

Expanding Circles of Citizenship

To make graphic the impression I wished to leave, I recalled how, when very young, some of us had found pleasure in throwing pebbles into a pond, and how fascinating it was to watch the ripples of water radiating in ever expanding circles to the pond's circumference. In this way I sought to bring home the opportunities of citizenship in terms of service to the public. I pointed out the opportunity for service, first of all to the local municipality, the town or the city, and to the county in which one lived; then, thinking of expanding areas, to one's province; and then to Canada as a whole. I sought as well to bring home the truth that, as the circumference of the circle of opportunity expands for the citizen, so do his duties and his responsibilities. It is the interest taken by individuals in the expanding circles of citizenship that holds human society together.

In the address I made at that time, I went a step further. I pointed out that citizenship in Canada was not confined to the bounds of the Dominion, extensive as they are. I said that we enjoyed a larger citizenship still, namely, our citizenship within the British Commonwealth of Nations.