

Jefferson, before the commencement of hostilities. Even after that commencement Jefferson affirms that the possibility of separation was "contemplated with affliction by all." Mr. Jay marks more distinctly the period when the notion of separation began to be received: "Until after the second petition of Congress in 1775, I never did hear an American of any class, or of any description, express a wish for the independence of the colonies. . . . Our country was prompted and impelled to independence by necessity and not by choice."

A motion that the petition of Congress brought by Mr. Penn afforded grounds for conciliation was rejected by an overwhelming majority. In vain Shelburne and Grafton in the Lords,—in vain Burke, Fox, and Barré in the Commons,—supported propositions "for composing the present troubles in America." The government carried its measures with a high hand. Chatham was again incapable through sickness of taking part in the debates of this solemn period. Lord North's Prohibitory Bill, forbidding any commerce with the thirteen American Colonies, was carried, in all its severe enactments, without Chatham's voice being heard to reprove Mansfield for hounding on the people to the extremities of war. But Chatham emphatically manifested the consistency of his opinions. General Carleton, the commander in Canada, had sent home lord Pitt, Chatham's eldest son, with despatches; and in a letter to the father had expressed the most favourable opinion of his aide-de-camp. The countess of Chatham writes to general Carleton to convey the gratitude of her husband; who, from ill health, was unable fully to testify his sense of obligation: "Feeling all this, sir, as lord Chatham does, you will tell yourself with what concern he communicates to you a step that, from his fixed opinion with regard to the continuance of the unhappy war with our fellow-subjects of America, he has found it necessary to take. It is that of withdrawing his son from such a service."\*

General Carleton, in his letter to Chatham from Montreal, in September, says, of lord Pitt, "I would it had been in my power to send him with more agreeable news for the public." The Congress had sanctioned an invasion of Canada, under the command of general Montgomery. Benedict Arnold had received a detachment of a thousand men from Washington's army in Massachusetts; and Ethan Allen was ready for a repetition of some such dashing exploit as his capture of Ticonderoga. Allen was marching to attack Montreal when he fell in with the British troops; was made prisoner; and was sent to England. Arnold, having

\* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 420.

surmounted great difficulties in penetrating through a country of woods and rocks,—his men sometimes wading through rapid rivers, and sometimes carrying their boats over barren heights—appeared suddenly before Quebec. Arnold was repulsed by colonel Maclean, who came in time to save the capital of Canada. But Montgomery was approaching with a larger force. Carleton, with energetic resolution, set off from Montreal disguised as a fisherman; and, passing in a whale-boat through the American flotilla on the St. Lawrence, got into Quebec, and took the command. On the 31st of December the united forces of Montgomery and Arnold climbed the heights of Abraham, and attacked the city. They were met by a formidable resistance. Montgomery was killed, and Arnold severely wounded. But the Americans blockaded Quebec throughout the winter.

From July, 1775, to February, 1776, Washington had continued the blockade of Boston. He was tired of what he describes as the irksomeness of his situation. The frost had formed some pretty strong ice over the river Charles, and he contemplated an assault upon the town.\* He was over-ruled by a council of war. Meanwhile the British army, in camp round Boston, was suffering great privations and miseries. The small-pox had broken out among the troops. The want of fresh provisions and of fuel made sickness and cold more fatal. In March, Washington had taken possession of Dorchester Heights, and was about to secure other points, from which measures he hoped it would be in his power "to force the ministerial troops to an attack, or to dispose of them in some way that will be of advantage to us."† No attack was made by the British; and on the 19th of March, Washington wrote to the President of Congress, "It is with the greatest pleasure I inform you, that on Sunday last, the 17th instant, about nine o'clock in the forenoon, the ministerial army evacuated the town of Boston, and that the forces of the United Colonies are now in possession thereof." General Howe sailed for Halifax to wait for reinforcements. Washington and his army marched for New York; against which city he felt assured that the British arms would be next directed. The Congress ordered a gold medal to be struck to commemorate the evacuation of Boston.

On the 20th of February, 1776, lord North presented copies of treaties between Great Britain and the duke of Brunswick, the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and the count of Hanau, for the hire of troops. The prime minister said, "that the force which this measure would enable us to send to America would be such: s in

\* "Despatch to Congress," February 18.

† *Ibid.*, February 26.

all human probability, must compel that country to agree to terms of submission, perhaps without any further effusion of blood." The petty German princes made a hard bargain with the British government. Mr. Hartley, the friend of Franklin, said with a clear prospect of the future, "When foreign powers are once introduced in this dispute, all possibility of reconciliation and return to our former connection is totally cut off. You have given a justification to the Americans by your example, if they call in the assistance of foreign powers." The measure was supported by a majority of a hundred and fifty-four. On the 3rd of March, Silas Deane was dispatched by the Congress to Paris, with instructions to inform the French minister for foreign affairs, that in the event of the probable separation from Great Britain, France would be regarded as the power whose friendship it would be fittest for the United Provinces of America to obtain and cultivate.

