

Writing, as I am now doing, on this the Canadian Thanksgiving Day, we have evidence on every side of deep gratitude. While expressions of thankfulness ascend from many thousand pulpits to the Great Ruler of all, and while every Canadian home within half a continent is filled with the spirit of gratitude, we cannot fail to bear in our minds how much we are indebted to the Mother land. We do not forget her fostering care, her long continued vigilant protection; we are reminded of the vast expanse of territory with its potential wealth of forest, of fertile field, and fruitful mine, all placed in our keeping as a heritage for our children and for our children's children: nor can we overlook the free political institutions long since granted us,—the British system of government which constitutes the basis of our national life and which conduces so much to our marvelous prosperity. Is not this in itself a glorious heritage?

Parliamentary government is essentially British. Its history is a record of growth and development from the tribal meetings of the early occupants of the British islands. It has survived the baleful shadows of despotism which proved so fatal elsewhere. In the mother land, from the earliest dates to the present, the evolution of representative government has been more or less continuous; the outcome of centuries is known as the British system of government and is unique in the history of nations. That system is inherited by us, and it appears to be the one system which promises permanence.

A century and a half ago, by the authority of the King's ministers in London, an Assembly of representatives, elected by the people, met for the first time in Halifax, in Nova Scotia, on October 2nd, 1758. From that day until the present, the Provincial Assembly of Nova Scotia has annually met at Halifax. Historians are agreed that the date mentioned denotes the Empire's constitutional birth day; that Halifax may be regarded as the Empire's birth place; and that the part of the Dominion, known as Nova Scotia, has the proud distinction of being the cradle of the Great British Empire, as it exists in the world today.

In the retrospect presented, we are carried back to a time in history which preceeded the existence of the United States of America by eighteen years, to a period, when the