ABSTRACT

THE ECONOMIST AND THE CONTINUITY OF BRITISH IMPERIAL EXPANSION: 1843-1860

by Rebecca Marie Balduff

This thesis examines imperial themes present in mid-nineteenth century British media. Typically considered a period of disinterest in the Empire, the period from 1843 to 1860 actually witnessed a strong promotion of British imperial expansion through newspapers such as The Economist. Articles and book reviews within The Economist provide examples of five themes which encouraged imperial expansion: rhetoric of better government, the defense of free trade, retention of colonies, emigration, and cultural superiority. By examining The Economist’s articles concerning four regions of the British Empire, including Ireland, Australia, India and Africa, this thesis demonstrates how mid-nineteenth century newspapers contained imperial themes and therefore promoted imperial interest and expansion.
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IMPERIAL EXPANSION: 1843-1860

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Historiography of the British Empire

Imperialism, as historians now define it, emerged as a concept in the 1880s when Europe scrambled for Africa and molded modern empires. Distinguished from territorial expansion and colonialism, imperialism was seen as a separate phenomenon with specific nineteenth century political, economic, and social underpinnings. Now termed New Imperialism most scholars pinpoint its beginning at the 1884 Berlin Conference where major European countries decided which would rule over certain regions of Africa. However, this thesis joins the minority of scholars who argue that the foundations for New Imperialism were set much earlier in the nineteenth century. Not only did territorial expansion occur in this early period of “disinterest in the Empire” but the ideological basis for New Imperialism was formed as well. Throughout the nineteenth century, the British continually possessed a desire to increase their empire due to ideas of superiority and the need to spread civilization.

Late nineteenth-century historians first examining imperialism in the British Empire framed their studies around two previous theories of empire; Edward Gibbon’s anxiety over the decline of empire and Thomas Macaulay’s firm belief in imperialism as a sign of progress. Published in 1776, Edward Gibbon’s *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* examined the role of external aggressors and moral degradation in the decline of the Roman Empire.¹ The Roman Empire was seen as the model for territorial and administrative expansion. Gibbon’s work on Rome was interpreted by many as raising questions about the permanence of the British Empire and thus encouraged critical examination of political, economic, social and moral characteristics of the empire. Thomas Macaulay’s *History of England*, published in 1849, also had lasting influence on historians of the new British Empire. Utilizing the “whig-utilitarian historical thesis - i.e. the thesis that the substance of history is material progress and that such progress can be attained through the application of particular political principles,” Macaulay emphasized the purpose of the empire, which he defined as Britain’s duty to improve what the English viewed as the non-civilized, and therefore lacking in material progress, world.² For a century after *History of England’s* publication, many historians utilized Macaulay’s teleological

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perspective, that history leads to a pre-ordained end, to examine Britain’s duty to its colonies.

Utilizing concepts from Gibbon’s and Macaulay’s works, late nineteenth-century historians, such as the “Father of Imperial History” John Robert Seeley, distinguished colonial history from imperial history. Seeley’s *Expansion of England*, published in 1883, argued that the British haphazardly and without design acquired an empire which he termed “Greater Britain.” Seeley examined Britain’s desire to transform white settler colonies into “New Englands,” replicating England’s societal and cultural institutions. In contrast to contemporary nineteenth century political leaders, he argued that other colonies such as India played a less significant role in Greater Britain.\(^3\) Historical works after Seeley followed his adherence to supposedly scientific and impartial research methods that the newly developing historical profession believed would achieve what historians considered the most objective history possible. As the study of the British Empire evolved, however it reflected the state of the empire itself and contemporary imperial conflicts. While Seeley had discussed Britain’s expansionist competition with France and Russia in the areas surrounding India, by the end of the nineteenth century Hugh Egerton in *A Short History of British Colonial Policy* examined Britain’s competition with Germany to gain territory in East and South-East Africa.\(^4\)

The turn of the nineteenth century witnessed great debates within the British government about how to govern the empire, resulting in works detailing new ruling strategies as well as criticism of the governance of the colonies. The British Imperialists involved in the Round Table Movement beginning in 1909 discussed the future of the Empire in terms of unity. A number of young government administrators, known as the “Kindergarten,” working under Lord Milner in South Africa succeeded in attaining the Union of South Africa in 1910. Persuaded by the benefits of formal colonial unions, Milner and members of the Kindergarten such as Lionel Curtis and Philip Kerr formed the Round Table Movement to work for a federation of colonies across the globe.\(^5\) Keeping in mind Gibbon’s fear of imperial decline, historians in the Round Table Movement took the view that the empire must form a closer political and ideological unity to remain in tact. Many paid “lip service to imperial federation, but were sadly disillusioned

when they got down to the problem of arranging it.” In contrast to federation as a ruling strategy, other historians supported the loosening of control in white dominions to keep them within the sphere of British influence. These historians felt that as white dominions were granted complete representative governments these colonies would appreciate the independence granted by the British crown and maintain strong economic and ideological ties.

The historical study of imperialism not only examined the past acquisition and maintenance of British colonies but future governing policies. The First World War strengthened the focus on theories of progress as many historians determined that Britain was the only nation fit to rule over the broken territories of the Ottoman Empire. The British government believed their rule aided underdeveloped nations in their progression toward Macaulay’s definition of civilization. Territories in the Middle East were therefore deemed protectorates, the British government did not formally annex the territory but controlled the government and economic structure to lead these nations to “civilized” society. The policy of protectionism was applied to Africa in works such as Frederick Lugard’s *Dual Mandate in Tropical Africa* and Reginald Coupland’s works on East Africa which reaffirmed Britain’s protectionist duties. By the 1930s, scholars from the United States and the dominions participated in examining the origin of British interaction with their regions to determine the best possible current relationship.

The discussion about governing the British Empire and its future also generated criticism of imperialism in general. Economist J.A. Hobson levied an attack on capitalism as an institution which inevitably led to imperialism and war. He argued that within capitalism the division of social classes and their inability to consume sufficient goods forced capital into overseas markets. The capitalist countries would have to compete for these new markets to maintain their balance of production and consumption. This competition resulted in imperialism and he predicted war between the capitalist countries for increasingly formal control. Though

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not a Marxist himself, Hobson’s thesis added to the economic theories of Marxists such as Rodbertus and Rosa Luxemberg and influenced the anti-imperialist ideology of Lenin. In 1919, Joseph Schumpeter expanded on Hobson’s economic theory to examine the pre-modern social aspects of imperialism. Imperialism existed in ancient times and both ancient and modern forms of imperialism had an economic basis, yet Schumpeter argued the modern form of imperialism was destined to collapse due to the decline in expansionist capitalists. The ancient form of imperialism revolved around an agricultural or sedentary society and Schumpeter argued that when modern capitalist only sought economic and financial ends, the social structure became less significant and class institutions dissolved. Thus, imperialism would fail as the traditional social structure was ruined by modern capitalists.  

Criticism arose not only from Marxist oriented economic and social historians but also from those chronicling nationalist movements in the British colonies. Historians documenting the development of nationalist movements in present or former colonies noted the negative impact of imperialism. In 1938 George Antonius’s *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* criticized imperial rule in the Middle East. In 1958 Edward Thompson and G.T. Garratt examined the Indian National Movement in *Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India*. They argued that rulers in India, Muslims, princes and British officials, had done little “for Indian progress.” Within Macaulay’s definition civilized and materially wealthy societies, Thompson and Garratt determined that Indian nationalists could best lead their nations in their search for progress.

The Second World War and the dissolution of the British Empire in the 1960s shifted the focus of imperial historians from the future of the empire to the reasons for its formation. The economists, Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher countered the traditional notion of a shift in British sentiments from mid-Victorian indifference to late nineteenth century enthusiasm over expansion. “The Imperialism of Free Trade” argued that the forces of imperial expansion, especially economic forces, were consistent throughout the nineteenth century and aided in

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creating Britain’s informal empire.\(^\text{13}\)

The new area studies of the 1960s examined the origins of British involvement and its consequences within white dominions as well as colonies with an indigenous majority. “Dependency theory” evolved from these many area studies to examine the relationship between the core, Britain, and its peripheries, the colonies. Scholars of Latin America such as Osvaldo Sunkel in *Past, Present and Future of the Process of Latin-American Underdevelopment* and W. Baer and I. Kerstenetsky in *Inflation and Growth in Latin America* utilized dependency theory to understand the economic relationship between Latin America and Western nations.\(^\text{14}\) Within the bounds of dependency theory Marxist scholars demonstrated that during the nineteenth century capital from Britain increasingly was invested in overseas markets. The Marxist perspective argued that to protect this capital, private companies influenced the British government to become more directly involved in the governing of the areas. The colonies, according to dependency theory, had little choice in their economic and political ties with Britain.\(^\text{15}\) The discussion of imperial origins also led to “modernization theory” which defined all societies in a hierarchy from traditional to modern. For a society to be considered modern all structures must change, not only political and economic structures but also societal and cultural. Modernization theory enabled not only historians, such as Walter Rostow, but also anthropologists, economists, sociologists, political scientists and psychologists to reevaluate concepts of “civilization.”\(^\text{16}\)

Economic and political control by the core could lead to the mutation of all social and cultural structures in the colonies. Imperial history could be defined as the metropole enabling colonies to become modern, which really connected modernization to Westernization. More recently scholars have criticized this inevitable connection between modernization and westernization as well as the view that all “advanced” nations should achieve the same levels, especially in terms of economics.\(^\text{17}\) Examining the discourse of “modern” nations, scholars such as David Spurr in *The Rhetoric of Empire* and Arturo Escobar in *Encountering Development* criticized imperialism


for its part in forming the third world.¹⁸

Not until the introduction of Post-modern theory in the late 1970s did culture take the center stage in British Imperial History. “Postcolonialism” utilized post-modern theories to study the process of imperialism from the beginning of European expansion to the period of decolonization. Antonio Gramsci’s work, *Selections from the Prison Notebook* translated into English in 1971, introduced multiple terms to the study of postcolonialism.¹⁹ Gramsci focused on the execution of power within societies at specific times. Europeans acquired hegemony through political, economic and social means, while in turn colonized peoples adapted European tools of power to resist imperialism. Published in the 1970s, Michel Foucault’s *The Order of Things* and *Power/Knowledge* added theories associating power, knowledge and resistance to the study of imperialism. Foucault argued that the possession of knowledge and thus control of the “discourse” between groups leads to control and power, yet in the presence of power there is always resistance.²⁰ Within Foucault’s theory of discourse, Edward Said’s 1978 *Orientalism* demonstrated how the possessors of language and knowledge created a perception of an unchanging, backward Orient.²¹ These post-modern theorists have influenced current historians, most significantly historians of the new approach, which they have termed Subaltern Studies. Taking the term subaltern from Gramsci, Ranajit Guha edited the first collections of articles from this perspective in the newly created journal *Subaltern Studies* formed in 1982.²² In this journal, the authors deconstructed written documents to find the opinions, thoughts and beliefs of the peoples which they believed to be oppressed by European colonizers. Advanced by Gayatri Spivak in “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” Subaltern Studies examines the possibility and the means necessary to discover whether or not the subaltern’s voice and opinions can be heard.²³

In recent years the historiography of the British Empire has expanded to include literary criticism. As one method of understanding cultural identity, literary criticism examines novels,
travel writing and various forms of popular media to answer questions concerning the cultural identity of colonizers and the colonized. Postcolonial historians have recognized the imperial connection to literature, arguing that literature is produced either by the colonial power or in response to the colonial rulers. Therefore, literary critics utilize the postcolonial and subaltern methods to re-examine various forms of literature written by the colonizer and the colonized. Mary Louise Pratt’s 1992 *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, used travel writing to study how Europeans viewed other cultures.\(^{24}\) As Edward Said examined Europeans’ view of the Orient, Pratt focuses on travel writing to gain insight on Europe’s views of Latin America and Africa. Adding a gendered perspective to the study of empire, Anne McClintock uses literary criticism to study sexuality and perceptions of Africans as well as the impact of the empire on the metropole.\(^{25}\)

There has been a cornucopia of publications on imperialism and its effect on the metropole in the last five to six years. Historian, Douglas M. Peers suggests that the renewed interest in the British Empire stems from several sources, 

nostalgia for an imagined age of certainties and stable hierarchies, the experience of and debate over multiculturalism, and the realization that imperialism not only had profound consequences upon rule and ruled alike, but that it continues to exert powerful influences on the contemporary world.\(^{26}\)

A significant influence of imperial was its impact of imperialism on the metropole in terms of technological advances, economics, social history and national identity. Technological and scientific advances occurred by interaction with remote regions of the world. Richard Drayton’s *Nature’s Government* examines how science was used by the metropole to increase its wealth and prestige and how the colonies, unintentionally through science and botany, shaped the metropole’s identity.\(^{27}\) Economic historians, P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, have combined the focus of economics and social change theory to argue that gentlemanly capitalism, the views of


merchants in the metropole, affected the expansion of empire. Social historians such as David Cannadine in *Ornamentalism* argue that the possession of an empire encouraged Britons to increase their hierarchical and ornamental political and social character. Niall Ferguson’s *Empire: The Rise and Demise of British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* disagrees with gentlemanly capitalism as well as Cannadine’s thesis to argue that the significant legacy of the empire remains with its social benefits. Scholars examine these avenues of how the Empire became such a large part of British national identity. The formation, maintenance and notion of the empire impacted British identity at the metropole as much as the peoples in the periphery, argues John MacKenzie.

**Earlier Foundation for New Imperialism**

This thesis joins the current interest in the colonies’ effect on the metropole’s identity and confirms that the mid-nineteenth century was hardly a period of disinterest in the Empire. Instead this era witnessed the British public formulate aspects of its identity based on cultural, economic and political interactions with its colonies. The media offers modern scholars insight into these interests of the British and demonstrates their interest in imperial expansion as early as the 1840s. Victorian periodicals and newspapers demonstrated the public concern over the decline of the empire, taken from Gibbon’s work, and the pride in the superiority of Britain and its duty to civilize the world defined by Macaulay. Building off theories of “continuous forces” explained by Robinson and Gallagher, this thesis argues that British ideology in the nineteenth century remained consistent in its approval of imperial expansion. The British policy of formal acquisition may have been haphazard, corresponding to Seeley’s “fit of absence of mind,” but the British public’s desire to increase its influence in the outside world remained constant throughout the nineteenth century. The more formal control of the 1880s beginning in Africa

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had its foundation in the early Victorian age decades before the “enthusiasm” for the Empire is said to have occurred.\textsuperscript{32}

Within Victorian media, such as \textit{The Economist}, historians can study the topics of the British Empire most promoted to the literate public in the mid-nineteenth century. Using methods from literary criticism, this thesis examines reviews of travel literature, memoirs and instructional pamphlets in this increasingly influential periodical. \textit{The Economist’s} reviews passed information to the British public on formal, informal and even perspective colonies when discussing the need to expand British imperial interests. This thesis demonstrates the pervasiveness of the empire in British self-perception and a belief that the greatness of the metropole and its colonies were intertwined.

