

XVI

THE MOTHER COUNTRY AND THE COLONIES QUARREL

My Lords, you have no right to tax America. The natural rights of man and the immutable laws of nature are all with that people.—*Lord Camden* in the English House of Lords (1775).

83. The Quarrel about Taxation.—It was a great day for England when Quebec was captured and the French power in America was broken. It was a great day also for the English colonies in America, for, with the French out of the way, the colonists could enjoy peace on the northern borders and could go ahead with their plans for opening up the country beyond the Alleghanies. After the French and Indian War, therefore, England and her colonies ought to have been closer together than they had ever been before; as a matter of fact, however, after that war they were further apart. The ink on the treaty of Paris (1763) was hardly dry before there arose between England and her colonies a bitter quarrel, and this quarrel led to a bitter war.

The quarrel arose over the matter of taxation. At the close of the French and Indian War the English government found itself very heavily in debt and hard pressed for money, and in casting about for means of raising money it naturally turned to the American colonies. These colonies, said the king and Parliament, are protected by England at a great expense, and they must help to pay for the cost of that protection; they must pay a share of the taxes. There was certainly nothing unfair in this; and if the English government had gone about raising the money in a way that seemed to the Americans to be fair, the taxes would probably have been paid. But it did not do this. In its efforts to collect the money the English government acted so unwisely that it seemed to the Americans to be acting unfairly and unjustly.

The first unwise thing the English government did was to