

vided for us, we may properly introduce the matter. I hope to be able to show that it is of some practical importance; and it seems to me especially appropriate that a matter of this kind, dealing as it does with history, should be discussed by this body, which contains a very considerable number of those who have at least a boyish recollection of the period to which it relates.

Less importance is usually attached to a sixtieth anniversary than to a fiftieth or a hundredth; but, after all, these divisions are merely arbitrary, and are adopted for purposes of convenience. In this case there is a special reason for a departure from custom. A celebration was planned for the fiftieth anniversary, but was interrupted by the Great War. We were then too much occupied by the anxieties of the present to be able to give much thought to the past. Now, unless we are to wait for the hundredth, which probably few of us will see, we have an opportunity to do in 1927 what we planned to do in 1917.

Is there any practical value in these celebrations? Well, experience seems to show that they satisfy some craving of human nature. No one regards as an idle ceremony the celebrations of Christmas, or Easter, or Thanksgiving Day. Our neighbours celebrate the anniversary of their independence with fireworks and oratory on a huge scale. We may think that they are too exuberant. Certainly we in Canada go to the opposite extreme. Dominion Day in Canada, though observed as a holiday, is hardly celebrated at all as a national anniversary. Eleven days afterwards, in Toronto, and I suppose in other Protestant communities, the anniversary of a battle in Ireland nearly 240 years ago is celebrated with an exuberance rivalling that of the fourth of July on the other side. On Dominion Day the maple leaf is hardly in evidence at all. But on St. Patrick's Day the shamrock is worn by many of us in whose veins there is no Irish blood, St. George's Day for the English, St. Andrew's Day for the Scottish, St. David's Day for the Welsh, all receive more attention at our hands than the anniversary of the birth of our own nation. I have no objection to these celebrations, so long as they perpetuate no ill-will or revive the memory of no ancient feuds. But I do feel that we ought to do a little more celebrating for ourselves, in a sensible way.

A visitor from the United States who spent some years in Toronto described us as an inarticulate people, and I have heard the same remark from an Englishman, a thinking man, who has made his home among us. "Does it

matter?" I may be asked. Well, does any celebration matter? Are Imperialists right or wrong in making provision for the celebration of Empire Day? My own notion is that the Imperialists are shrewd practical men and women, and that we might very well take a leaf out of their book. Do we need any such aid to patriotism? I agree that even without such aids much is being done. All good and useful work, on the farm or in the factory, or office, or pulpit, or school, is patriotic. We are all working for Canada as well as ourselves, and I think that it may be fairly said that Canadians, if inarticulate in speech, are articulate in deeds that redound to the benefit of their country. Yet I think there is need for a little more self-conscious patriotism.

We are a nation in the making, with a small population scattered over a vast area. We have in the east a population divided not very unequally between those of French and those of British descent. We have in the west, besides a large British element, large elements drawn from the continent of Europe, creating a problem which is described in the United States as the melting pot. I rather dislike the phrase as expressing too mechanical a process, but I recognize the necessity of blending these elements into a common Canadianism. We were once threatened with a racial cleavage between those of British and those of French descent. That danger, I believe, is now much less than in the past, and a great deal of progress has been made in establishing friendly relations. We are now threatened with a cleavage on economic and geographical lines. We heard much of discontent in the West, and more recently of discontent in the Maritime Provinces. We have even heard talk of secession, which I take as not expressing a serious purpose, but only an emphatic way of showing discontent. I am aware that for this there must be remedies more practical than celebrations. But much depends upon the atmosphere in which the question is discussed, and from that point of view we ought not to neglect the aid of any national and unifying sentiment, such as may be evoked by a worthy celebration of our natal day.

Have we anything to celebrate? Is there anything in our history calculated to awaken national pride? In my opinion there are few countries which can show a history richer in picturesque and romantic elements, or in political instruction. In the early period of French rule we have a great procession of heroes, soldiers, explorers, missionaries. Concerning this, I borrow the language of