In its first years, \textit{The Economist} had a relatively small circulation yet drew articles from \textit{The Times, The Manchester Guardian, The Bombay Quarterly} and many other newspapers and magazines. Within \textit{The Economist’s} reviews imperial themes become apparent which, intentionally or not, promoted imperial expansion. From the various geographical regions mentioned in \textit{The Economist’s} reviews, three regions show the varieties of this attitude of imperial expansion. Reviews of works concerning Ireland demonstrated that even attempts at colonial self-government were designed to bring colonies closer to the metropole. Discussion on immigration to Australia promoted the spread of British people to foreign lands, thereby expanding the British Empire. \textit{The Economist’s} reviews about India show that even in the midst of the 1857 Rebellion, Britain intended to maintain and expand its empire. The justification of expansion in these three regions was based on notions of British superiority in political, economic, physical, intellectual and cultural terms. As this thesis examines publications concerning these three regions in the years 1843-1860, it will provide specific evidence that Britain did have an interest in imperial expansion decades before the “Scramble for Africa.” \textit{The Economist} set no specific colonial agenda, made no standard call for conquest but its steady reassurance that Britain had the duty and the privilege to influence and rule other nations led to a general acceptance and even desire for British formal expansion in the mid-nineteenth century.

The press in England was a unique and influential entity in the early and mid-nineteenth century. The 1819 tax law displayed the unique and still unresolved definition of the “newspaper,” as lawmakers could not provide a specific definition of the form of publication to be taxed as a newspaper. In contrast to the dominant forms of publication, the book and the pamphlet, the press could not attempt to encapsulate one issue or attempt to cover one problem. The press possessed a “fragmentary nature of content” as it was required to maintain a degree of consistency throughout its regular publication while treating each issue in a limited number of words. Newspaper editors felt hard pressed to distribute their issues before more interesting news occurred. Another unique quality which distinguished newspapers from the dominant forms of publication was the anonymity of their writers. While a book author’s reputation sold copies, a newspaper relied on its own reputation rather than that of its writers. The issue over what constituted a newspaper, six months, one month, weekly or daily publication, was resolved in the 1836 law which stated any paper printed weekly or more often could be taxed as a newspaper. In the thirty years prior to the 1836 tax law only 126 newspapers had been established throughout England. However, the next thirty years saw an increase of 907 weekly or daily publications, demonstrating the success of this unique publication by the mid-nineteenth century.

The success of the newspaper in the mid-nineteenth century depended on its availability as well as its accessibility. Several factors influenced financial accessibility and decreased the price of newspaper publication. The 1819 law declared a tax of 4 pence on each copy. By the 1830s dissenters over the Corn Laws headed the movement for the decrease in newspaper tax. The cheaper the newspaper became the more could be distributed to increase awareness of the benefits of abolishing the Corn Laws. The dissenters’ success was demonstrated when the 1836 tax law reduced the tax from four pence to one penny on each copy. Founded in 1848 the

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34 During the nineteenth century, Victorian scholar Lucy Brown argues that “anonymous articles carried more weight because they were published with the authority of the newspaper behind them.” Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 108.
35 Jones, 16.
36 Jones, 21-25.
37 Jones, 19.
Association for the Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge decided that even this one penny stamp tax was inconsistent with England’s ideal of free knowledge. Members of this association, Richard Cobden and Collet Dobson Collet established a newspaper and refused to charge the stamp tax. The public discussion over Cobden and Collet’s prosecution persuaded Lord Palmerston to abolish both the Advertisement duty in 1853 and the one penny stamp tax in 1855.38

Even with the stamp tax causing high newspaper prices, distributors increased newspaper accessibility to meet higher demand. In 1850 scholars estimate that literacy rates in England neared sixty one percent overall.39 While many literate English could not afford to buy a newspaper every day or week, newspaper circulation was still fairly high. In 1836 the historian Aled Jones states that throughout England, 39 million copies circulated annually and by 1854 the number had increased to 122 million.40 These figures, however, reflect only the minimum number of individuals who had access to newspapers. Literary and philosophical societies along with Mechanic Institutes offered a selection of free newspapers for paying members. An 1850 law required public libraries to offer free newspapers to the public. Literate English who did not possess the funds to buy newspapers daily could take advantage of free or reduced newspapers. Non-literate English could listen as this publication was read aloud in libraries, pubs, taverns and other social settings.

While sales and distribution indicate accessibility of the newspaper to the public; the influence newspapers had upon readers remains more elusive. Modern scholars agree that by the late nineteenth century newspapers constituted the “main medium of information” for the British public.41 With the 1855 law abolishing all taxes on newspapers and the improved printing technology in the 1860s, newspapers sales, and therefore the number of people influenced, skyrocketed in the late-nineteenth century. Concerning the period prior to and shortly after the abolition of the stamp tax in 1855, an ongoing debate surrounds the impact of the relatively limited circulation of newspapers in the mid-nineteenth century. Historian George Steiner argues that newspapers created an “alphabet of culture,” in the nineteenth century by including

38 Jones, 21.  
40 Jones, Page.  
41 Jones, 4-7.
“the shared stories and cultural references” that eventually defined the British public.\textsuperscript{42} Michael Foucault agreed that the popular press became one of the technologies of power that set the parameters of social and personal relations.\textsuperscript{43} Aled Jones argues “especially in the years that followed the abolition of the newspaper Stamp Duty in 1855, newspapers were routinely assumed to act as faithful and continuous reflectors of public opinion, mirrors that cast ‘their light back upon the public.’”\textsuperscript{44}

Contemporary observers, however, make these same arguments of the period prior to 1855. The institution of the press appeared influential enough to demand newspaper historians by the 1820s. In 1820, Edward Baines published \textit{On the Origin and History of Printing} focusing on the newspaper’s power to circulate knowledge. In a book detailing the past achievements of newspapers William Hartpole Lecky stated that newspapers had “a greater influence than any other productions of the day in forming the ways of thinking of ordinary educated Englishmen.”\textsuperscript{45} Politicians also commented on the impact of newspapers in England. Lord Lyndhurst commented in 1839, “There was no engine…that exerted a more powerful influence than the public press of this country. It directed, controlled, it governed public opinion of this vast empire.”\textsuperscript{46} Lord Lytton deemed newspapers the “organ of opinion” for the British populace.\textsuperscript{47}

Thus, the attitudes and opinions of the British public toward the Empire in the 1840s and 1850s can be reexamined using newspapers. Partly agreeing with Macaulay’s dictum, “the only true history of a country is to be found in its newspapers,” modern scholars seek to understand various parts of British society from this form of publication.\textsuperscript{48} Modern scholars glean not only information on the public’s political and economic opinions from newspapers but also use them to understand social and cultural concepts of the nineteenth-century British public.\textsuperscript{49} Historian, E.M. Palmegiano argues that newspapers are “virtually untapped sources” for the study of the

\textsuperscript{42} Jones, 202.
\textsuperscript{43} Jones, 1-3.
\textsuperscript{44} Jones, 90.
\textsuperscript{45} Jones, 59.
\textsuperscript{46} Jones, 114.
\textsuperscript{47} Lee, 21-22.
\textsuperscript{48} Jones, 59.
\textsuperscript{49} Brown, 97. Victorian scholar, Lucy Brown utilizes newspapers to study the public’s view of the Empire. Her research demonstrates a large interest in foreign news, especially in times of wars such as the Crimean War, as well as a marked interest in the governance of the Empire.
British Empire “in the early and mid-Victorian period.”\textsuperscript{50} Palmegiano disagrees with scholars who argue that during this time period the British public had no interest in the Empire. “The literate Victorian public were avid readers, and nothing titillated their collective curiosities more than developments in the far-flung reaches of the Empire.”\textsuperscript{51} Even though only a small number of newspapers dedicated their contents entirely to issues of Empire, larger papers such as \textit{The Manchester Guardian} and \textit{The Times} often included articles to meet their reader’s interest. The weekly London paper, \textit{The Economist} frequently borrowed articles or responded to articles from these larger papers concerning the Empire. This thesis will examine \textit{The Economist} in-depth and argue that it provides a small window through which to look at the British attitude toward Empire at mid-century.

James Wilson founded \textit{The Economist: or The Political, Commercial, Agricultural, and Free-Trade Journal} in 1843 with the intention of creating a weekly newspaper that focused solely on the economy. Wilson had developed a strong interest in economics at an early age. Born in 1805 to a Scottish wool manufacturer, Wilson first attempted the trade of schoolmaster. Disliking the training for the position, he became an apprentice with a hat manufacturer. In 1824, with the help of his father Wilson established a hat manufacturing firm in London. The firm became profitable and Wilson had made approximately 25,000 pounds by 1837.\textsuperscript{52} Wilson enjoyed life in London and made important contacts, such as the economist and statistician George Porter. With these contacts he discussed the classic economists, Adam Smith and James Mill. Wilson firmly supported the classical economists’ views that agriculture was not the major source of countries’ wealth. Instead, nations aspiring to greatness should focus on manufacturing and labor to build up their economy and encourage free trade.

The economic depression of 1837 affected Wilson financially and politically and persuaded him to establish his own newspaper. Financially, Wilson had invested the majority of his profits from his company in the indigo trade. This investment was lost during the depression; however Wilson managed to keep his manufacturing firm open. Politically, Wilson began to take a direct interest in Britain’s economic policy. The 1837 depression caused many in Britain to view the Corn Laws of 1815 unfavorably. The Corn Laws required the price of grain to be at

\textsuperscript{51} Palmegiano, xi.
a certain level before foreign grain could be sold in England. This price ceiling was meant to protect domestic grain producers by keeping the price of their goods high. However, during the depression Britain could not feed its growing population. Prices were too high for British subjects to afford, but not high enough for cheaper foreign grain to be imported. Businessmen in Manchester developed the anti-Corn Law movement in 1839 which soon spread over England. The Manchester capitalists wanted to dominate England’s economic policy and supported the repeal of the Corn Laws to weaken those they viewed as their political competitors, the landed gentry and the aristocracy. The repeal of the Corn Laws would weaken the gentry and aristocracy as they would lose the monopoly of selling grain in Britain which would undercut their profits. The influx of inexpensive grain would cause the general cost of food to decrease. As food prices decreased, it lessened the demand for worker’s wages to increase. Stable wages would increase Manchester capitalists’ profits. As the Anti-Corn Law Movement fought for inexpensive food, the Manchester capitalists appeared to be fighting for the common workers and gained support at the expense of their aristocratic political rivals.

Wilson enthusiastically supported the repeal of the Corn Laws and the movement’s emphasis on free trade and laissez-faire policies. The definition of free trade implied the ideal of equal access to trade by every country in the world as governments ceased regulating the economy. This idealistic notion of free trade involved the absence of tariffs and monopolies and in theory gave each country an equal opportunity in the global market. In reality, the practice of free trade was easier said than done. Most advocates of free trade approved of governmental intervention that stimulated the growth of British manufacturing, such as laws that encouraged the control of labor, and tariffs to protect their goods. In practice, free trade was seen as a vehicle to “enhance Britain’s comparative advantage in the world economy.”53 Britain could trade unimpeded by tariffs against British goods and utilize imperial possessions for inexpensive raw materials and cheap labor. British finished goods then earned a larger profit from a greater share of the market. Wilson’s first major publication entitled “Influences of the Corn Laws, as affecting all classes of the community, and particularly the landed interest” appeared in 1839 as a pamphlet. He advocated Adam Smith’s theory that if men or nations were allowed to compete freely to better their own personal condition the whole society would indirectly benefit. This

pamphlet increased Wilson’s involvement in London intellectual and activist circles. The
Reform Club, originally established to support the Reform Bill of 1832, invited Wilson to join.
This membership allowed Wilson to introduce the views of the Anti-Corn Laws League to
Reform Club members, such as the wealthy Earl of Radnor, William Pleydell-Bouverie.

Wilson, assisted financially by the Earl of Radnor, decided to establish his own
newspaper. Wilson believed that existing newspapers did not provide enough coverage of the
general economy. Editors of such papers as *The Manchester Guardian* cut Wilson’s economic
articles and the League’s *Anti-Corn Law Circular* dealt too exclusively with the Corn Laws.
Wilson desired his weekly newspaper to advocate free trade and laissez-faire principles to the
“landowning and mercantile elite” in order to encourage and support their endeavors. From the
beginning in 1843, *The Economist* was aimed at an audience of middle to upper class capitalists.
Wilson adamantly declared his paper independent of parties or political influence and made sure
the League leaders and *The Economist* readers understood the League had no influence over his
publication.

Historian Aled Jones argues that the prospectus and opening address of newspapers
“signaled in a direct,…, way the intentions and self-perceptions of the printer or editor,” the
prospectus therefore established the newspaper’s identity. In *The Economist*’s prospectus
Wilson detailed the issues which the newspaper would cover; the five main sections, which at the
outset of the publication’s life were mostly written by Wilson, were covered in detail. The first
section consisted primarily of original articles concerning global free trade principles. The
second and third sections included articles on political economy and news of the week that might
have been borrowed from other publications, such as *The Times* or *The Manchester Guardian*.
The fourth section consisted of book reviews, fiction and non-fiction, that Wilson thought would
be of interest to *The Economist*’s audience. The fifth and final section included a commercial
gazette of the prices and statistics of the week’s trade products. Within the prospectus, historians
can see the inadvertent connection *The Economist* would develop with the Empire: “If we look
abroad, we see within the range of our commercial intercourse whole islands and continents, on
which the light of civilization has scare yet dawned; and we seriously believe that Free Trade,
free intercourse, will do more than any other visible agent to extend civilization and morality

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54 Edwards, 16.
55 Jones, 117.
throughout the world." The newspaper centered on the economy actually brought information concerning Britain’s trade and interactions with the various parts of its formal and informal empire to its readers. The weekly circulation of *The Economist* in its first year averaged 1,969 as compared to the popular London newspaper, *The Spectator’s* 3,557.

*The Economist* gained a loyal following of middle to upper class businessmen as its readers. With the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 and the dissolution of the Anti-Corn league and its publication, *The Economist’s* circulation rose to 4,483 by 1847. The weekly edition cost a sixpenny, which was more than the common working class family could afford. Businessmen took not only economic news and advice from *The Economist* but also reading suggestions. Nearly every week, books and pamphlets were reviewed in *The Economist*. The length of the review section generally depended on the number of publications Wilson deemed worthy of review and the amount of space left by the articles in previous sections. Individual reviews ranged from a few sentences to several columns. Many types of books were reviewed each week; novels included *Mutiny on the Bounty* and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Non-fiction book reviews considered reprints of John Locke’s *Treatises on the Government* and other studies of philosophy, science and ethnography. Wilson commented on pamphlets containing anything from parliament speeches, to university lectures to travel guides. Occasionally Wilson found it instructive to review new atlases or collections of maps for his readers. Nonfiction narratives such as diaries, memoirs, and travel accounts were also reviewed. Many of these reviews dealt with literature concerning other countries. Nonfiction book reviews especially discussed the travels of the authors to foreign lands and their description of the economic prospects, indigenous customs and practices of these lands, reflecting Wilson’s belief that *The Economist*’s readers were greatly interested in the current and prospective lands of the British Empire. Under Wilson’s editorship from 1843 to 1860, *The Economist* printed over 620 reviews relating to imperial expansion, validating the use of these reviews to access mid-century views of empire.

