

Bk. IV. colonists, nearly seventy thousand hogsheads being annually exported. In the more southern colonies, rice and indigo formed the most important articles of exportation. Ch. 4.  
A. D. 1763. Cotton, which has since become the great staple of the South, was not yet cultivated.

Literature and the arts. Nor were the interests of education neglected with the material growth of the colonies. New schools and colleges arose. Lawyers began to obtain more public consideration. The fine arts were advanced by Copley and West, and eminent scholars appeared in every department to which genius was directed.

## BOOK V.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

THE American Revolution, in whatever light it may be viewed, was the grand event of the eighteenth century, and one of the most momentous, in its consequences, in the whole history of society. It excited intense interest throughout the civilized world, when it took place, and its effect has been constantly progressive. All other subjects of American history are certainly tame in comparison with it. It is memorable for the great deeds of heroes, for the development of unknown energies, for the establishment of a new western empire, for the shock it gave to political power in Europe, for the impulse it communicated to the cause of liberty throughout the world, and for the hope it inspired, among all oppressed people, of their own future triumph.

This great event might have been delayed, had the government of England been gifted with greater political sagacity, and had it exercised more prudence and moderation. But blindness, arrogance, and a spirit of oppression, are as natural to an unboundedly prosperous nation, as the development of great energies among those who are industrious and self-reliant.

When the peace of Paris was signed, England had

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A. D.  
1763  
to  
1775. reached the height of her prosperity and power. Her ships whitened the ocean. Her armies occupied nearly all the strongest fortresses in America and Asia. Her colonial possessions were greater than any nation had ever possessed before. Her empire comprehended the extremities of the known world. Her manufactures were sought and prized in every corner of the earth. Her wealth was prodigious and unbounded. Her merchants were richer than ordinary princes. Her nobles formed the proudest aristocracy which ancient or modern times had ever seen. Her triumphs of art, science and literature, were the glory and the boast of the age. In every thing she was great and unsurpassed. No wonder that sentiments of pride were engendered.

England  
at the  
peace of  
Paris.

But pride is the curse of man. It is as blind as it is self-complacent. It ever goeth before destruction. England, intoxicated with prosperity, overlooked the incipient greatness of her colonies, underrated their strength, and trifled with their affections. She imposed upon them burdens which were irreconcilable with freedom. She cast upon them insults which not even imbecility will bear. She forced upon them rebellion, without considering the terrible power of union among those who felt that they were capable of freedom.

Feeling  
of the co-  
lonies.

Nor could any European power have long fettered the energies of continually expanding colonies, conscious of strength, as well as of justice and right. They had grown from feeble settlements to powerful States, and there seemed no limit to future increase. There was scope for every variety of talent, and every form of enterprise. The people were born free—had been nursed in freedom, had ever loved it passionately, had ever defended it with enthusiasm. They had also, from the first, been taught self-reliance. They had multiplied in spite of all obsta-

Bk. V.  
Ch. 1.  
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1763  
to  
1775. cles. They had discovered their own strength in various intercolonial wars. They had measured themselves with regular troops from the mother country. They had learned the art of self-defence.

When, then, they perceived that England regarded them, not as children, but as servants—that they were to be kept in base dependence—that their interests were to be made subservient to those of British merchants and the pride of British nobles—that, as they grew strong, additional burdens would be imposed,—they resolved no longer to wear the yoke. Why should they submit to evils which they could throw off? When love was weakened, when interest no longer bound them, and when the desire for absolute independence was nearly universal, was it not in the nature of things that a struggle for liberty should one day be made, and, when made, be crowned with glory and honour?

Dissatis-  
faction  
with  
British  
rule.

It was the will of God that a great and free nation should arise in the West. And it is as absurd to speculate on the means by which this event could have been prevented, as it is to wonder why the old Roman Empire should have passed away, when the vices of self-interest had perverted all orders and classes among the people, and prepared the way for violence and anarchy.

Yet the story of English aggression is interesting, and teaches lessons of moral wisdom. The desire to domineer, arising from great pride and prosperity, on the one hand; and the spirit of liberty, fanned by unnumbered influences, on the other, gave rise to the American Revolution. The consideration of these conflicting principles and interests is the present subject of our inquiry.

