

the West coast, Britain was the sole occupant of North America. Her subjects—French, English and Dutch—were imbued with that spirit of enterprise characteristic of the adventurer and the pioneer in overcoming the difficulties of early settlement amidst the terrors of wild beasts and wilder aborigines; they had acquired a spirit of self-reliance and independence peculiar to themselves. Proud of the land from which they sprang, they transferred its institutions to their new home, adapting them to the changed conditions of their more primitive ways of life. Little did they think that they should be forced to forego their allegiance to the King, in order to preserve these institutions from destruction.

But a change was at hand. The expenditure of the Mother Country in the great Continental Wars of the period, and in the establishment and defence of her colonial possessions, had become so oppressive that relief was sought in measure for the taxation of her colonies in North America. True, the colonies were not parties to these wars; they were not consulted as to their purpose or utility, but they shared in the glory which they brought to the nation, and so they should bear a reasonable share of the burdens which they involved. So, at least, argued the great jurist, Lord Mansfield; so thought the majority of the Lords and Commons of the day, in spite of the remonstrance of Burke and the eloquent appeal of Lord Chatham. But the colonies thought otherwise, and expressed their objections, by a significant disregard of customs' regulations, of the authority of British officers, and finally by a grand remonstrance, known as the Declaration of Rights, drawn up in Philadelphia in 1774, which was afterwards accentuated by the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July, 1776.

Now it is rather a strange circumstance in the history of this Continent that the Declaration of Rights, which laid the foundation of the American Republic, practically laid the foundation of the Dominion of Canada. If this statement is historically true, we can claim a share in the pride you feel in that memorable gathering out of which has sprung your great Republic, with its wonderful record of democracy and achievement. Let us examine the validity of this statement.

The call to the first Continental Congress in 1774 was responded to by all the North American colonies, excepting Georgia and Canada. I have not seen any good reason why Canada did not appear there. It might have been on account of the difficulties of transportation, or because the French-Can-