The opinions and views of *The Economist* revealed in its articles and book reviews could be attributed to Wilson exclusively in the early years of the paper. However, as the newspaper increased its circulation, Wilson hired more staff members to share the writing responsibilities. Unfortunately, a policy of anonymity meant that no complete record was kept of the author of...

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56 *The Economist*, 1843.
57 Edwards, 34.
each week’s book reviews. Throughout the 1850s the editor and sub-editors most likely to take over Wilson’s reviews of books were William Rathbone Greg, Herbert Spencer, Thomas Hodgskin and Richard Holt Hutton. Occasionally Wilson’s two eldest daughters, Julia and Eliza, reviewed books as well. W.R. Greg first contributed to The Economist in 1846 with an article on the Irish famine. He soon became an editor and took over many of Wilson’s writing responsibilities. Greg, who had attended Edinburgh University, became close to Charles Darwin. True to The Economist’s independence, Greg’s articles did not support a specific political party, yet many of Greg’s personal, if not political, biases could be seen in his articles on foreign affairs. He viewed the French as lacking in all “moral character” yet maintained hope for the Germans and Italians. These races “struggle for real reforms…they seek to govern in concert with their sovereigns, not instead of them.” Ruth Edwards, writer of The Pursuit of Reason: The Economist 1843-1993, argues that Greg had a “passionate horror of barbarism” of all those “races” he deemed less civilized than the British. Reviews during his editorship focused on this fear of the degeneracy of other European races.

Herbert Spencer acted as sub-editor under Greg from 1848 to 1853, yet Spencer left the majority of the book reviews to Thomas Hodgskin. Spencer wrote of the book reviews: there were “(not many however, The Economist had but small space for literary criticism); and into these I occasionally dipped before they went to Mr. Hodgskin.” After leaving The Economist, Spencer wrote on the theories of evolution and Social Darwinism, and coined the term “survival of the fittest” in the 1860s. Beginning in 1844, Hodgskin frequently wrote articles on education, poverty, law and book reviews for The Economist. Hodgskin became a part-time economic and social writer for The Economist yet maintained an independent status, writing for many papers. Hodgskin’s views toward government were the epitome of laissez-faire. His deist beliefs caused him to view the “world as a perfect system determined by natural laws.” All government intervention disrupted the natural order of society. Hodgskin’s views undoubtedly influenced The Economist’s discussions on free trade and imperial expansion. Also, the idea that society was governed by natural laws would easily fit into Spencer’s late nineteenth century concept of survival of the fittest, as natural laws determined the race most worthy of success.

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58 Edwards, 162.
59 Edwards, 162.
60 Edwards, 155.
61 Edwards, 145.
62 Edwards, 125.
The reviews during the later half of the 1850s probably should be attributed to Richard Hutton. After W.R. Greg took a customs job in 1856 and while Thomas Hodgskin continued to write for various papers and magazines, Hutton became editor from 1857 until 1861. His economic background was not strong enough to allow him to work well as editor of *The Economist*, but he excelled at book reviews. Under Hutton’s editorship, *The Economist* during the years 1858-1860 saw a dramatic increase in the number of book reviews. Hutton later became known as the “greatest reviewer of the Victorian Age,” due to his publication of approximately 6,000 articles, essays and reviews. Included in his reviews were the works of his close friend Walter Bagehot. After Wilson’s death in 1860 Bagehot took over *The Economist*. With slightly different interests, Bagehot drastically decreased the number of books reviewed in order to focus on economic articles. Therefore the years from 1843 to 1860 saw the concentration of mid-nineteenth century book reviews within *The Economist* and Bagehot’s assumption of control in 1860 marks the ending date for the time period under study in this thesis.

Book reviews could have a significant impact on the reading public by immediately offering them an opinion as well as suggesting further reading on a topic, such as the Empire. Newspaper historian Kelly J. Mays argues that “While periodicals had developed and multiplied in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and early 19\textsuperscript{th} century explicitly as a mechanism for guiding readers in their selection of appropriate reading matter; they implicitly functioned to create readers and appropriate, class-specific reading practices as well.” Reviews of publications dealing with the Empire influenced the reading practices of the mercantile and manufacturing elite who read *The Economist*. The *Bibliotheca Londinensis* records of published books from the years 1814 to 1846 show that out of 36,000 entries the genre of geography/travel/history/biography constituted 17.3\% of all published books, second only to publications dealing with religion at 20.3\%. This genre frequently dealt with issues of empire or expansion of British territory or influence. As *The Economist* reviewed publications in this genre it encouraged its readers to add certain books into their reading repertoire. Mays further explains that newspaper reviews “were the primary

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63 Edwards, 180.
vehicle for the dissemination and assimilation of ideas about ways of reading.” Reviews therefore directly and indirectly influenced readers’ opinions and reading practices.

The views and opinions The Economist’s readers took from the book reviews is difficult to determine, but with hundreds of reviews dealing with the Empire scholars can theorize on the impressions of Empire offered to them. Historian E.M. Palmegiano identifies five main imperial themes mentioned in newspaper articles and reviews throughout the mid-nineteenth century. The first imperial theme concerned the retention of the Empire in terms of physical and moral superiority. “The definition of destiny had gone from statements about responsibility to those about superiority.” Next, newspapers espoused the rhetoric of better government. Even when writers argued that certain colonies should be granted self-government, these writers advised paternalism and a supervisory role by British officials. The third theme centered on population movements as newspaper writers discussed systematic colonization to ease population pressure in England. The fourth theme appeared less frequently in newspaper writing: writers compared the British cross-culturally with indigenous peoples of the Empire. This comparison resulted in the encouragement of expansion by arguing the “inferior” peoples of the empire needed British interference to gain the advantages of British civilization. Finally, the defense of free trade consistently involved discussion of “how the empire would be benefited or burdened.” Palmegiano states “Authors were overwhelmingly confident that they could promote appropriate imperial policies and projects” through the debate over free trade. Palmegiano argues that each theme expressed in newspapers intentionally or unintentionally promoted the expansion of the British Empire.

While modern scholarly consensus agrees that the five imperial themes, typical of New Imperialism, were prevalent in the late nineteenth century, reviews within The Economist demonstrate that these themes not only existed earlier but provide concrete examples of the way newspapers promoted, inadvertently or not, the expansion of the British Empire. These themes of the mid-century demonstrate an interest in gaining multiple types of rule over a territory and encouraging the attitude of expansion necessary for later formal acquisition. The five themes outlined by Palmegiano provide a framework for studying the early foundations of the New

67 Palmegiano, 1.
68 Palmegiano, 6.
69 Palmegiano, 6.
Imperialism.\textsuperscript{70} The debate over free trade and laissez-faire as well as the theme of governmental reform most prominently appeared in the reviews dealing with Ireland. Even in reviews calling for Irish self-government writers called for various forms of British advising. Reviews concerning Australia illustrate the theme of population movements and imperial expansion, justified by British superiority over the Aborigines. \emph{The Economist}'s reviews on publications dealing with India provide examples of multiple themes. Writers declared British cultural superiority in relation to the Indians and argued for expansion of free trade. When the Indian Mutiny broke out, writers pushed for the retention of India as a colony and offered suggestions for improved paternalistic government. The following chapters will provide evidence for these themes and demonstrate how \emph{The Economist}, as only one small mid-nineteenth century newspaper, promoted imperial expansion long before the ‘Scramble for Africa’ began.

\textsuperscript{70} Newspapers in the mid-nineteenth century demonstrated that the British were interested in expanding the Empire long before the Scramble for Africa. Within Palmegiano’s scholarly works she has listed these themes but has yet to provide multiple and concrete examples to back them up. By examining newspapers in-depth, such as \emph{The Economist}, specific examples can be added to support these themes.
“Improvement” and Retention of Ireland

The oldest colony in the Empire became part of Greater Britain in the 1801 Act of Union, yet in many ways Britain continued to treat Ireland as a separate, conquered territory. Examining the imperial themes found in publications concerning Ireland can provide insight into British dealings with other regions of its empire. Britain experimented with imperial policies and techniques in Ireland, the oldest and closest “colony,” which it would then apply elsewhere. The imperial themes of free trade, better government, retention due to superiority and civilization seen within The Economist demonstrated an avid interest in expanding the Empire in the mid-nineteenth century.

During the 1840s and 1850s, discussions over the potato famine demonstrate the first imperial theme of the defense of free trade. As the starving Irish farmers required more British aid, newspapers such as The Economist debated the merits of laissez-faire policies. Contrary to the laws of free trade, The Economist reviews concerning publications dealing with the famine and subsequent changes in the law demonstrated that the British favored consolidating their economic control in Ireland and possibly expanding it. A second imperial theme present in the publications concerning Ireland was the rhetoric of better government. According to mid-nineteenth century British writers, economic “reform” could only be undertaken by a strong government, and the British could institute a stronger form of government than the Irish. The third theme of retention of Ireland as part of the British Empire resulted from British belief that their “superior institutions” would benefit the “inferior” Irish. The superior quality of British institutions and economic policy justified the retention of Ireland as a subordinate part of Great Britain. Palmegiano’s theme of cross-cultural comparison is the fourth theme that applies to publications dealing with Ireland. As The Economist compared the English and Irish character, the supposed superiority of the English race justified British intervention in Irish social institutions, such as schools and leisure time, to bring the Irish toward a more “civilized” state.

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When the potato famine began in September of 1845, no one knew how devastating the crop failure would be to the Irish population. Within less than a year the devastation killed the entire potato crop in Ireland. In 1847, Dr. John Parkin compared the disease that wiped out the potato crop to malaria in humans, while Reverend John M. Wilson stated that its effects “closely
resembled” cholera.\textsuperscript{71} Reverend S. Godolphin Osborne, in \textit{Gleanings in the West of Ireland}, described the hundreds of starving people including the children whose “skin over the chest bones and upper part of the stomach is stretched so tight, that every angle and curve of the sternum and ribs stand out in relief.”\textsuperscript{72} While all of Ireland suffered, the British government, newspapers, and public debated how much aid, if any, to send the starving potato farmers and their families.

Part of the debate on aiding Ireland centered on whether or not to provide inexpensive or free food. \textit{The Economist} viewed giving food to Ireland as a grave offense to the policies of free trade. Any author desiring the British government to increase food donations to Ireland received a harsh response from \textit{The Economist’s} reviewers. In 1847, Mr. Spackman called for increased aid, but \textit{The Economist} decried his “protectionist doctrines” as “erroneous” and misleading to the public. Protectionist policies, involving government aid and welfare, did not help the general public according to \textit{The Economist}. Instead, Adam Smith’s view was correct that individuals working for their own improvement would inevitably benefit society as a whole. In a sense, agriculturalists, merchants, and manufacturers all produced food for their country. While “the farmer sows the seed,…the manufacturer makes the plough that the farmer uses and the clothing that protects him from the weather…and the merchant…brings the seed, clover for example, from foreign countries that the farmer sows, and the guano with which he manures his crop.”\textsuperscript{73} For the government to interfere with these three occupations would impede the cyclical process which allowed countries to sustain themselves. Even as it was clear that the cyclical process in Ireland had already broken down, \textit{The Economist} repeated its “recipe…trust them to nature, or leave them alone.”\textsuperscript{74}

The British government followed \textit{The Economist’s} recipe to a certain degree, yet it did respond to the famine by setting up workhouses throughout Ireland. By allowing the farmers to earn money through building public works, the government allowed the Irish to purchase their


\textsuperscript{72} Rev. S. Godolphin Osborne, \textit{Gleanings in the West of Ireland}, \textit{The Economist}, September, 28, 1850, pages 1076-1077.

\textsuperscript{73} William Frederick Spackman, \textit{An Analysis of the Occupations of the People, showing the relative Importance of the Agricultural, Manufacturing, Shipping, Colonial, Commercial and Mining Interests of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and its Dependencies}, \textit{The Economist}, September 18, 1847, page 1086.

own food and avoided distributing handouts. The Economist felt even this interference with the country’s situation led to negative consequences. Working on public projects, such as building new roads, earned women and children approximately 6d per day, while the men earned 8 to 10d for the same interval. This work had “deteriorating effects,” physical as well as moral, according to The Economist.\textsuperscript{75} Employing the Irish for public works while the fields lay untilled and unplanted seemed to the reviewer a “backward” agricultural policy.

As more Irish died of starvation, authors of various publications reviewed in The Economist made proposals to transport the remaining Irish to regions with abundant resources and, particularly, crops in order to feed them. At first The Economist recognized transportation as a viable option, but abandoned it as a backwards policy soon after. In Self-Supporting Colonization, Colonel R. Torrens proposed shipping the Irish to previously established British colonies, including “Canada, New Zealand, Western Australia, or Eastern Africa.” In theory, the reviewer agreed that government supported transportation would benefit British colonies by increasing settlers and trade. However, The Economist argued that in reality government supported transportation would cost the government too much money. The government would have to pay for ocean transportation, “build and support an archiepiscopal place, a government house, and provide incomes for a great variety of government officers” before the Irish could become sufficiently established to support themselves.\textsuperscript{76} Voluntary emigration to British colonies by the Irish would save those who could afford their own transportation, but the reviewer argued the remaining Irish “must be cured at home.”\textsuperscript{77} This cure would come, as The Economist’s reviewers explained, in the form of social and economic “reform.”

The Economist discounted any form of governmental aid or expenditure in Ireland because of its adherence to the principles of free trade, yet argued for increased British interference in Ireland to enact economic and social “reform.” This contradiction of advocating certain aspects of laissez-faire yet arguing against full governmental non-intervention demonstrates how the debate over free trade actually promoted imperial expansion. The reviewer of English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds praised the series of letters for “stating a very important

\textsuperscript{75} William Bennett, Narrative of a Recent Journey of Six Weeks in Ireland, The Economist, July 24, 1847, page 849.
\textsuperscript{76} R. Torrens, Self-Supporting Colonization: Ireland Saved without Cost to the Imperial Parliament, The Economist, April 10, 1846.
\textsuperscript{77} Torrens, 1847.
truth, that there are two Englands….ignorant England…and enlightened, reflecting England.”

Ignorant England held prejudices against the Irish races and therefore ignored Ireland’s suffering; while enlightened England “has always been anxious to claim Ireland for her sister.” Enlightened England desired to halt the treatment of Ireland as an inferior British colony and include it as an integral part of the Empire. The author Aubrey De Vere blamed ignorant England and asked:

What can be more lawless than to leave a whole nation without laws? What policy ever called imperial was more beggarly than to make the subject of your empire beggars? What could be more deceitful than to demand a nation’s submission, and not in return impart to it safety? ...You who accuse us of procrastinating, why did you, in later times, content yourselves with endless debating, instead of doing what was to be done?

