like very much, I think I should be very much at home there, it might even be one of my 'spiritual homes' to one can never tell. There is not really much chance of my ever leaving Britain, I should love to travel to different countries and see for myself the changing scenery and animal life, and the way other people live.

The part of New Zealand, in which I think I

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should like most to live in, is North Island, ten to twenty miles south or south-west of Hastings on a farm that has a few dairy cattle near and some orchards on the farm, in a little white homestead with a garden, a friendly New Zealand family and a dog and perhaps a horse of my own.

Since I have been thinking about this essay I became so interested in New Zealand and New Zealanders that I wrote there to try and contact a New Zealand young-person for a pen-friend, to learn more about everything New Zealand-ish, and to exchange ideas, interests and experience.

My information came from some pamphlets for which I wrote to the New Zealand High Commissioner. Also from the talk, and films shown, by Mr. L. Edwards at the Christmas, School Lectures held in the Royal Empire Society building in Northumberland Avenue.