

Bk. V. the streets were paraded by sentinels. Boston had all the  
Ch. I. appearance of a town under martial law.

A. D. The House of Representatives, on assembling in May  
1769. 1769, resolved that it was inconsistent with their dignity  
and freedom to deliberate in the midst of an armed force,  
Removal of the legisla-  
ture. and petitioned the governor to remove the troops from  
Boston. Upon his refusal they declined to enter upon  
business, and the governor adjourned the court to Cam-  
bridge, and finally prorogued it as unmanageable, and  
returned to England to lay his complaints before govern-  
ment, leaving the administration in the hands of Lieuten-  
ant-governor Hutchinson.

Spirit of resist-  
ance in Virgi-  
nia. In Virginia the spirit of resistance was equally marked.  
The General Assembly unanimously passed resolutions  
that the sole right of taxation belonged to the representa-  
tives of the people, and that all trials for treason should be  
conducted in the colonial courts; for which offence it was  
dissolved by the governor, Lord Botetourt. The members,  
instead of dispersing, reassembled in a dwelling-house,  
and, after choosing their late speaker, Peyton Randolph,  
for moderator, unanimously signed an agreement to import  
no more British goods, to which the people, throughout  
the colony, acceded.

Inspired by the example of Virginia, the Assembly of  
South Carolina refused obedience to the act for providing  
quarters for British troops, and passed resolutions similar  
to those of the Virginia Assembly. Maryland, Delaware,  
New York, and Georgia, adopted substantially the same  
resolutions. Indeed, the non-importation agreement was  
generally adopted throughout the colony, and everywhere  
the right of American legislatures to supersede the autho-  
rity of Parliament was discussed and advocated.

Nothing produced greater irritation among the colonies,  
and led to a revolutionary spirit more decidedly, than the

quartering of troops in Boston. It was the occasion of Bk. V.  
perpetual tumult. A mob of boys and men made it a Ch. I.  
constant practice to insult the military, and the military,  
at length provoked beyond endurance, fired upon the A. D.  
people. This act of violence created such an excitement 1770.  
that the governor, Hutchinson, found it expedient to re-  
move the troops from Boston.

About this time, 1770, Lord North succeeded the Lord  
North  
repeals  
duties,  
except  
on tea.  
Duke of Grafton as prime minister to George III., and,  
in order to pacify the Americans, yet still maintain the  
right of taxation, brought forward a motion in Parliament  
to repeal all obnoxious duties, except that on tea. This  
was carried by a large majority, and his measure became  
a law. It had in some respects the effect he intended.  
It furnished an excuse to the colonies to abandon the non-  
importation agreements, which were now limited to the  
article of tea alone. But it was far from allaying the  
spirit of disaffection, soon destined to burst out into a  
revolutionary storm. New disputes constantly agitated  
the colonies.

These arose from the continued restraints on colonial New dis-  
putes.  
manufactures; from the presence of large bodies of foreign  
troops; from rumours of a plan to establish episcopacy by  
law; from the support of royal governors by the govern-  
ment at home, thus destroying all dependence on colonial  
legislatures; from repeated dissolutions of colonial Assem-  
blies by royal governors, and from the accounts which  
these governors transmitted to England of the state of  
the provinces, which were considered as libellous and  
unjust. These, and various impolitic measures of the  
English government, hastened the crisis.

Nothing was more injudicious than the conduct of the  
ministry respecting the tea duty act. By the constant  
refusal of the colonies to use this luxury, except so far as

Bk. V.  
Ch. I. it could be smuggled by the French, Dutch, Danes, and Swedes, tea had accumulated in the warehouses of the East India Company to the amount of seventeen millions of pounds. The government would not repeal the duty of threepence per pound, and the Company did not like to lose their commercial profits. Hitherto, a heavy tax had been imposed on the exportation of tea from England. This export duty was removed by the government, under the impression that the Americans would now purchase tea, since its price was reduced. Accordingly, the East India Company freighted several ships with the article, and sent them to the various American cities, hoping to dispose of it. But this course only showed how ignorant both British merchants and ministers were of the temper of the American people. The inhabitants of Charlestown suffered the tea to be landed, but deposited it in public cellars, and locked it up from either sale or use. The citizens of New York and Philadelphia prevailed on the consignees to disclaim their functions, and forced the ships to return to London with their cargoes. The Bostonians were not so quiet. A mob of fifty men, dressed like Indians, boarded the ships, staved the chests, and threw the tea into the water. This affair happened on the 16th of December, 1773; and when the news of it reached England, the rage of ministers was excessive. In their indignation, they brought a bill into Parliament to shut up the port of Boston, and remove the seat of government to Salem, which passed almost unanimously. This was followed by another, which gave the appointment of nearly all officers to the governor, without the approval of the Council, which was virtually an abrogation of the charter of Massachusetts. A third bill was also passed, which provided that all persons charged with murders committed in support of government, should be tried in

Opposition in the colonies to the duty on tea.