This could have been a call for Irish independence or at least more Irish control over legislation. Instead, this criticism of British imperial policy resulted in both the author and The Economist’s reviewer calling for the increase and “improvement” of British intervention.

Throughout the late 1840s and 1850s, authors called for increased British regulation of Irish economic policy, such as improvement of Ireland’s industry and reform of land distribution legislation. Dr. Robert Kane called for British industries, as his title implies, to take account of The Industrial Resources of Ireland. Kane listed the seven major coal mining regions in Ireland, detailing their current output as well as their possible output. The Munster coal field was the “most extensive development of the coal strata in the British Empire,” and with increased British involvement the field could produce great quantities of fuel for Ireland.

If the British instructed Irish farmers on how to utilize the “2,830,000 acres” of bog, then Ireland would have an additional source of fuel. Properly cultivated bogs could transform into dry turf, which performs “the same work as coal in a steam engine furnace at half the cost.” The Economist encouraged British industries to invest in Ireland where wages, rent and taxes were lower than in England, allowing companies to increase their profit.

The Economist called for British industries to expand into Ireland because the Irish were not prepared or secure enough to be truly industrious. The Irish worker required security of

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79 De Vere, 99.
80 De Vere, 99.
81 Robert Kane, The Industrial Resources of Ireland, The Economist, November 7, 1846, pages 1460-1462.
82 Kane, 1461.
property, tools and land, in order to develop an industrious spirit. In the review of *Ireland: Historical and Statistical*, the reviewer agreed with George Lewis Smith that “No people were ever regularly industrious and orderly who wanted security for their property.” Only British legislation could resolve Ireland’s problem of security of property, therefore *The Economist* reviewed the British debates over the best way to reform these Irish laws. In T. Alcock’s pamphlet, *The Tenure of Land in Ireland Considered*, he stated that property was the basic right of all British subjects and the Irish must be secure in all forms, especially their land. Accusing landlords of acting with a “mischievous nature” toward land distribution and holdings, Alcock called for a permanent land holding system. British legislation must follow the model of Prussia’s 1815 land distribution: allow landowners to retain two-thirds of their property and tenants under life-lease keep half the land as their own, the remaining land from both groups would be distributed to the current landless Irish as permanent property. As the peasants realized that their property could not be interfered with by the larger landholders, they would improve their capital and the general prosperity of Ireland.

While the Prussian model was not completely implemented, the British government acted quickly on the debate over land reform following the Great Famine. The Encumbered Estates of Ireland Bill passed in 1849 allowed the British government to sell the property of owners who were ruined by the famine. The original tenants received only what money was left after their debts had been paid and their land was sold to a new tenant who it was assumed could better improve the property. *The Economist* expressed interest in a *Daily News* reporter’s assessment of the bill in 1850. After reading the reporter’s pamphlet *The Encumbered Estates of Ireland*, the reviewer stated that Britain’s legislation “will in time accomplish a social revolution” in Ireland. This social revolution, however, only furthered the process that had been occurring in Ireland for centuries. The poor, Irish-Catholic farmers effectively lost their access to the land as the British Protestant landowners, those able to improve the land, acquired more.

While *The Economist* promoted the improvement of Irish industry with the help of British industrialists and land “reform” by British legislation, the newspaper also focused on the social reform that British intervention could bring to Ireland. Security of property and more

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efficient industry might help Ireland, but The Economist argued that the Irish moral character had to be improved before it could earn the status of a prosperous, integral part of Britain. In the mid-nineteenth century, a people’s ranking in the hierarchy of races depended partly on the state of their moral characteristics. In Irish Ethnology, George Ellis explained the many factors affecting a race’s moral characteristics. Moral characteristics are not necessarily innate, according to The Economist which agreed with Ellis that climate greatly influences a race’s characteristics. Therefore, a race can be improved and “civilized” in English terms. Ellis stated that “each race is capable of progress, but each in its own way,” warning the English that they must first understand Irish characteristics before they take steps to improve them. After the main differences between the two races were “clearly ascertained,” Ellis called for strong British action to improve the Irish character.

George Ellis did not offer specifics for British action, but other authors laid out their theories for Irish moral improvement. Henry Goold in Thoughts on a Judicious Disposition of Land in Ireland declared “It is not Ireland, but the Irish that require to be changed.” His solution required Britain to enact legislation that would ensure the security of Irish farmers. Then the British needed to instill the benefits of consolidating farms; larger farms would allow individual farmers to work together and create more profit. Goold argued that the British form of wage labor would also bring prosperity to Irish farmers and the new class of workers. The “British” principle of wage labor would increase security and prosperity to a smaller number of Irish farmers as they could hire former, poor farmers to work the land.

According to The Economist, the British could bring to Ireland institutions and qualities that would improve the Irish character. This “moral regeneration” was brought to Ireland in several ways. An 1846 review noted that Irish wage workers at first were “reckless, ignorant, improvident, drunken, and idle.” However, after the inferior Irish character became accustomed to wage labor, the workers ceased drinking and quarrelling. The author praised the introduction of the temperance hall “for social, quiet meetings” and stated that the British-built schoolhouses improved the student’s education. The Economist, side-stepped laissez-faire principles in its advocacy of increased British cultural influence. While the newspaper denounced all

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86 George Ellis, Irish Ethnology, The Economist, July 3, 1852, page 735.
87 Henry Goold, Thoughts on a Judicious Disposition of Land in Ireland, The Economist, August 14, 1847, page 946.
89 Kane, 1462.
government attempts to channel money into Ireland and affect trade, it promoted a variety of forms of British interference to improve the Irish moral character by changes in access to land and in social institutions. As the moral character of all Irish peoples improved the problems of Ireland would be resolved internally and the nation could become a productive member of the British Empire.

_The Economist_ dismissed any mention of a separation of Ireland and Britain as impossible, therefore promoting the imperial theme of retention. Britain refused to part with any of its colonies, especially Ireland which seemed to be specially connected to Britain. The reviewer of _A Dialogue between John Bull, An Englishman, and Patrick Kelly, And Irishman, on the Subject of Repeal_ insisted that Britain could not separate from Ireland even if it were possible.

The two are bound together; and, however uneasy may be their lives in union, they have been so bound for six hundred years, and will most probably be a still longer period. They cannot be otherwise than united; and they must, like man and wife, make each happy or miserable.\(^90\)

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s debates raged on the reform of Ireland’s governmental connection to Britain. The extreme options were the complete repeal of the 1801 Act of Union which would separate the two governments or the increase of British control of Ireland’s Parliament. _The Economist_ rejected both extreme options in favor of the federal system. Any reforms promoted by _The Economist_ that affected colonial government, such as the federal system, were designed to strengthen bonds between Britain and her colonies.

Supporters of the federal system such as J.G.V. Porter called the Act of Union in 1801 a “legislative conquest of Ireland.”\(^91\) In his pamphlet _Ireland: the Union of 1801_, Porter’s federal reform calls for Britain and Ireland to have separate Parliaments for internal affairs, while both countries contribute members to an Imperial Parliament to deal with Britain’s colonies and foreign affairs. Contrary to weakening Britain’s hold over Irish affairs, the federal system would actually intertwine Ireland and Britain closer to each other. Porter insisted that “Nothing, therefore, can be farther from justice than to associate the claims for federal government set up in

\(^90\) John Bull and Patrick Kelly, _A Dialogue between John bull, An Englishman, and Patrick Kelly, and Irishman, on the Subject of Repeal, The Economist_, September 2, 1848, page 1005.

Ireland with any revolutionary principles or tendencies.” If the federal system was established within Ireland and Britain, *The Economist* noted that the “general interests of the whole empire” would be better attended to and the British Empire as a whole strengthened.

*The Economist* continued to promote an increase of British involvement in Ireland even after the famine. An 1860 review of *The Irish Convict System, more Especially Intermediate Prisons* called for the installation of British values, the need for harsh punishment for crimes in the Irish convict system. Harriet Martineau’s 1859 publication of *Endowed Schools of Ireland* caused the reviewer to note that “The Earliest provision made by the English for the education of the newly-subjugated Irish was the establishment by Henry the Eighth of parochial schools.” Martineau and the reviewer argued that the British in the 1850s should continue to provide education for the Irish and even advocated free tuition. Legislation affecting Irish schools would therefore serve to indoctrinate English values to young Irish children. As poor, Irish Catholics were inundated with aspects of English “civilization,” wealthier, land-owning Protestants in Ireland were encouraged to purchase *The Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage of Great Britain and Ireland, for 1850*. Ireland may have been considered by many to be an integral part of Greater Britain but *The Economist*’s reviews which encouraged “civilizing” procedures shows the ways in which Ireland was treated as a colony.

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In Ireland, the British experimented with procedures, legislation and governmental involvement that were then applied to other colonial possessions. “Reforms” appearing to give Ireland more control over their own government actually linked them more closely to Britain. Debates concerning British aid during the Great Famine resulted in *The Economist*’s push for increased British interference, not in direct monetary aid, but by the “improvement” of Ireland’s moral characteristics. Writers of multiple publications argued that because of English superior characteristics, England must take action in Ireland for civilizing purposes. Through increased

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92 Porter, 1282.
influence in legislation, education, the judicial system, and campaigns for moral improvement, the British expanded their imperial control of Ireland.
Imperial Immigration to Australia

Thousands of miles from London, Australia and New Zealand seemed impractical for settlement at the time of their re-discovery by Europeans in the late eighteenth century. Serving initially as penal colonies, the Australia region demonstrated only the British desire to rid Greater Britain of its degenerates, not a desire to expand British influence and peoples. However, by the 1830s and 1840s, Australia and New Zealand appeared to be viable options for British settlers and merchants. *The Economist* actively participated in the promotion of greater British expansion in these two colonies. The indigenous peoples failed to halt British acquisition of territory, causing many British to discount their right to land and even their very existence. *The Economist* promoted emigration to Australia especially following the discovery of gold in the 1850s. The theme of emigration to Australia and New Zealand remained consistent in the mid-nineteenth century even in the aftermath of treaties which assured indigenous peoples of their right to land and sovereignty, such as the Treaty of Waitangi. The imperial theme of superiority justified this British acquisition of indigenous lands. Consequently during the 1840s and 1850s, *The Economist* encouraged expansion in Australia and thus demonstrated an avid interest in even the far reaches of Britain’s Empire.

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In 1770, Captain James Cook rediscovered Australia and claimed it as British property. The fifteenth-century Treaty of Tordesillas, technically, split the ownership of Australia between the Spanish and the Portuguese, yet both countries knew little of this “Southern Continent.”

Sixteenth-century Spanish explorer, Alvaro de Mendana, as well as Portuguese captains such as Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, found it difficult to even locate the continent. When seventeenth-century Dutch expeditions reached New Zealand, the Dutch East India Company determined it would be more profitable to concentrate their trading activities nearer India. The low populations of indigenous peoples on New Zealand seemed to offer no incentives to initiate trade. Therefore, the Australian continent lay virtually untouched by Europeans when Cook’s expedition in 1770 set it firmly in British hands for the next two centuries.

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97 Hughes, 45.
Given the vast distance between Britain and Australia, the British left Australia untouched for another seventeen years until circumstances persuaded Prime Minister William Pitt to utilize the distant continent. The British Isles had been transporting criminals to parts of its empire since the early seventeenth century. The Marshal of Virginia brought over criminals in 1611 to fill the labor shortage and “from 1618 onward, a steady infusing of felons came to England’s embryo settlements in the New World, to Puritan Massachusetts as well as to the tidewater settlements of the South.”98 Transportation of criminals negated the need for Britain to build prisons. The North American Revolution halted most transportation to the New World and Britain’s criminals quickly overflowed the barges on the Thames. In 1783, William Pitt the Younger became Prime Minister and seriously considered the use of Australia as a transportation colony. However, as the convicts to Australia would be a financial drain to the state, unlike the criminals sent to the North Atlantic colonies where settlers had purchased their labor, Pitt might have had alternative reasons for extending British influence to Australia. Britain feared the alliance of Dutch and French in the Far East trading market, and Pitt’s solution was to establish a firm foothold in Australia.99 Thus, while Australia was founded as a convict colony, the continent also served strategic economic and militaristic needs of the British.

By the 1840s, Australia’s reputation as a penal colony was in decline, instead many in London desired to transform Australia into a respectable settlement colony. Authors, favorable to emigration, described Australia as a land of virgin soil. Designating territory as virginal, implied that the land was uninhabited by other human beings.100 At the time of the first shipment of convicts to Australia, historians and archaeologists estimate that approximately 300,000 Aborigines inhabited the continent.101 The small tribes lived nomadic lifestyles on or near coastlines, subsisting on fishing, hunting and gathering. Aborigines did not employ systemized agriculture and their technology was basic. To early British settlers Australia might as well have been completely empty. If the indigenous peoples did not use the resources of the land properly according to British standards, then the territory needed inhabitants who could utilize it appropriately.

98 Hughes, 40.
99 Hughes, 56-68.
100 Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (New York: Routledge, 1995).
101 Hughes, 11.
Many British authors wrote of the indigenous inhabitants of Australia as a primitive and dying race, which to them justified their appropriation of the land. *The Economist’s* book reviews demonstrate the pervasiveness of this theme of British cultural, technological and intellectual superiority. William Westgarth’s *Australia Felix*, published in 1848 detailed the relationship of British convicts and settlers to the Aborigines. *The Economist* reviewer, after examining several encounters of British inhabitants and indigenous peoples, noted that “the whole aboriginal population seems likely to be destroyed.”  

The Aborigines had remained at a “primitive” technological and intellectual level and could not compete with the superior characteristics of the British. The reviewer agreed with Westgarth that “We cannot mourn over their extinction,…It is in the order of nature that the weak make way for the strong.” Even before the term “survival of the fittest” was coined, *The Economist’s* reviews argued that races considered inferior in British terms should give way to the more advanced races. Nature’s laws therefore dictated that the backwards Aborigines were fated to die out, especially when confronted with a more advanced race: the British.

Even when the British acknowledged indigenous peoples’ right to land, settlers and speculative trading companies argued for the land’s acquisition. Representatives of the British government and over 530 Maori signed the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 to ensure Maoris’ right to the land and to give tribes full British citizenship. Throughout the 1840s, however, the British settlers and companies argued that the Maori tribes did not properly improve the land. According to *The Economist*, the land could be better owned and cultivated by British settlers. The 1848 review of *The New Zealand Question, and the Rights of Aborigines*, offered an argument for the ownership of land in “New Zealand and other similar countries by the civilised inhabitants of Europe.” Settlers can own the land “by bargaining for it, or take possession of it by force.” Either method rightfully transferred ownership to the British settlers and subsequently to the British crown. Even as the Maori adopted British religion, agricultural techniques and literacy *The Economist* still argued that British settlers should dominate New Zealand because of innate British superiority.