At the beginning of 1776, the Americans had been defeated by general Carleton, and had retired from Quebec. In other engagements they had been equally unsuccessful; and Canada, in the summer of that year, was in the unmolested possession of the king's troops. In June, general Howe had left Halifax, and had landed his forces on Staten Island. In July, admiral lord Howe arrived with reinforcements from England. The two brothers had been authorised, as Commissioners, to receive the submission of insurgent colonists, to grant pardons, and inquire into grievances. At an earlier period the appointment of these Commissioners, who were men of sense and moderation, might have had beneficial results. But the state of feeling amongst the colonists was hurrying onward that measure of separation, which the most sagacious saw would be the inevitable result of an obstinate assertion of authority opposed to an ardent desire for independence—a desire at first timidly avowed by a few, dreaded by most, and at last matured into a sentiment which it would have been dangerous in the minority to oppose.

Whilst the British forces under Howe were taking a position on Staten Island, and the American, under Washington, were collecting on Long Island and in the city of New York, each preparing for hostilities, the Congress at Philadelphia took a decisive resolution which gave to the war a character somewhat different from an insurrection. In the Convention of Virginia the delegates to Congress had been instructed to propose that the Colonies should declare themselves independent of Great Britain. The proposal was submitted to the Congress at the beginning of June, and was debated for some days with slight prospect of unanimity. Six

of the Colonies were opposed to the immediate adoption of such a measure. Nevertheless, a committee of five was appointed to prepare a manifesto embodying this principle. Jefferson was selected to make the draught of a Declaration of Independence. It was submitted and discussed on the 1st of July when the delegates of Pennsylvania and South Carolina voted against it. Those of Delaware were divided in opinion; and those of New York withdrew. On the next day, by a compromise and a change of delegates, three of the dissentient provinces gave their adhesion to the majority. The draught prepared by Jefferson was discussed during sittings of three days; and it was finally agreed to by the members present of the twelve States, with the exception of one. The delegates from New York were subsequently impowered to give their assent. Thus, on the 4th of July, was completed what has been not unjustly termed "the most memorable public document which history records."\* We give the document in a note to this chapter. The long catalogue of "injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny," must be regarded, in many particulars, rather as overstrained inferences from impolitic acts, than as evidences of deliberate oppression. Like most of the manifestoes in any great conflict of principles, these charges must be viewed rather as a demonstration of temporary feeling than as incontrovertible truths. But the opening paragraphs of the Declaration are very remarkable as an exposition of doctrines which had a different origin than the Anglo-Saxon institutions upon which the American Colonies were founded. The deputies of Congress say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and their happiness." These were not American ideas. They were based upon the "Social Contract" of Rousseau, and reflected the popular philosophy which was destined to produce a far mightier revolution than that of the separation of America from the British Crown. In France, where inalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—were too fre-

\* Tucker—"Life of Jefferson," vol. i. p. 90.

quently trampled upon by the governing classes, the American Declaration of Independence was hailed as a beautiful illustration of that theory of liberty and equality which was delightful to speculate upon in the Parisian *salons*—a theory calling forth a delicious enthusiasm, provided it could be kept at a safe distance. If we look back with wonder and pity upon the obstinacy of the British government in the attempt to coerce the Americans into submission, we may regard as a stronger manifestation of political blindness, the support which the French government gave to that practical assertion of republican freedom, which was to convert the ideal democracy of which courtly aristocrats delighted to talk, into the terrible reality in which a long-suffering people roused themselves to act, in a fearful revenge of centuries of misrule.

A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN GEN-  
ERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us in times of peace standing armies without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them by a mock trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated addresses have been answered only by repeated injuries.

A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here, we have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which would inevitably interrupt our connexion and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do.

And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.

## CHAPTER XI.

Lord Howe, as the British Commissioner, addresses a letter to Washington.—The letter refused.—The British on Long Island.—Battle of Brooklyn.—Washington retreats.—His exploit at Trenton.—His success at Princetown.—Franklin dispatched by the Congress to Paris.—Underhand proceedings of France.—John the Painter, the incendiary.—Manning the navy.—Defences of the country.—Chatham appears again in Parliament.—Steuben.—La Fayette.—Kosciusko.—Battle of the Brandywine.—The British in Philadelphia.—Burgoyne's army enters the United States from Canada.—The convention of Saratoga.—Parliament meets.—Chatham's speech on the Address.—On the employment of Indians.—Washington in winter-quarters at Valley Forge.—Steuben re-organizes the army.

THE first measures of lord Howe, upon his arrival off New York, were of a conciliatory nature. He arrived on the 12th of July. On the 14th, he sent a flag on shore with a letter, addressed "George Washington, Esquire." One of Washington's colonels told the officer who brought the letter, that there was no such person in the American army. The officer expressed great concern; and finally went back, receiving as his answer, that a proper direction would obviate all difficulties. Washington wrote to Congress, "I deemed it a duty to my country and my appointment to insist upon that respect which, in any other than a public view, I would willingly have waived." A letter on the 16th, from general Howe, similarly addressed, was similarly refused. The British adjutant-general, lieutenant-colonel Paterson, then came to Washington's quarters to explain the matter. He laid the letter on the table, and Washington refused to open it. The conversation on both sides was that of two high-minded gentlemen; but Washington was firm in declining to accept the direction of "George Washington, Esquire, &c., &c., &c.," as a proper address to himself in his public station. Colonel Paterson wished his visit to be considered as the first advance towards that accommodation of the unhappy dispute which was the object of the appointment of Commissioners, who, he said, had great powers. Washington replied that he was not invested with any powers on this subject, from those from whom he derived his authority; but from what had transpired, it appeared that lord Howe and general Howe were only to grant pardons;—those who had committed no fault wanted no pardon. Paterson departed, having declined Washington's invitation to a collation. He had expressed his