

And here let me submit two other considerations bearing upon the relations of the French occupation of Canada to the history of North America. First, if the French had not taken possession of Canada when they did and colonized the valley of the St. Lawrence, Canada would no doubt, like other parts of North America, have been occupied by the British. Then would it not naturally follow that when the other British colonies revolted in 1776 that Canada as the fourteenth colony would have also joined them? By a similar process of reasoning, had not Canada become a British possession in 1759 is it not more than probable when Napoleon Bonaparte sold his French possessions in America to the United States in 1803 that Canada as part of these French possessions would also have been hargained away? Are these two circumstances contingent parts of that "divinity which shapes our ends," or merely an hypothesis incapable of proof? At all events the logic of the situation leads to but one conclusion.

Let us next consider the significance of the Plains of Abraham to America. Although it is generally assumed that the passing of the Stamp Act was the cause of the revolt of the thirteen colonies, a closer reading of history shows that the right of self-government conceded to them in their charters from the Crown was the secret spring of that spirit of independence which found expression at Philadelphia in 1774. The Stamp Act was but an excuse to assert their independence in the fullest sense, although they had in fact all the liberty up to that time which it was possible to obtain under any circumstance. But so long as France was in control of Canada to the north and west they felt that to attempt a separation would be to place themselves between two fires. On the Atlantic side British troops could be easily landed, to which resistance would be futile. To the north and west they would be subject to the attack of the French aided no doubt by the Canadians. But by the conquest of Canada the position was materially changed. They argued that now in the event of a revolution, France, instead of aiding Great Britain, would be disposed to revenge the loss of Canada and could be depended upon openly, or secretly at least, for assistance.

Mr. Francis Parkman in his introduction to the "Life of Montcalm and Wolfe" says: "More than one clear eye saw at the middle of the last century that the subjection of Canada would lead to a revolt of the British colonies. So long as an active and enterprising enemy threatened their borders they could not break with the mother country because they needed her help."