103 Westgarth, 16-17.
True to the principle of laissez-faire, *The Economist* argued against any governmental involvement that restricted settlers. In New Zealand the commission to re-inspect pre-Waitangi land sales was opposed and an 1847 review of two publications by John Dunmore Lang chastised the British government for impeding land ownership in Australia.\(^{106}\) The reviewer argued that the government should remove all obstacles to acquiring territory in Australia, as it benefits the settlers and the crown. Joint stock companies had purchased land from Aborigines and settled 200 Britons by the end of 1836. The reviewer stated “It might have been supposed that a paternal government should have had no thought but how to protect and promote such a refreshing example of colonial enterprise,” however the governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, declared that only the crown could grant the right to purchase and sell land.\(^{107}\) Lang extolled the settlers for taking action to colonize the continent, while declaring the government “inefficient” for impeding colonization.

Many reviews explicitly solicited emigration and colonization of Australia and New Zealand. The reviewer of Lang’s publications noted that “Both these works…are intended to recommend the districts of Cooksland and Phillipsland to our capitalists and laborers, as calculated to give them wealth and employment.”\(^{108}\) The reviewer agreed with Lang that cotton, sugar and indigo would grow well in the northern part of the continent. *The Economist* included excerpts from Charles Hursthouse’s *An Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth*, which described the beauty and utility of New Zealand. Hursthouse described the land as “undulating, and so interspersed with small dells” with “graceful fern-trees.” This country of “sylvan scenery and quiet rustic beauty” had practical uses and Hursthouse pointed out the water resources and fertile soil.\(^{109}\) By describing plentiful resources and the beauty of the land, authors encouraged emigration to Australia.

The multiple advice books for emigrants demonstrated readers’ need for information concerning emigration and the authors’ desire to increase settlement in Australia and New Zealand. In *South Australia: its Advantages and its Resources, being a Description of that

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\(^{106}\) Dalziel, 580.
John Dunmore Lang, *Phillipsland, or the Country hitherto designated Port Phillip; its present Condition and Prospects as a highly eligible Field for Emigration*, *The Economist*, October 16, 1847, pages 1198-99.
\(^{108}\) Lang, 1198-99.
Colonist, and a Manual of Information for Emigrants, the author George Blakiston Wilkinson emphasized the variety of occupations available in Australia. The reviewer noted that Wilkinson included information on “the prospects of the labourer and farmer, on agriculture, stock farming, building, gardening, manufacturing in various branches, and last, not least, on mining and mineral productions in that flourishing colony.” The author intended the positive description of occupations to entice those in Britain to better their situation by emigrating. To facilitate the long journey and initial installation of British settlers, Wilkinson compiled a “manual for emigrants,” which described the land and told the settlers “what they ought to take with them, and what they ought to do on their arrival.”

The Economist portrayed emigration to Australia and New Zealand as beneficial to both settlers and residents of Great Britain. The reviewer of Sidney’s Australian Hand Book agreed with the author that the working class benefited from the opportunities Australia offered. The squatters, lower class residents without official land ownership, were the backbone of the new settlers and “by them alone can it (emigration) be effectual.” The Economist included a review of An Emigrant’s Atlas in 1848 and declared it helpful in providing “a great deal of information, addressed to the eye as well as the understanding.” The reviewer also noted its inexpensiveness, which allowed the lower classes to purchase and use such manuals. The same issue of The Economist included a review of the magazine The Colonist, published by The Society for the Promotion of Colonisation. The reviewer stated that The Colonist “intended to teach the unemployed how they may better their condition” by emigration.

Residents in Great Britain supported emigration to Australia to increase their trading opportunities especially after gold was discovered in 1851. Only a few reviews dealt with the concern that an influx of Australian gold into the global market would depress prices. In 1853, The Economist reviewed Patrick James Stirling’s The Australian and Californian Gold Discoveries, and their Probable Consequences. Stirling compared the gold discoveries to Spain’s conquest of the New World and excess circulation of silver, which resulted in inflation. Along with inflation, Stirling argued that the gold discoveries would harm merchants as they

111 Wilkinson, 604.
114 Trewlauney Wm Saunders (publisher), The Colonist, The Economist, September 30, 1848, page 1114.
would experience “the breaking up of all the existing relations of property.”\textsuperscript{115} The Economist disagreed with Stirling; his “picture is sketched, we think, in much too dark colours.” Instead, The Economist believed gold would “raise and improve the degraded condition of the laboring classes” and benefit British society at home by opening new trading markets.\textsuperscript{116}

The gold discoveries increased British interest in expanding into Australia as shown by the increase in the number of reviews calling for improved routes within Australia and faster transportation from Britain to the colony. The Economist reviewed a pamphlet on the new roads to transport gold in Australia because it believed that “in the colony, the story of Lieutenant Tolmer will come in after times to rank with the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England and the treaty of Penn in Pennsylvania.”\textsuperscript{117} Lieutenant Tolmer forged a shorter route from the major gold fields to Adelaide, a 328 mile journey. Tolmer’s route could transport half a ton of gold to Adelaide in eleven days. The Economist not only praised expedient routes to transport gold to Australia’s ports but also included many reviews calling for faster oceanic transportation of gold and peoples. The manager of the General Screw Steam Shipping Company, James Laming wrote a pamphlet in 1856 detailing an alternative route to Australia. Instead of the route promoted by the Treasury, the “Suez, Aden and the Ponte de Galle, both ways,” Laming argued that by utilizing screw steamers the trip around Africa to England could be made in fifty days.\textsuperscript{118} In describing the benefits to individuals and to British trade that faster transportation to Australia would have, authors promoted British imperial expansion.

The Economist’s encouragement of settlement to Australia became vividly apparent, when the newspaper compared emigration to Australia and to the United States. Outside the formal realm of the British Empire, the United States posed a great threat to the prosperity of its colonies. Inexpensive farmland and the discovery of gold in California drew settlers away from Britain’s colonies of Australia and Canada. Therefore, many of The Economist’s reviews emphasized the disadvantages of immigrating to the United States. While cotton flourished in the South and fortunes were made, the institution of slavery was enough to keep the British away. The Economist declared that even civilized Englishmen could be morally degraded by the

\textsuperscript{115} Patrick James Stirling, The Australian and Californian Gold Discoveries, and their Probable Consequence, The Economist, January 22, 1858, page 98.
\textsuperscript{116} Stirling, 98.
\textsuperscript{117} Saunders and Stanford (publishers), South Australia and the Gold Discoveries, The Economist, July 2, 1853, page 740.
\textsuperscript{118} James Laming, Steam Communication with Australia, The Economist, June 28, 1856, page 701.
connection to slavery. Fighting with Native Americans kept settlers from the fertile land of the Great Plains. Even the recent discovery of gold in California did not entice *The Economist* to promote emigration to the Western United States. William Kelly wrote *A Stroll Through the Diggings of California* in 1852, which examined the gold mines of California. The reviewer chose to include a passage from Kelly’s book on advice to emigrants. Kelly explained the grueling and backbreaking work diggers undertook in the mines. The hours of work were high, the days off few and the average pay not as high as expected. Kelly argued this unyielding digging schedule was suitable for only the hardiest workers and any immigrants of other trades, for example carpenters or smiths, would not fair well in the mines. The reviewer noted that Kelly “did not stay long in the country, appearing to prefer civilisation to gold.”

When compared to Australia, *The Economist* reviews gave an impression of an underdeveloped United States. While the nation might have bountiful natural resources, its conditions and primitive state were not suitable for British emigrants. *The Economist* discouraged Britons from immigrating to an area outside Britain’s formal empire. Australia and New Zealand were prospering colonies with great potential, while the United States remained in a backwards, almost uncivilized state, shown especially by its use of forced labor. To emphasize the United States backwardness and Australia’s progressiveness, *The Economist* included glowing reviews of Australia’s colonies. One of the six colonies on the continent of Australia, Victoria prospered greatly following the gold discoveries and the influx of settlers. In 1859, the reviewer of *The History of the Colony of Victoria* considered Victoria “one of the most promising dependencies of the British Crown.” The author commended the early settlers of Port Phillip’s use of profits gained by selling land to send for more British settlers in 1841 and 1842. This early influx of settlers allowed the colony to gain a firm trading foothold when gold was discovered a decade later. Another reason for prosperity in this region was the government’s policy on squatters and grazers. As long as the squatters and grazers purchased a small amount of land they were able to use large “waste tracts” which the government could later sell to additional immigrants. While gold brought immigrants to mine the fields, the reviewer stated “every class profited and continues to profit more largely by the gold-fields than the gold-

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diggers themselves.”¹²¹ Sheep-grazers, without foreign competition, sold meat and wool to settlers. Merchants sold products to the new settlers and shipped gold out of the colonies.

In addition to describing the prosperity of the Australian colonies, publications described the improved general character of their settlers. *The Economist* attempted to dispel the notion of Australia as a convict colony whenever it appeared. Most travel books included advice for emigrants and encouraged British settlers to make the journey to Australia. Any authors that provided negative opinions on the colonies received a cursory review in *The Economist*. When the author of *Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand* referred to these colonies as “convict islands,” the reviewer questioned the Englishman’s upbringing and promptly contradicted his negative opinions with statements of the colonies’ prosperity and potential.¹²² By the late 1850s, *The Economist* had aided Australia and New Zealand in removing their labels as convict colonies. While the colonies might have been started to house criminals, by the late 1850s any respectable Englishman could feel at home. The review of *Life in Victoria; or, Victoria in 1853 and Victoria in 1858* emphasized the marked progress of the colonies respectability in the interim five years. The author William Kelly dwelled on the early miners, those “rough, half-savage wanderers, with the coarse women they had bribed to be their companion…rioting in the first flush of success, dissipating in ostentatious extravagance the fruits of many months of privation.”¹²³ Added to the original British inhabitants of Australia, the convicts along with the miners seemed a volatile combination, however, Kelly persuasively wrote of the changed Victoria of 1858. The “digger horde” had left or acquired permanent jobs, women could walk the streets without fear of losing their virtue, and “a respectable society had begun to form itself around the better-educated of those who had raised themselves to wealth and station in the land of their adoption.”¹²⁴ *The Economist* agreed with Kelly’s portrayal of the new Australia and encouraged further emigration, declaring that “even a fastidious Englishman might find it not intolerable to settle.”¹²⁵

*The Economist* recognized that Britain should learn from its dealings with other settlement colonies, such as the United States and Ireland, in terms of the crown’s position in

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¹²¹ McCombie, 817.
¹²⁴ Kelly, 1321.
¹²⁵ Kelly, 1322.
colonial government. As the number of settlers to Australia and New Zealand increased, The Economist acknowledged that self-governance would become an issue. The Economist explained the dilemma of governing settler colonies:

The bond which binds the colonist to his native land is elastic enough as regards mere tension—but it will burst if much strain is put on it at home. The very qualities which suit Englishmen for colonisation make the administration of a Colonial Empire a matter of the greatest difficulty and one which absolutely demands the greatest tact. The loss of the United States was due to that very instinct of local self-government which had rendered the States so strong and healthy.126

Authors, such as Charles Hursthouse, Justice Haliburton, Carfax and Thomas McCombie, offered many theories and proposals dealing with the government of Australia and New Zealand. The Economist saw the goal as preventing a separation, like the United States, while maintaining “the practical advantages of a strict political unity.”127 In the publications reviewed in the 1840s and 1850s, the complete separation of Australia and New Zealand from Britain was to be avoided. The formulation of a plan of self-government was to keep these colonies as close to the mother country as possible without constraining the colonists and forcing them into rebellion. Far from breaking or even relaxing British control, the concession of self-government to Australia and New Zealand would keep them firmly within the British Empire’s sphere of power. Therefore, The Economist’s promotion of settlement and even self-governance for Australia and New Zealand encouraged British imperial expansion.

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The Economist’s book reviews demonstrate that publications dealing with Australia and New Zealand consistently promoted the imperial theme of emigration throughout the 1840s and 1850s. In New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi, designed to protect Maori rights, soon “became a license for settlement on a scale undreamt of by Maori” as British settlers increased from 2,000 at the time of the Treaty signing to 59,000 by 1858, far outnumbering the Maori.128 British

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127 The Economist, May 3, 1857.
128 Danziel, 581.
settlers in Australia increased from 15,000 in 1815 to over one million by the 1861 census.¹²⁹ As British settlers dominated the two colonies, immigration proved to be a powerful instrument of imperial expansion. Similar to the situation in Ireland, the growth of the Empire in Australia and New Zealand was justified by The Economist based on innate English superiority. The imperial theme of superiority was not only used to justify the expansion of settler colonies but also to encourage the expansion of the British imperial presence over peoples of other regions, such as India.

Imperial Expansion Before and After the Indian Rebellion of 1857

Britain’s interference in India in the 1840s and 1850s provides a prime example of not only the formal acquisition of territory in the mid-century but also press’ promotion of imperial themes which E.M. Palmegiano argues encouraged British expansion. As to territorial conquests in India, the Sikh Wars led to British control over Punjab, Satara and Sambalpur at the close of the 1840s. In 1852, Britain acquired more territory with the Second Burmese War. The British fought the Persian Wars in 1856-57 to keep other interested nations from asserting influence in Herat and Afghanistan. To increase British control in India in alternative ways, the press, specifically *The Economist*, consistently promoted British expansion by including four of the five imperial themes in publications dealing with India. Prior to the 1857 Rebellion, *The Economist* included many reviews that compared British and Indian cultures to determine the more superior of the two. This imperial theme of cultural comparison inevitably determined the British “race” superior and therefore justified British presence in India. This imperial theme as well as the theme of promoting free trade appeared primarily within travel writings and military memoirs. Publications reviewed during the Indian Rebellion of 1857-58 clearly demonstrate the last two themes of better government and retention of India. Histories of India and political commentaries argued that Britain could provide better government and therefore should maintain India permanently as an imperial possession. The media consistently, intentionally and unintentionally, spread information on the benefits of imperial expansion in India.

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Themes of Superior Civilization and Free Trade: Arguments for British Presence and Expansion

Authors of travel writing and memoirs often compared their British culture and customs to those found in India. When the comparisons inevitably reached the same conclusion, that British culture was superior to Indians,’ British interference to “civilize” the Indians was justified. Closely related to British cultural superiority was the supposed economic improvement that free trade brought the Indians; reviews of geographical publications especially demonstrated this imperial theme. While examining travel writing and military memoirs for themes of superiority and free trade, an additional theme appeared: the theme of masculinity and imperial expansion. The British desire to assert and prove their masculinity provided another reason for increased British interference in India. *The Economist* reviews provide examples of how these
publications promoted British imperial expansion through themes of “civilization,” free trade and masculinity.