British  
aggres-  
sion.

It has already been shown that Great Britain, from the time of Cromwell, had enforced a system of commercial restrictions. The various navigation acts had fettered the

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Ch. 1. commerce of the colonies, and operated unfavourably on American manufactures. To these evils the colonists had at length submitted, though always with reluctance and expostulation. The moral effect of these restrictions was to create alienation on the part of the colonies, which constantly increased with their growth, and would in time have alone occasioned a disruption. This event was not wholly unforeseen in England, but was placed at some remote and indefinite period—a notion encouraged by the mutual jealousies and divisions of the colonies, and an exaggerated importance attached to the power of Great Britain.

Contem-  
plated  
military  
force in  
Ameri-  
ca. Scarcely any British statesman, with the exception of Lord Camden, perceived the necessity of wholly removing these restrictions, especially after the conquest of Canada, which had revealed to the colonies new sources of internal strength. But such was the infatuation of government, that it resolved to extend rather than curtail the control exercised by the parent State; and scarcely was the peace of Paris announced, before it declared its intention of maintaining permanently a regular army in America, and supporting it at the expense of the colonies. No declaration could have been more unfortunate, especially as all external danger was now removed, and as a regular British force for protection had not been sent, when, owing to the molestations of both French and Indians, their presence was really necessary.

Interfer-  
ence  
with co-  
lonial  
trade. Another cause of alienation was the attempt of the British government to suppress smuggling in the colonies, by calling in the aid of the naval forces on the coast. All the commanders of ships-of-war cruising in the American seas, received commissions from government to act as custom-house officers, and were authorized to receive an ample share of contraband or confiscated cargoes as the

reward of their disagreeable duties. These naval officers were then generally rough, boisterous and impetuous, and often acted with inconsiderate zeal, making constant blunders and mistakes, which called forth the indignant remonstrances of those merchants whose ships they had perhaps unjustly seized or detained.

Moreover, the British governor and colonial custom-house authorities had, for a long time, connived and winked at a contraband trade between the colonies and the West India Islands, inasmuch as articles of British manufacture were, to a considerable extent, advantageously disposed of. But the naval officers did not regard the advantages which the colonies reaped, without injury to the mother country, and were prompt to seize indiscriminately all ships conducting those branches of trade which hitherto had passed without question or notice.

The colonies, indignant, proclaimed their intention to purchase, in future, no British commodities which were not absolutely necessary, since they could not pay for them with the gold they had hitherto procured from French and Spanish colonies. The British ministers yielded so far to their complaints as to authorize, by act of Parliament, the commerce which had previously been considered contraband, but loaded its most valuable articles with heavy duties.

Had the English government been content with this mode of raising a revenue in America, the Revolution might have been delayed. But it was not. It was resolved to levy a domestic tax upon the colonies, on the ground that, as they were protected by British arms, they should contribute something towards that protection.

The colonies looked upon the project of taxation with other eyes. They regarded it as the beginning of a system which would be indefinitely extended in proportion as

Bk. V.  
Ch. 1.  
A. D.  
1765.

Contra-  
band  
trade.

The co-  
lonies  
refuse to  
pur-  
chase  
British  
goods.

Contem-  
plated  
taxa-  
tion.

Bk. V. they were willing or able to meet the demands of British  
 Ch. I. rapacity. They saw no justice or right in direct taxation,  
 A. D. when they were not represented in Parliament. The only  
 1765. connection which they admitted, was the recognition of  
 Colonial their entire equality with Englishmen at home—as enti-  
 views of tled to the full privileges of Englishmen, if they were to  
 English share their burdens. Moreover, they no longer desired  
 tax- the protection which England now was ready to bestow.  
 ation. They looked upon the army to be sent among them, as a  
 means of coercing obedience to tyrannical injunctions,—  
 not to save them from foreign attacks. They had taken  
 care of themselves in times of weakness and danger. They  
 surely could do so now, when dangers were removed, and  
 when the means of resisting them had increased. They  
 were willing to be ruled in accordance with those royal  
 charters which, from time to time, had been given them.  
 They were even willing to assist the mother country in  
 expelling her enemies from adjoining territories. They  
 professed the strongest attachment to her laws, her inter-  
 ests, and her institutions. They sought no political  
 influence in England, and waived their rights as English-  
 men to be represented in Parliament. But they could  
 not see by what right they should be made to pay for  
 English aggrandizement, or contribute to those wars by  
 which England alone was benefited. If they could be  
 taxed without their consent in one thing, they could be  
 taxed to an indefinite extent, and would incur the danger  
 of a mean and ignominious subjection—would fare worse  
 than Ireland—would be reduced to the condition of a  
 conquered country—would become what Sicily, and Gaul,  
 and Greece, and Africa, were to ancient Rome—what  
 parts of the East have become to modern European pow-  
 ers,—provinces to be rifled, robbed, and enslaved.

