

and envoys were sent to Maryland to arrange the matter. The envoys were favorably received by the Maryland authorities, provisions and clothing were furnished them, and they were told that the Maryland Indians might freely depart if they wished, and that they would be paid for the lands they relinquished. The Nanticokes went, but the Choptanks remained, and being few in number, soon disappeared. Thus the last dealings which Maryland had with the aborigines in their tribal capacity, were as friendly and equitable as the first.

In 1768 the Assembly received the memorable circular letter from the House of Representatives of Massachusetts Bay, setting forth in impressive words the right of the colonists as British subjects, not to be taxed without their own consent given through their representatives; and as it was impossible that they could be represented in the British Parliament, the colonies had been granted elective legislatures of their own, in which they had "the inalienable right of representation." They therefore called upon the other colonies, through their legislatures, to join them in protesting against the imposition of taxes and duties on British goods in excess of those paid by their fellow-subjects in England.

Lord Hillsborough, representing the King in Council, sent to each Governor a letter denouncing the Massachusetts circular as factious and dangerous, and expressing the hope that the Assembly would treat it with the contempt which it deserved; but if that body showed any disposition to receive it favorably, enjoining the Governor to prorogue or dissolve it at once. Sharpe laid this letter before the Delegates with a message echoing Lord Hillsborough's words.

The Delegates replied with a spirited address, in which, after declaring their respect for the King, their firm attachment to the British constitution, and their regard for "the just and constitutional power" of Parliament, they declare that "we shall not be intimidated by a few sounding expressions from doing what we think is right." With reference to the Massachusetts circular they say:

"What we shall do upon this occasion, or whether in consequence of that letter we shall do anything, it is not our present business to communicate to your Excellency, but of this be pleased to be assured that we cannot be prevailed on to take no notice of, or to treat with the least degree of contempt a letter so expressive of duty and loyalty to the Sovereign, and so replete with just principles of liberty; and your Excellency may depend that whenever we apprehend the rights of the people to be affected, we shall not fail boldly to assert, and steadily endeavor to maintain and support them."