Travel writers expressed the “civilizing” benefits of British involvement in agriculture, missionary work and commerce to the Indians. The author of Rural Life in Bengal described his travels through the countryside in 1860. The indigo plantations and “factories” impressed the traveler as did the “model planter” who showed him around. The author admitted that each planter probably “ruled” his plantation differently, but if other planters had any of this planter’s “kindness of heart and...natural generosity towards his brother planter” then the planters undoubtedly benefited each other and their indigenous workers. 130 The reviewer also cautioned the reader that this kind and generous planter should not be taken as representative of all planters but then continued to state that this example “shows how extensive are the opportunities which a planter enjoys of benefiting those around him” in Bengal. 131 While The Economist noted that an influx of indigo on the market would depreciate profit, nonetheless the newspaper noted that “The healthful, active occupation – the out-of-door life- the comfortable houses, with farm-yards and gardens- the abundance of servants and horses” must “tempt many a young man at home to try his fortune” in Bengal. 132

The Economist promoted agricultural careers in India for the benefit of young British men as well as the Indians on the indigo plantations. The review of Rural Life in Bengal acknowledged the planter’s immense influence over Bengalis. “The mission of the European to India was not to find a highly-principled, educated, and enlightened people, but to aid in making them so,” stated the author (original italics). 133 Many other travel writers commented on the positive influence British inhabitants in India could have on the indigenous peoples. The review of Christopher Winter’s Six Months in British Burmah: or India beyond the Ganges in 1857 included Winter’s observations on Christian conversion. While Winter noted that the Burmese peoples rejected Christianity for the most part, one tribe the Karens, accepted it and even spread the religion to “ten thousand” of their followers. 134 The spread of Christianity was an important point argued the reviewer as it demonstrated the benefit Britain brought to South Asia.

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131 Rural Life in Bengal, 228.
132 Rural Life in Bengal, 229.
133 Rural Life in Bengal, 228.
134 Christopher Winter, Six Months in British Burmah: or India beyond the Ganges in 1857, The Economist, October 16, 1858, page 1153.
Travel writers mentioned education and the spread of Christianity as British benefits to Indian peoples, and were quick not to forget the advantages of British trade. In describing his travels, Winter seamlessly connected the “enlightenment” of Indian peoples to the spread of British trade. The reviewer noted Winter’s description of imports and exports as well as products new to Europeans such as the wood-oil tree. Each tree grows up to two hundred feet and could produce thirty to forty gallons each year. The Burmese worker cuts a hole in the tree and lights a fire inside it to extract the oil. The reviewer implied the benefits to the Burmese worker if the British decided to purchase this oil in larger amounts. William Knighton, a traveling journalist, published *Tropical Sketches* in 1855 with observations along with sketches of Indian life and commerce. The review in *The Economist* focused on Knighton’s travels to the Suez and the region’s lethargic trade. Knighton described the slow trade by camels, “those toiling desert-ships,” as a painful sight, implying the region’s reliance on a stagnant form of trade as opposed to progressive British commerce.\(^\text{135}\)

As early as 1843, travel writers implied and explicitly stated that Britain’s trade and influence would benefit India’s peoples. In *Personal Observations on Sindh*, T. Postans listed the reasons the people of Sindh could not completely prosper when left to their own devices. Postans described the innate vices possessed by the Sindhians as resulting in “a complete torpor of the human intellect, and of course, a generally debased condition of the mass of the people.”\(^\text{136}\) The reviewer agreed that the people produced no finished products worthy of the British, yet the region offered “various and valuable” resources: “cotton, indigo, opium, hemp, tobacco, saltpeter, alum, sulphur” to name a few. In a contradictory logic, *The Economist* agreed with Postans that the seizure of Sindh by the British was “atrocious” and “unjustifiable,” yet tempered this argument by listing the benefits of the British conquest.

Not only in an economical point of view would it be the opening up of a new and immense market in the centre of Asia, where the rich Eastern products would be exchanged for our manufactures; but in a higher and nobler respect it would give admission into one of the great arteries of the world, along which European civilization


and the religions of Christ might circulate among nations yet unvisited by either the steam-engine or the cross.\textsuperscript{137}

Even as \textit{The Economist} lamented the broken treaties with the Sindhians and their new distrust of the British, the reviewer could not help but mention the benefits that would inevitably result from British rule. Within reviews of travel publications, \textit{The Economist} could offer its disapproval of the aggressive means of British acquisition of territory, while extolling the future benefits for the region due to British rule. A general acceptance of expansion was demonstrated within reviews of publications concerning India and any and all expansion justified by Britain’s “superiority” and beneficial impact.

Travel writers used British superiority in various ways to justify imperial expansion, including the need to assert British masculinity, defined as male physical and mental prowess. Europe appeared to be in its final stages of reaching “enlightened civilization,” where bureaucrats would rule nations and peace would be certain. As a result, men found it more difficult to prove themselves by participating in warfare, military careers or great adventures in modern European civilization. India, in contrast to Europe, offered opportunities for British men to prove their masculinity and superiority in traditional ways. Although not mentioned by E. Palmegiano as an imperial theme, \textit{The Economist’s} reviews demonstrate how the desire to prove British masculinity aided imperial expansion. The reviewer of \textit{Military Memoir of Lieut.-Col. James Skinner} declared that “India has always been a great school for fighting…a theatre for the display of military prowess.”\textsuperscript{138} India’s caste system played a large role in forming the region’s tendency for warfare. The reviewer explained the divisions of caste, including the caste of warriors, an entire section of Indian male society raised and respected as warriors. While “civilized” European society began to question the benefits of warfare, India remained a region characterized by fighting. The continual fighting in India, however, provided benefits for British men in the form of military training.

\textit{The Economist} promoted military careers for British men as a successful and honorable occupation. “Great power and great wealth have been the rewards of military success,” stated the reviewer of Skinner’s memoir.\textsuperscript{139} These rewards seemed to be doled out to the individual soldier as well as the successful nation. The reviewer praised India’s “hotly contested fields”

\textsuperscript{137} Postans, 27.
\textsuperscript{139} Fraser, 318.
for molding soldiers worthy to fight for Britain.\textsuperscript{140} *The Economist* reviewed numerous publications dealing with the military in India, such as *Political and Military Events in British India from 1756 to 1849*, described as a useful military handbook.\textsuperscript{141} Other reviews included praise for military men and interest in “personal adventure, extraordinary aggrandizement, and striking reverses” against formidable foes.\textsuperscript{142}

In lieu of military service, some British men sought personal adventure and determined their proving ground to be India, fighting against the big game of India’s jungles. The reviewer of *Tiger-Shooting in India* declared “that a high state of civilisation no more shrinks from the dangers of conflict with wild beasts than it does from the horrors of warfare between man and man.”\textsuperscript{143} *The Economist* reviewer detailed the dangers of hunting tigers: the necessity of hunting in the hot season, the unavoidable bee’s nests, and the cunning tiger itself. The tiger-hunter, William Rice, was praised for introducing a new form of hunting which included the use of a double rifle, instead of the repeating rifle. Also, Rice did not take elephants on the expedition without which, according to the reviewer, “the sport has until now been considered too hazardous to attempt.”\textsuperscript{144} Rice displayed his bravery by keeping calm in harrowing situations, such as when a tiger passed twenty feet in front of his hiding place. The reviewer described the largest tiger killed by Rice as twelve feet, seven and a half inches long. The more dangerous the hunting conditions and the larger the tiger, the more the hunter proved his masculinity in this dangerous pastime. Tiger hunting provided British men an alternative from military service to prove their physical ability to endure difficult situations and their bravery in the face of danger.

Tigers were not the only dangerous animal within India’s borders, explained *The Economist*. The reviewer of *The Wild Sports of India* argued that the “panther, wild boar, bear, elephant and buffalo” also tested the British hunters’ skills and bravery.\textsuperscript{145} The reviewer explicitly stated that hunting improved the hunter’s “steadiness of nerve, his presence of mind, his promptness of resources in emergencies, his contempt for ease, and his capability of endurance.”\textsuperscript{146} *The Economist* agreed with the author Captain Henry Shakespear that soldiers

\textsuperscript{140} Fraser, 318.  
\textsuperscript{141} William Hough, *Political and Military Events in British India, from 1756 to 1849*, *The Economist*, 1852, page 1355.  
\textsuperscript{142} Charles Macfarlane, *History of British India*, *The Economist*, December 6, 1851, page 1352.  
\textsuperscript{143} William Rice, *Tiger-Shooting in India*, *The Economist*, January 2, 1858, page 8.  
\textsuperscript{144} Rice, 9.  
\textsuperscript{146} Shakespear, 651.
require these qualities and that hunting becomes a perfect substitute for training when war was absent. Captain Shakespear encouraged young British men to use India to further their physical skills, mental endurance and their careers. As The Economist encouraged the use of India for the betterment of masculine skills, the discussion about using India for military purposes encouraged actual military acquisition.

The Economist reviewed multiple publications of maps, gazetteers and atlases of the British Empire which added to a general acceptance of British expansion. Sudipta Sen argues that the process of mapping facilitated military expeditions which in turn led to additional roads, railways, and British technology in India.147 In 1850, Charles Knight published The Imperial Cyclopaedia. The Geography of the British Empire. The Economist reviewer noted that this publication “gratifies one of the growing wants of the age. All that is curious in antiquity is noticed, and all that is worthy in novelty is recorded.”148 The reviewer suggested that the British public desired more information about the British Empire, and to satisfy this desire The Economist included reviews of more detailed maps as well. In 1854, the review of Edward Thornton’s A Gazetteer of the Territories Under the Government of the East India Company mentioned the publication’s detailed maps, and information on regional trade, revenue and population.149 Sen argues that as India’s territory was further explored and recorded, Britain found it easier to conquer and maintain hegemony.

If information about mapping previously unexplored regions aided the goals of expansion, then the publications detailing inhabitant’s customs, population and occupations also helped these strategic operations. In 1847, “An Officer in the Hon. East Indian Company’s Bengal Native Infantry” wrote A Sketch of Assam, detailing the Naga peoples’ marriage customs, education practices and, of special interest to The Economist reviewer, the Naga’s preparations for war. The reviewer stated “We trust that other officers will contribute their quotas, till at length every hill and valley of this fertile and interesting place shall be made familiar to the English.”150 Recording information of war rituals, weapons and strategy prepared British

148 Charles Knight, The Imperial Cyclopaedia. The Geography of the British Empire, The Economist, June 1, 1850, page 604.
officers in case of a confrontation or opposition to their already established rule. Detailed knowledge of lands and peoples in and around India not only aided military purposes but spread the notion that the British public possessed the right to acquire and “own” the information concerning these regions.

Other forms of geographical and demographic knowledge increased British road and railway construction. In 1848, *The Economist* reviewed *Indian Railways and their Probable Results, with Maps and an appendix* written by An Old Indian Postmaster. “That railways could be of signal advantage to a country so densely peopled, so rich in spontaneous productions as India, there cannot be the smallest doubt. They would make her the cotton field of Europe,” stated the reviewer.\(^{151}\) While professing the benefits of railways for India itself, the reviewer actually focused on the potential commercial benefit India cotton could have for Europe. Two years later, an army officer provided detailed maps of the post office routes throughout India. The reviewer of *Observations on the Indian Post-Office* noted that “Amongst the reforms which will promote the peace, prosperity, and civilisation of India, a postage reform would be one of the most efficient.”\(^{152}\) This publication offered many suggestions to improve the post office’s delivering time and to decrease the price of postage. The reviewer hoped that the East India Company would adopt the reforms. In addition to internal communication routes and postage routes, *The Economist* reviewed publications concerning external communication lines. In a pamphlet published by Hope and Co. the author explained that if Egypt continued to be threatened by France and Turkey, England could lose a valuable communication and trade route to India. As England was the “arbitress of the fate of these Eastern nations,” she had a duty to end the dispute, while of course protecting her own trade interests.\(^{153}\)

With reviews of these publications concerning maps, railways, or communication routes, the British public was inundated with the information necessary to expand, as well as the notion of England’s duty to expand. *The Economist* focused on how British agricultural systems, religion and customs could be of benefit to Indians, which justified their presence and expansion. The review of the previously mentioned 1851 pamphlet *The Present Crisis in Egypt, in Relation to Our Overland Communication with India*, explicitly told readers that England controlled the

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151 “An Old Indian Postmaster,” *Indian Railways and their Probable Results, with Maps and an appendix, The Economist*, February 26, 1848, page 238.
fate of countries such as Egypt and Turkey. Also, when discussing the agents of free trade such as railways, *The Economist* reviewer noted that the British railway should spread civilization: “civilization” defined as British language, religion, customs and trade.

*Better Government and “Superior” Rulers: Arguments for Retention of Imperial Possessions, Especially seen during the Rebellion of 1857*

Prior to the Rebellion of 1857, historical publications discussed the superiority of British rulers in India. Unlike travel literature which argued British superiority in terms of culture, historical publications dealt specifically with superiority of ruling strategies and government organization. These publications reviewed in *The Economist* promoted the imperial theme of “better” government, justifying increased British interference in Indian affairs. The Rebellion of 1857 sparked intense discussion on the retention of India as a British imperial possession. Political documents, books, and pamphlets promoted this theme of retention by arguing that India would benefit from continued British rule.

To allay any concerns about imposing British rule and civilization on Indian peoples, *The Economist* included many reviews discussing Indians as a historically conquered race. The ancient Indian civilization, once “progressing nicely,” stalled in its progress and consequently opened itself to outside rule. Historical publications most often mentioned this imperial theme and most reviews portrayed the ancient Indians as a very “civilized,” yet weak race. The author of *India in Greece* attempted to prove that the ancient Greeks had actually been an expelled tribe of the Indian race. As a result of religious persecution, the tribe of future Greeks had left India and “rolled onwards towards its destined channel in Europe and Asia, to fulfil its beneficent office in the moral fertilization of the world.” The reviewer did not completely accept the notion of an Indian civilization greater than even the ancient Greeks but focused, instead, on the author’s view that the character of the Indian race allowed it to be conquered. Militarily superior outsiders conquered the ancient Indians and halted their advance to greater civilization.

The reviewer of an 1851 book, *Ancient and Modern India* confirmed this notion of India, “The civilization which had advanced so far by its own inherent powers, was then stopped or diverted or modified by foreign elements and was never afterwards freely developed.” Thus, the British need have no qualms about being the superior power meant to rule over India. As in

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publications concerning conquest in Australia, this review offered justification for British rule by reference to a hierarchy of racial groups. The reviewer noted that “civilisation is a moral progress connected with the physical increase of the species.”\textsuperscript{156} A people’s placement in the hierarchy of racial groups was determined by conditions of race, soil, climate and character of the species, what the author termed the physical increase. The author argued that in these aspects the British had experienced by far the largest physical increase of any race; therefore the superiority of the British species justified their rule over the halted civilization of the Indians.