Its in-  
justice

The scheme of taxation originated with George Gren-

ville, successor of the Earl of Bute, as prime minister to Bk. V.  
 George III. He was a man of great talent, but inconsi- Ch. I.  
 derate, unpractical, and rash. He had already shown A. D.  
 himself unfit to contend with the spirit of the age, by his 1765.  
 impolitic prosecution of Wilkes for a political libel. But George  
 then, it should also be said, the great body of the British Gren-  
 aristocracy shared with him the delusion respecting Amer- ville.  
 ica. His scheme of taxation met with general favour.

Not so in America. As soon as his design was revealed, His plan  
 it excited alarm, aversion, indignation, resentment. The of tax-  
 project was discussed in all the Provincial Assemblies, ation.  
 and was universally condemned as unjust, oppressive, and  
 hateful. From all the colonies, petitions were prepared  
 and presented to the English government. They sent  
 agents to England, to remonstrate with the minister.  
 They printed pamphlets and made speeches without end.

But, in spite of remonstrances, and protestations, and 1765.  
 appeals from colonial agents, especially from Franklin, Stamp  
 Ingersoll and Jackson, the minister was resolved to Act.  
 proceed; and accordingly, early in the year 1765, brought a  
 bill into Parliament for collecting a duty on stamps. The  
 tax, it was true, was light, but the principle involved  
 gave importance to the precedent.

Then followed the debates in Parliament, in which Debate  
 William Pitt, General Conway, and Colonel Barré, distin- in Par-  
 guished themselves in opposition to the ministers. In liament.  
 reply to the speech of Charles Townshend, who styled the  
 colonies “children planted by our care, nourished by our  
 indulgence, and protected by our arms,” Colonel Barré  
 made this ever-memorable reply, preserved by all histo-  
 rians: “*They planted by YOUR care!* No! your oppres-  
 sions planted them in America. They fled from your  
 tyranny to a then uncultivated and inhospitable country,  
 where they exposed themselves to almost all the hardships

Bk. V.  
Ch. I. to which human nature is liable; and, among others, to the cruelties of a savage foe, the most subtle and formidable of any people upon the face of the earth. *They nourished by YOUR indulgence!* They grew up by your neglect. As soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them who were perhaps the deputies of deputies, sent to spy out their liberties, and to misrepresent their actions—men, promoted to the highest seats of justice, some of whom were glad, by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of a court of justice in your own. *They protected by YOUR arms!* They have nobly taken up arms in your defence, and have exerted a shining valour for the defence of a country whose frontier was drenched in blood. Believe me—remember, I this day told you so—that the same spirit of freedom which actuated those sons of liberty at first, will accompany them still,—that they are a people jealous of their liberties, and will vindicate them if ever they should be violated.”

Passage  
of the  
Stamp  
Act.

In spite of the warnings of the distinguished orator and soldier, who had served in America, and of the petitions of London merchants, and of the remonstrances of the colonies, the bill passed the House of Commons by a very large majority—250 to 50—and was not even obstructed in the House of Lords. So great was the national delusion!

Its effect  
in the  
colonies.