Not only had the Indian civilization ceased progressing in ancient times, but some reviews argued that it had declined and therefore Indian peoples were significantly inferior to the British, inviting foreign domination. \textit{The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings} detailed the life of Marquess of Hastings after his 1813 appointment as India’s Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. Published forty years after his last entry in 1818, the publication included Hastings’ first impression of the Indian peoples. Hastings disagreed with the notion that the Indian peoples he met were descendants of an ancient and civilized Indian nation. While he did not rule out that such a civilization had once existed, Hastings stated his opinion that an advanced civilization could not have declined to such a degree.

The Hindoo appears a being nearly limited to mere animal functions, and even in them indifferent. Their proficiency and skill in the several lines of occupation to which they are restricted, are little more than the dexterity which any animal with similar conformation, but with no higher intellect that an dog, an elephant, or a monkey, might be supposed capable of attaining….Retrogradation from an improved condition of society never takes this course.\textsuperscript{157}

Other reviews, also, included comparisons to animals or simply listed Indian peoples’ inferior characteristics. Indian peoples had a “flexible, parasitic, and timid character.”\textsuperscript{158} The reviewer of \textit{The History of British India from 1805-1835} mentioned the many examples from the publication that demonstrated the murderous tendencies of Indian peoples. Like animals, Indians did not value life and British observers frequently saw “examples of brother seeking to murder

\textsuperscript{156} Taylor, 1104.
\textsuperscript{157} Marquess of Hastings, \textit{The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings}, \textit{The Economist}, August 7, 1858, page 873.
\textsuperscript{158} William Edwards, \textit{Personal Adventures during the India Rebellion in Rohilcund, Fattoghur, and Oude}, \textit{The Economist}, August 7, 1858, page 874.
brother, and fathers to murder their children.”¹⁵⁹ British political, economic and cultural interference became necessary to raise Indians out of their state of inferiority.

Due to their historical superiority, as reflected in *The Economist’s* reviews, the British felt they had a duty to expand their influence in India. The reviewer of *History of British India* described how the author, Charles Macfarlane, details the military achievements of Britain mostly in the fifty years prior to the 1851 publication. However, the reviewer admonished this author because he took “no notice of commerce, none of the ameliorations introduced by the British Government,…nor of the growth of the prosperity of India” therefore the work is “excessively limited, meager, and unsatisfactory.”¹⁶⁰ Even a negative review extolled British superiority as, according to *The Economist*, Macfarlane’s publication was not worth reading because the “best part of the history of British India, the improvement of the country under our rule, is wholly omitted.”¹⁶¹ The reviewers wished to underline their belief that British rule improved the condition of India. The review of Hastings’ journal noted that in the early nineteenth century, Hastings “found war...(and)...left peace.” Hastings improved the finances, “enlarged and secured” Company territory and established a stable relationship between the Indian peoples and the British.¹⁶² Wilson’s *The History of British India* argued that the previous conquerors of India had furthered the people’s inferiority by creating an unstable political condition which led to social evils and murderous characters. Until the British introduced their rule, the conquerors of India never worked for the benefit of the Indian peoples. “The English rule the country with some view to the good of the people; they look on it as a permanent possession,” therefore according to Wilson and the reviewer the British could mend the divisions of the past and improve India.¹⁶³

*The Economist* took this duty to improve India seriously, as did some authors who criticized British actions which improperly spread “civilization.” In a second volume of *The History of British India, from 1803-1835*, Horace Hayman Wilson noted the contradiction in spreading British values and pushing the production of opium on Indian farmers. The reviewer agreed that Britain was responsible for the government as well as the moral improvement of the

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¹⁶¹ Macfarlane, 1352.
¹⁶² Hastings, 873.
¹⁶³ Wilson, 363.
Indian people. Even as Wilson chastised Britain’s merchants for protecting opium monopolies, he unquestionably stated that Britain should control the Indian government and its people. Wilson listed British positive achievements in India, “perpetuation of internal tranquility, …exemption from the fatal consequences of native misrule,… (and) the assured security of person and of property.” The achievements, according to Wilson, were based on “a sense of duty, not from identity of interest or reciprocity of feeling.” Subsequent authors reviewed by The Economist would note that expansion even from a sense of duty could lead to challenges for imperial control, however “inferior” the subjugated peoples.

This challenge came in 1857 with the mutinies in the Bengal army, which quickly spread to rural areas. Reviews prior to the rebellions had warned against such an occurrence, for example the review of the 1851 Military Memoirs. The number of British men participating in military engagements in India taught Indians the European method of fighting. The reviewer cautioned readers about this military schooling, “We have taught the native the military arts by which we have subdued them, and they may at some time turn them against ourselves.” The reviewer recognized the danger of multiple Indian armies with European training and discipline and some even with mixed race leaders. If these Indians felt too much discontent, the British might face a significant challenge to their rule. After the mutinies most reviews continued to attribute the mutinies to general discontent but others specifically targeted British faults. In 1858 the author of British India, Its Race and Its History, with reference to the Mutiny of 1857 stated “that it is our own conduct as Englishmen, which has been the main cause of the hatred towards us.” Other reviews referred to this English conduct as strict rule and a superior attitude. In My Diary in India the author W.H. Russell attributed the British superior attitude to the English women in India. The author and reviewer argued that British women were less tolerant of Indian customs especially of their religion and the caste system. They believed that British women “tended to foster the tone of haughtiness and indifference now assumed toward the natives,” resulting in Indian discontent. Russell also argued that missionaries forced Christianity onto the

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164 Horace Hayman Wilson, The History of British India, from 1803-1835, The Economist, December 9, 1848, page 1395.
165 Wilson, 1395.
Indians which went against British duty as rulers to “treat their (Indian’s) creed with respect.”\textsuperscript{168} The Economist’s reviews also mentioned that British administration provided no employment for native administrators who better understood the needs of their people.

While debates ensued on the causes of the rebellion, The Economist never questioned British rule over India, but instead offered multiple suggestions as to how best to strengthen and improve it. Increased Indian participation in government was only one of the many reforms The Economist reviews advocated for repairing British control in India. Reviews of two pamphlets in 1858 argued that the entire administrative government of India should be reorganized. The existing Court of Directors should be replaced with a Council of India, including a president, vice president, and twelve or eighteen members.\textsuperscript{169} These pamphlets argued that more Indians should serve in lower administrative positions. However, other reviews cautioned the influx of too many Indian administrators. The English in India written by Captain Evan Bell declared the “natives” unprepared to accept high offices. The reviewer agreed with the need to wait for an increased “enlightened and high toned public opinion” in India which could be achieved by “extended intercourse with Europeans.”\textsuperscript{170}

Harriet Martineau, in Suggestions towards the Future Government of India argued that this intercourse between Europeans and Indians should include education. Martineau advocated education of both the British and Indian public. Education for British officials would rid them of “incompetence...and the insurmountable barriers which shut us out from a full understand of the native population.”\textsuperscript{171} Better informed of the population’s needs, the British administration could work to satisfy those needs. Education of Indians would “raise them to a state of intelligence and sympathy” with the British that would allow the Indians to appreciate British rule. The reviewer of Martineau’s work again justified British rule in India by the superiority of the British and their “intrinsic governing power.”\textsuperscript{172}

Whether arguing for governmental or educational reform the possibility that the Indian people should govern themselves was always dismissed as a viable option. The view that India needed an outside ruler remained a constant during the mid-nineteenth century. Most Economist

\textsuperscript{169} R.J.R. Campbell, India: Its Government, Misgovernment, and Future, considered in an Address to the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, The Economist, March 6, 1858, page 258.
\textsuperscript{170} Captain Evan Bell, The English in India, The Economist, August 20, 1859, page 928.
\textsuperscript{171} Harriet Martineau, Suggestions towards the Future Government of India, The Economist, March 20, 1858, page 314.
\textsuperscript{172} Martineau, 314.
reviews not only dismissed the idea of Indian self-rule but advocated an increase of British authority concentrated in one person to assure efficient and total authority. In 1852, George Campbell wrote *Modern India* to aid the committee deciding on the East India Company’s charter renewal. The reviewer agreed with Campbell that “Our Government in India must be despotic while it observes the usages of the people, for the head Governments of India have always been despotic.”\(^\text{173}\) After the Rebellion, Britain did not question its right to rule over India. The very title given to the rebellion, the “Indian Mutiny,” demonstrates that in Britain’s opinion it was a “mutiny” and not a “rebellion” against British rule. A mutiny allowed the British to ascribe and contain the uprising to a certain group, for example Charles Raikes stated in *Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Province of India*, “I attribute the origin of our existing disturbance in India to a mutiny in the Bengal army and to that alone.”\(^\text{174}\) Raikes argued that the “Hindoos,” the great majority of India’s population, were on the side of the British government. The reviewer emphasized Raikes observations that even though the Hindoos were raised to hate the British and on most counts did, they still supported the British because they “appreciate his (Britain’s) stern love of justice.”\(^\text{175}\) Raikes suggested for the future to preserve the Indian aristocracy, institute reforms for the masses and most importantly give one British administrator in each region complete control over “matters of police, revenue, civil justice and diplomacy.”\(^\text{176}\) Therefore, not only was Indian self-rule dismissed but *The Economist* promoted concentrated British authority.

The rejection of Indian self-rule did not necessitate the complete exclusion of Indians from governmental rule. As previously mentioned, some observers approved of increased Indian involvement in the local government. Others also approved of Indian princes retaining most of their power. The reviewer of *Notes of the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India* argued that British rule in India depended on the “preservation of the native aristocracy.”\(^\text{177}\) The usefulness of the Indian princes was demonstrated by the fewer number of mutinies within their regions. However, these Indian princes should not be given full control over their people, this would lead to “oppression and misrule” of the masses. Raikes and the reviewer agreed that one


\(^{175}\) Raikes, 902.

\(^{176}\) Raikes, 902.

\(^{177}\) Raikes, 901.
European administrator should oversee regions in India, even the regions that Indian princes nominally controlled. The reviewer noted that this centrality of authority within the government was called the “Oriental system.” Regions such as “Scinde, Burmah, Assam, and Arracan” adapted to the Oriental system well, as opposed to the European method of government which included many offices and the division of responsibility. The division of authority “suits the European genius” yet “if we (Britain) would really pacify and govern the people” India needed to be ruled by a more centralized British government, which oversaw all Indian administrators. 178

The Economist promoted an expansionist agenda, or at the very least defended the annexation of territory, following the Rebellion for defense of British interests and the “good” of the Indian people. Reviewing several pamphlets together, The Economist discussed expansion of influence in response to a foreign threat. “To intervene in order to secure the principle of non-intervention, though a paradox in terms, does not involve any inconsistency in conduct.” 179 The Economist recognized that imperial expansion appeared to be the opposite of its goals of laissez-faire and free trade, yet argued that expansion benefited British and Indian peoples by allowing greater achievement of these goals in the future. Though speaking of a European threat to areas of British influence, The Economist applied this theory of expansion to regions in India threatened by warring Indian tribes or even their own princes. The reviewer of Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown Towards India disagreed with the anti-expansionist author, John Malcolm Ludlow, that Indian rulers can be trusted to avoid being “indifferent to their duties, steeped in indolence..., ignorant of business...leaving their subjects to be plundered.” 180 Instead, the reviewer argued for increased British institutions and government. The reviewer defended Lord Dalhousie’s new annexation of previously independent states justified by the Indian rulers’ lapses in following treaty stipulations. The example of Oude, an area of uprising during the Rebellion, demonstrated The Economist’s approval of Lord Dalhousie’s annexation at the request of the Indian Council and the Home Government. The reviewer not only wanted his reader’s to know that Lord Dalhousie annexed the region by official orders but praised Lord Dalhousie for

178 Raikes, 901.  
bringing British rule to “that unhappy country” before allowing the King of Oude to cause his country more harm.\textsuperscript{181}

In a second response to Ludlow’s publication, \textit{The Economist} further disagreed with Ludlow’s criticism and also upheld addition territorial annexations. \textit{The Economist} reviewer defended the annexation of territory from the Nizam of Hydrabad which Lord Dalhousie completed shortly before the Rebellion. While Ludlow declared that the British government “unjustly” took territory, the reviewer explained that this accusation was unfounded. Using evidence from the “Blue-book” the reviewer stated that the Nizam owed the British government 660,000\(l\) for maintaining an army which protected the Nizam’s territory. After only paying half the borrowed money, the reviewer argued that the Nizam had forfeited his territory. The British therefore “justly” assumed control in order to earn back this money in tax revenue. The reviewer approved of this extension of British rule, arguing that many Indians “gained enormously from a settlement which restored to them the lands of which they had been deprived by the talookdars.”\textsuperscript{182}

\textit{After the Rebellion: Consistent Promotion of Expansion in The Economist}

In the midst of the crisis of the Rebellion and subsequent debates over governmental reform and annexation, \textit{The Economist} continued its reviews of publications dealing with Indian trade, railways and expansion. One 1857 review announced that the military re-conquest of India would only take a matter of months.\textsuperscript{183} Therefore, the process of civilizing India need not be delayed. In \textit{Commerce in India}, B.C. Irving argues that most of India’s resources lay untouched due to the insufficient number of roads and railways. While Irving called on the government, \textit{The Economist} reviewer called on private companies to increase transportation routes. \textit{The Economist} especially noted the need for Indian cotton to compete with that from the Southern United States.\textsuperscript{184} An 1857 article noted the railways’ potential commercial and social impact. Through railways, \textit{The Economist} stated: “We cannot doubt that the arbitrary and onerous character of their religious customs, and the superstitious timidity of their general character, will be eventually and deeply influenced by the introduction of the new European

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\textsuperscript{181} Ludlow, 509.
\textsuperscript{183} Stocqueler, \textit{The Economist}, September 19, 1857, page 1040.
\textsuperscript{184} B.C. Irving, \textit{Commerce in India}, \textit{The Economist}, March 13, 1858, pages 285-286.
\end{flushleft}
Railways would benefit British commerce and allow European rationale and faith in the sciences to reach the uneducated “Hindoos.” “In proportion as railway traveling extends to all classes of the Hindoos, there will begin a fermentation of moral and intellectual thought, which must introduce a new era into their strangely petrified civilisation.” The Rebellion only seemed to have intensified the desire to spread British government, enlightenment and commerce to India.

After the Rebellion, The Economist promoted this spread of enlightenment by continuing to encourage the spread of Christianity in India. Religion should spread cautiously, according to many reviews because discontent grew when the British pushed Christianity on the Indians. One debate mentioned in the reviews questioned whether or not the Bible should be used in Indian public schools. The author of A Few Words on the Question of Teaching the Bible in Government Schools in India argued that the Bible should not be a required book in public schools. The reviewer agreed that the “greater cautions against conversion” (original italics) the more students that voluntarily seek out information about Christianity. Learning from the lessons of the Rebellion, the author noted that any action taken by the Government to promote Christianity would be counterproductive. Therefore, the author focused on the press as the best vehicle of conversion. John William Kay, the author of Christianity in India adamantly encouraged the spread of Christianity, but again through subtle means. “There is nether fear nor hatred of Christianity so long as there is no appearance of “authority.”” As long as the government remained invisible in spreading Christianity, leaving it to missionaries and the press, many authors believed its extension would be successful.

Initially, India appeared to the British as a region teaming with available resources: cotton, indigo, spices. The British then utilized the region as a testing ground for young soldiers; for these and other young men to prove their masculinity in military and sports. The evidence that the British approved of expansion in these areas appeared in publications on railways, trade and postage routes, detailed maps of previously unknown territories and soldiers’ and adventurers’ memoirs. The Economist defended territorial expansion before and after the

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186 “The Indian Railways,” 1289.
187 Hodgson Pratt, A Few Words on the Question of Teaching the Bible in Government Schools in India, The Economist, September 10, 1859, page 1014.
Rebellion and encouraged more centralized governmental control in India. To justify the expansion of British government, trade and institutions, *The Economist* focused on Indian inferiority and British superiority. Readers of this newspaper were continuously informed that Britain had a duty to raise the unenlightened Indians by the expansion of British presence.

The desire to expand was succinctly recorded in *The Economist* in a review of Richard Cobden’s *How Wars are got up in India*. There Cobden explained:

Public opinion in this country has not hitherto been opposed to an extension of our dominion in the East. On the contrary, it is believed to be profitable to the nation, and all classes are ready to hail with approbation every fresh acquisition of territory, and to reward those who bring us home title-deeds, no matter, I fear, how obtained, to new Colonial possession. So long as they are believed to be profitable, this spirit will prevail.¹⁸⁹

Cobden wrote this in 1853 as a commentary on the Second Burmese War land acquisitions. Although Cobden was an avid anti-imperialist, his comments demonstrate that even contemporary observers recognized the general desire to expand. The approval and promotion of expansion existed throughout the 1840s and 1850s, remaining constant until the technology and new opportunities of the 1880s allowed for “new imperialism” to occur. Victorian media, exemplified here by *The Economist*, promoted the benefits of expansion and retention: civilizing the unenlightened, increasing British trading interests, providing better government to Indians. Underlying Britain’s desire to expand was the notion that superior British characteristics gave its citizens the unquestionable right to rule over and decide the fate of millions of other people.

Early Imperial Interests in Africa and Future Studies of the British Empire

The strongest argument offered by most modern historians to explain the divergent nature of old and new imperialism involves the Scramble for Africa; Britain’s acquisition of formal territory on the African continent. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, Britain did add more African territory to its empire than during the previous three centuries. However, the British interest in Africa did not suddenly appear in the late nineteenth century. The ideological background for the interest in African expansion was set by the 1850s, and therefore the delineation between old and new imperialism is not so clear-cut. Imperial themes of better government and British superiority were present in mid-nineteenth century media that dealt with Africa. The Economist reviews demonstrate that long before historians cite the beginning of New Imperialism, British interest in the end of the slave trade, improvement of government and exploration promoted the imperial expansion and later occupation of Africa.

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The British abolished the slave trade to their colonies in 1807 and within another thirty years emancipated all slaves throughout their colonies. Abolitionist and missionary societies felt they had achieved much for the moral improvement of the British as well as their formal slaves. However, The Economist’s reviews in the 1840s demonstrate the frustration that Britain’s law could not be enacted worldwide. The Memoirs of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton published in 1848 examined Buxton’s plan for the gradual world-wide abolition of slavery. Slavery was an ancient institution which could not immediately disappear from the earth, according to Buxton. The reviewer agreed that just because Britain, the superior European power, recognized the horrors of slavery did not mean that the other nations of the world could so quickly understand the benefits of abolition. Through Britain’s struggle to end the slave trade by their naval power, Buxton argued that Britain aided slaves, “and not merely the Negroes in our own colonies, but the whole Negro race.”¹⁹⁰ Other authors agreed that the end of slavery would benefit all black peoples, yet voiced their frustration in ending the institution in other nation’s colonies. The reviewer of Free Trade in Negroes contradicted the author’s proclamation that Britain should use military force to end slavery in the United States and Brazil. The Economist advocated economic and political

pressure on the slave-owning countries of Europe and the Americas but resisted arguments that included British naval or military intervention, no matter how frustrated the abolitionists might be.

While *The Economist* discouraged any military action against European and American nations, the reviews noted the necessity of force in dealing with African leaders. In *Remarks on the Slave Trade and African Squadron*, Henry James Matson discussed what he viewed as the loss of British prestige in Africa by the 1850s. By failing to end the slave trade, African chiefs viewed the British with less awe than when the British first arrived. Matson felt Britain needed to regain the African chief’s and peoples’ respect by demonstrating their military power. Using force to end the traffic in human life throughout the continent would demonstrate British military superiority. The fight against slave traders therefore was “one of those wars which are always carrying on, under various disguise, for empire.”

*The Economist* realized that the fight over the slave trade within Africa was actually an imperial struggle. The nation or group who gained influence over and earned or forced respect from the African peoples would create their empire on the continent.

Another avenue of creating empires in the African continent involved the discussion of improved government in various regions: Egypt, Algeria, and South Africa. *The Economist’s* reviews declared that British involvement in African government could improve how the African peoples were ruled. The encouragement of British governmental involvement became an aid to imperial expansion when this involvement led to permanent and complete British control. In *A Pilgrimage to the Temples and Tombs of Egypt, Nubia, and Palestine, in 1845-46*, the author Mrs. Romer commented on Egypt’s “arbitrary government and despotic ruler.” Romer declared the Egyptian people to be in a desolate state which the “old Pasha” exacerbated by refusing to institute new technologies. The reviewer especially noted Mohammed Ali’s resistance to the construction of a large railway and encouraged the British government to persuade Egypt’s ruler otherwise. Another review declared the pasha capable yet in need of assistance from the British. Modernization in British terms “is the true way to secure to Egypt the natural monopoly of the road, and enrich her by the stream of travelers and commerce: she

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193 Romer, 1094.
may then again be made the emporium of the east.” The Economist reviews declared that Egypt could prosper if only its government listened to the rational advice of Britain.

The Economist also commented on the Algerian government’s inability to prosper under control of the French and suggested that Algeria would benefit under British influence. In *Four Months in Algeria, with a Visit to Carthage*, Rev. Joseph William Blakesley declared “France has hitherto shewn herself altogether unsuccessful as a rearer of colonies.” French-established cities in Algeria were small, land was sold to German and Spanish immigrants, and the French treated their Arab colonists with disrespect. Rev. Blakesley stated that France failed to build up Algeria’s economy and that France would find it hard to earn back the 60,000,000£ sterling it took to conquer the region. George Wingrove Cooke suggested in *Conquest and Colonisation in North Africa* that with British instruction certain industries in Algeria could produce profits. With British advice “the wool of the immense flocks of sheep pastured by the Arabians might be turned to good account.” However, under French rule Algeria’s economy and government would remain a failure.

The British criticized Egyptian and European governments in Africa and implied British intervention but The Economist’s reviews dealing with South Africa blatantly demonstrated the British willingness to intervene in order to establish “good” government. After the Cape Colony became a British colony in 1804, the British felt their government greatly benefited the area. The previous settlers, the Dutch, had done little to improve the land or trade in South Africa. The Boer government also dealt unfairly with the various African peoples according to The Economist; forcing them into semi-slavery within the economic conditions.

Not only was the British government an improvement over European colonizer governments, but The Economist argued it was superior to the African ruling systems. The belief that British rule improved governance of Africans previously governed by their own chiefs justified the increasing British interference with indigenous South Africans in the 1840s and 1850s, especially the Kaffirs. The author of *A Narrative of the Kaffir War of 1850-51* detailed the political and economic situation of British Kaffraria. The region “was not wrested from the

196 Blakesley, 144.
Kaffirs *in toto*, but they were suffered to retain certain divisions apportioned out to each tribe by Government Proclamation, under their own laws, modified in some degree by British rule.”

This blend of Kaffir and British government greatly improved the economic situation as “depredations diminished” and the political situation improved as the British government dealt “out equity and justice to every man alike, and by preventing the chiefs from “eating up” or despoiling their serfs.”

The uprising of the Kaffirs then came as a shock to the British who felt their benevolent governance was a great improvement for the African peoples. After the British quelled the Kaffir War of 1850-51, *The Economist* included many publications dealing with the continuing governance of the Kaffirs. Never questioning their right to rule over these peoples, the British debated how best to strengthen their governance in pamphlets such as *Brief Notice of the Causes of the Kaffir War*. The author, Sir A Stockenstrom, argued that the future policy of the British should be not to exact vengeance but to strengthen British power by:

- showing your moral superiority by strict truth and justice, in giving them a taste for Christianity, by proving the virtue of your faith in your practice, and making them virtually levers in your hands by which you will move their tribes at your pleasure, while you leave them ostensible all powerful, until in process of time you may find them dwindling into your magistrates through the conviction of the whole community that a Christian is a better man than a heathen, …and that British laws, when faithfully administered, are better than Kaffir laws.

The Kaffir War and its governmental consequences provide only one example of British desire to expand its influence in the form of “good” government to African peoples.

In publications dealing with exploration for trading purposes it becomes apparent that *The Economist* felt British influence would improve many aspects of African life in virtually every region in Africa. In South Africa, where a strong British presence existed, *The Economist* focused on the spread of British government, but in regions such as West and Central Africa, where the British had a tentative hold, *The Economist* emphasized the benefits of British trade. The reviewer of *The Narrative of an explorer in Tropical South Africa* declared in 1853 “If the

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199 Godlonton, 1103.
whole of Africa be not explored, it is not for want of enterprising travellers.”

These enterprising travelers recorded the African climate, peoples, rulers, customs, but most interesting to The Economist, the African potential for trade. The Economist reviewer observed from Brodie Cruikshank’s book *Eighteenth Years on the Gold Coast of Africa* that “The Africans are obviously susceptible of progress” and reminded the reader that trade is one aspect of “progress” in the British definition. The search for new markets was also an imperial mission as increased trade benefited the prosperity of Britain. The Economist promoted expansion in West and Central Africa because Africans had “a capacity for improvement and civilisation among them, which, if realised, will enormously enhance the value of our discoveries and acquisitions in this region.”

Some historians argue that British attention only focused on explorers in Africa during the period of David Livingstone’s travels. However, hardly an anomaly, David Livingstone only popularized the figure of the African missionary/explorer in Africa. Interest was strong in exploring Africa even before Dr. Livingstone’s publications detailed his travels. Livingstone’s 1857 *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* only heightened the established interest in British commerce in Africa. Even in the early 1850s, The Economist reviewed multiple publications from travelers and missionaries dealing with African trade. The review of *Travels of an Arab Merchant in Soudan* detailed the Darfur peoples’ “instruments of exchange” and methods of commerce. William Balfour Baikie wrote *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the River Binue in 1854* to discuss the “promotion of commerce and of civilization in Central Africa.” The Economist noted that just as with other publications on explorers in Africa, its readers should take advice from Livingstone’s work to gain information on how to “raise the inhabitants from their present abject condition, and open up a new field of enterprise to European industry.” Therefore, the discussion over British “free trade,” and the interest in explorers, promoted imperial expansion into the remote regions of Africa.

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Interest in British imperial expansion into Africa did not suddenly appear in the 1880s or even with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Instead, British promotion of imperial goals in Africa began as early as the 1840s with discussions of ending the slave trade, better government and increasing free trade. Reviews within *The Economist* demonstrate an avid interest to increase British presence, governance and trade in Africa throughout the 1840s and 1850s. As most historians of New Imperialism target the desire to expand into Africa as the beginning of New Imperialism, the traditional late nineteenth century date should be reconsidered.

*Concluding Remarks on British Imperial Studies*

Throughout this thesis many examples have been provided to demonstrate that British interest in imperial expansion did not suddenly occur in the late nineteenth century. The separation of Old and New Imperialism should not be considered as definitive as many historians state, because they use for evidence the supposed lull in imperial interest of the mid-Victorian period. This thesis disputes the view of “disinterest in empire” during the 1840s and 1850s and argues that the ideological support for expansion was present long before the major territorial acquisitions of the 1880s. The sources used for providing evidence, such as newspapers, reviews, and travel literature, will hopefully be utilized by other historians to gain further insights into imperial interest during the mid-nineteenth century.

By using *The Economist*, its reviews and passages from travel literature, this thesis seeks to encourage historians of the British Empire to study these sources traditionally used by journalist historians and literary critics. The techniques and methods of literary criticism also can be utilized to study non-fiction writings for attitudes of the nineteenth century. An expansion of this thesis could significantly help the understanding of imperial interest in the Victorian period. Articles and reviews in *The Times, The Spectator, The Manchester Review, The Calcutta Review, The Colonist* and more could be examined to approximate the level of interest in the Empire.

Historians argue that many factors influenced New Imperialism, including technology, nationalism, imperial interest, Darwinism and political fragmentation. It is not this thesis’ goal to discount the unique circumstances of the late nineteenth century, however many ideological factors only strengthened in this time period; they did not suddenly appear. Racial

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207 Smith, 72-94.
attitudes based on Social Darwinism did not create a new hardened attitude toward people outside the British “race.” Science historian Richard Drayton states that “Those who seek to explain racism in the Second British Empire, as if it was merely a Victorian phenomenon, strangely seem to forget that it was the foundation of the First.” 208 Drayton argues that racism in one form or another had always affected imperialism. Historian Sudipta Sen provides examples of early nationalism in relation to British imperialism. Even in the early nineteenth century, Sen argues that commerce mixed with nationalistic pride “sustained interest in India.” 209 Nationalism based on a unique identity did not only affect imperialistic motives at the end of the century. The imperial themes mentioned throughout this thesis demonstrate that British media emphasized superiority based on British culture and customs which promoted imperial expansion. As The Economist mentioned the superior knowledge, government and trade of the British, it aided in setting the foundations for the racism and nationalism at the end of the century.

This continuity in ideological factors not only shows that the foundations of New Imperialism were set earlier than the 1880s but also displays a large interest in imperial expansion during the 1840s and 1850s. The Economist offers numerous examples of the desire to expand and retain the Empire. Britain did not want to separate with its white settler colonies and utilized various means to keep them within British dominance, shown by discussion on Irish self-government. There was also a desire to increase the size and prosperity of white settler colonies demonstrated by reviews of publications dealing with Australia. The number of advice books and travel guides to Australia illustrated the interest in promoting immigration, especially after the gold rush of 1851. Expansion of the British Empire was approved by The Economist’s readers due to its beneficial impact on colonized peoples. India therefore received the benefits of superior British knowledge, government, trade and religion. Also, the British desired to expand into Africa to provide its “superior” benefits to the “Dark Continent.” Even in this supposed period of disinterest in the Empire, explorers fought the hardships of diseases, fierce animals and hostile peoples to discover the best way to expand the British Empire in Africa. While the 1880s saw the dramatic increase in territorial expansion, the heart, attitude and desire for expansion

208 Drayton, 225.
209 Sen, 7-8.
existed in the British public through media, such as *The Economist*, much earlier in the nineteenth century.
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