The news of the passage of this fatal act, March 22d, 1765, created an immense sensation throughout the colonies. Patrick Henry in Virginia, James Otis in Massachusetts, Trumbull in Connecticut, and others scarcely less distinguished, lifted up their indignant voices against it in the various Assemblies of which they were members. There was everywhere a general ferment. In Boston and Providence there were popular riots. The clergy preached

political sermons. The Stamp Act was both ridiculed and denounced; and on the day when the execution of the act was appointed to commence, the first of November, every distributor of stamps in America had resigned his office. Not a stamp was to be seen. Nor was this all. Associations were formed not to import any more British goods until the hateful act was repealed; and that sheep might be increased, and American manufactures encouraged, people agreed not to eat lamb or mutton.

Grenville was not prepared for this outcry. The unpopularity of the measure, and the difficulty of enforcing it, together with the odium which he incurred by the prosecution of Wilkes, induced him to resign the reins of government.

Grenville was succeeded by the Marquis of Rockingham, one of whose first measures was to bring in a bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act, although the Commons insisted upon their right to tax America. Pitt supported the repeal, and maintained that the kingdom had no right to tax the colonies; and his decisive avowal made a profound impression on the House. But the ministry by no means took the ground of Pitt. They placed the repeal on the score of expediency. On this ground alone, the Commons, by a vote of 275 to 167, voted for the repeal of the tax, February 22d, 1766. The examination of Benjamin Franklin as a witness before the bar of the House, had also great influence in producing repeal. He was then an agent in England for Pennsylvania, and his prompt and pointed replies gained him great credit, both for genius and extent of information.

The news of the repeal produced transports of joy in America, mingled with surprise, exultation, and gratitude. The Provincial Assemblies voted addresses of thanks to his majesty, and to royal ministers and distinguished

Bk. V. statesmen, especially to Lord Camden, Pitt, and Barré.  
Ch. 1. Several provinces voted statues to the king, to Pitt, and to Camden. Faneuil Hall was adorned with full-length pictures of Pitt and Barré, the former of whom became a popular idol. Professions of attachment to the mother country again became general and cordial.

The Sugar Act. But, after the first flush of popular enthusiasm, new subjects of complaint arose. The Stamp Act was indeed repealed, but the Sugar Act remained in force. Moreover, royal troops were sent to America, as if to overawe the people, and compel obedience. It was reported that new bodies were to arrive. But the crowning evil was a new scheme of colonial taxation.

William Pitt. This originated with Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Marquis of Rockingham retained office but a few months, and was succeeded by the Duke of Grafton, in August, 1766, as First Lord of the Treasury. Pitt, recently created Earl of Chatham, was nominally the prime minister, but was unable to attend to business on account of ill-health. Nor had he much influence on his colleagues, who were, in most instances, Tories; and they were left to pursue their own policy. It was a blot on the fair fame of this great statesman, who had hitherto sustained the American cause, that he consented to form a part of an administration which acted in direct opposition to the course he had uniformly pursued. It is true, he still opposed his colleagues in the council chamber; but his voice was no longer heard in the House of Commons, the scene of his glory, in vindication of the cause of liberty. Could he have been seduced by the glitter of a coronet and the title of a lord? Certain it is, that no man ever made a greater mistake than he, in accepting a seat among "the Incurables." He gained social rank, dignity, ease, titles. But he lost popularity,

power, and self-respect. The "Great Commoner," who might, as a popular leader, have arrested the calamities which so soon befell his country, now deprived of his strength, which lay in the affections of the people, relapsed into indolence and spleen, and was laid on the shelf as a man who had parted with his secret; a Samson shorn of his locks, without his eyes, the sport of his seducers, the pity and reproach of those whom he had once defended. Great was the fall of Pitt when he descended from his glorious position as ruler of the House of Commons and idol of the nation, to be a nominal minister and a powerless earl. No wonder that he languished and died.

A tory ministry, which hated liberty, an infatuated king, who repented, like the Egyptians of old, the concessions he had made, and the courtiers, who affected to lament the humiliation of royalty, resolved to retrieve their dignity. Ambition and pride prevailed over wisdom and moderation. It was resolved to impose a tax on the colonies, as the sign of their dependence and degradation; perhaps with the hope of ultimately increasing the national revenue. Accordingly, Townshend introduced his bill into the House of Commons, May 1767, to impose duties on all glass, lead, painters' colours, tea, and paper, imported into America. It met with scarcely any opposition, and was triumphantly passed.

Sullenness, indignation, and gloom, returned to the colonies on the report of this new taxation; not that they dreaded the burden, but they hated the principle. Trust in Parliament was irreparably weakened. Confidence in royal ministers fled. New combinations of opposition were organized. The press, the pulpit, and the senate chamber, teemed with invective and reproach. The cry of alarm was raised. The appeal to patriotism was made

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Ch. 1.

A. D.  
 1766.

His folly in being made a peer.

1767.  
Duties on glass, tea, &c.

Opposition and outcry in America.

Bk. V. from ten thousand tongues in every section of the  
Ch. 1. country.

A. D. Foremost among the patriots of Massachusetts were  
1767. Thomas Cushing, James Bowdoin, Samuel Cooper, Josiah  
Patriot- Quincy, Robert Treat Paine, John Winthrop, James Otis,  
ism of the and Joseph Hawley; all of whom were men of great  
Americ- social position, talents, and weight of character. Equally  
cans. distinguished as popular leaders were John Rutledge,  
Henry Lawrence, David Ramsay, in South Carolina, and  
Patrick Henry, Peyton Randolph, and Richard Henry  
Lee, in Virginia. In all the colonies there arose orators  
to plead the cause and stimulate the energies of freemen.  
John Dickenson, in Pennsylvania, in a treatise called  
*Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer*, warned his country-  
men not to be deluded by the moderate rate of the new  
duties, designed only to prepare their necks for a weight  
which would bear them to the ground, while the inhabi-  
tants of Boston passed resolutions to discontinue the im-  
portation of all British commodities. The Assembly of  
Massachusetts addressed to all the sister colonies a circular  
letter, inviting them to co-operate in some general scheme  
of resistance, and nearly all the provincial assemblies  
acceded to the overture.

Changes  
in the  
British  
minis-  
try.

In the mean time, some changes had occurred in the  
British ministry. Townsend had died, and was succeeded  
by Lord North; a man devoted to royal prerogative. Lord  
Hillsborough, also a distinguished partisan of the crown,  
had been entrusted with the management of American  
affairs, which had been withdrawn from Lord Shelburne.  
This latter nobleman strongly reprobated the conduct of  
Massachusetts respecting the circular letter, and instructed  
Governor Barnard to require of the Assembly its disap-  
probation of the act as hasty and rash. The minister also  
wrote a circular letter to all the provincial governors,

breathing insolence, folly, and spleen, which occasioned,  
of course, general disgust, and increased the rising disaf-  
fection. Bk. V.  
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Additional cause of offence arose in America from the  
rigid enforcement of the laws of trade, which called forth  
opposition and inflammatory publications. The merchants  
were irritated by suits for past breaches of revenue laws,  
and by new strictness in the collecting of duties. A sloop  
laden with wine from Madeira, belonging to Hancock,  
was seized on the charge of smuggling a part of the cargo,  
although nothing was done contrary to custom and usage.  
A riot ensued, which resulted in the flight of the revenue  
commissioners to Castle Island, where a company of Brit-  
ish artillery was stationed. In the midst of this ferment  
Barnard acquainted the General Court with the letter he  
had received from Lord Hillsborough, which communica-  
tion excited still more the patriotic spirit. The House  
refused to rescind its measures, and justified itself in a  
remonstrance to the Earl of Hillsborough. On the fol- 1768.  
lowing day, July 1, 1768, the governor dissolved the as- Trou-  
sembly, and the town and corporation retaliated by bles in  
denouncing him as a traitor, and choosing a convention to Mass-  
meet in Boston to consider the public danger. This chu-  
convention was regarded by the governor, and by the British setts.  
ministry, as a treasonable and criminal association, and  
therefore its petitions and acts were wholly disregarded.  
Moreover, Boston was regarded as in a state bordering on Troops  
revolt, and therefore it was occupied by two regiments, sent to  
while the harbour was commanded by a fleet of seven Boston.  
ships of war. The people were required to furnish quar-  
ters for the troops. They peremptorily refused, and the  
State House was accordingly seized by the governor, and  
the town overawed by a military garrison stationed in it  
as a citadel. The Common was covered with tents, and

*Pinnie M. Loughan*