Boston Port Bill.

Bk. V.  
Ch. I. England. This was again followed by a fourth act, which provided for quartering troops in America, April, 1774. The liberties and chartered rights of the colonies were now plainly assailed. They were regarded as rebellious, and only to be brought to terms by a military force. Ministers foolishly resolved to terrify them into submission, notwithstanding the expostulations of Chatham, Burke, Barré, Fox, Conway, Dunne, and other illustrious statesmen, who perceived that these severe measures would end in war, and that war would lead to the everlasting separation of the colonies from England.

The colonies, distressed, embarrassed and indignant, now meditated a congress of delegates to take measures for their common defence, and advance their mutual interests. The people everywhere were excited by popular orators. Inflammatory publications were openly circulated. Associations were formed for the purchase of arms and ammunition. Proceedings in the courts of justice were suspended, and ordinary business was neglected, in the general ferment of impassioned feeling. Nothing was thought of but resistance. Thomas Jefferson wrote a pamphlet in which sentiments of independence were broached. The spirit of liberty animated all classes from New Hampshire to Georgia.

And yet the colonies did not, at this time, contemplate a separation. Nor were they prepared to plunge into a general revolt. They were only irritated and indignant to an extraordinary degree. They were resolved on resistance, rather than independence. It is true, there were those who saw that resistance would lead to war, and war to separation; but such men were in advance of public sentiment. In spite of the invasion of long-cherished rights, there was yet a lurking love of the mother country, which, had it been cherished, would have delayed the Revolution.

Troops sent to Boston.

Resistance contemplated.

And resistance rather than independence.

Bk. V. This was the time, if it were ever to be, when the  
Ch. I. colonies should have been coerced by an overwhelming  
A. D. military force, before measures of resistance were matured.  
 1774. But the British government neither sought to heal the  
Disaffec-  
tion of  
the co-  
lonies. wounds which their impolitic measures had inflicted, nor  
 adopted a bold and prompt course of intimidation. Pitt  
 would either have refrained from taxation, or would have  
 sent an army of forty thousand men to subdue the rebel-  
 lious colonies. But every measure of the present minist-  
 ters proved a blunder, increasing the general discontent  
 and irritation, without producing any decided advantage.  
 They supposed that the Boston Port Bill would produce  
 jealousy and disunion among the different towns of Mas-  
 sachusetts, by dividing among them the commerce pre-  
 viously enjoyed by the metropolis. But, on the contrary,  
 it produced a strong feeling of generous disdain, sympathy,  
 and co-operation. The people of Marblehead offered the  
 use of their wharves and warehouses to the Boston mer-  
 chants. The citizens of Salem also refused to avail them-  
 selves of the misfortunes of their neighbours.

Meeting  
of Con-  
gress.

In the midst of this general ferment, the contemplated  
 Congress assembled at Philadelphia, September 5th. It  
 was composed of delegates from all the colonies except  
 Georgia; and as these were chosen by the several provin-  
 cial legislatures, the national mind was fairly represented.  
 The instructions which they received, however, only  
 authorized them to deliberate on the means to secure the  
 rights and liberties of America as a colonial possession of  
 Great Britain. Revolt was not contemplated, although  
 it may have been hastened in consequence of the assembly.

Its great  
men.

Of this Congress, Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, was  
 chosen President. It consisted of fifty-three delegates,  
 all of whom were men of character and influence. Among  
 the more distinguished of them were Samuel and John

Adams, of Massachusetts; Sherman and Dean, of Con-  
Bk. V. necticut; Livingston and Jay, of New York; Henry, Ch. I.  
 Washington, and Lee, of Virginia; and the two Rut- A. D.  
 ledges, of South Carolina. The proceedings were con- 1774.  
 ducted with closed doors, and with great unanimity—with  
 prudence, talent, and despatch. It was resolved that  
 obedience was not due to any of the recent acts of Par-  
 liament, and that Massachusetts should be sustained in her  
 resistance to what was universally considered to be unjust  
 and unconstitutional. A "Declaration of Colonial Rights" Declara-  
tion of  
Rights.  
 was voted. A protest was made against standing armies  
 maintained in the colonies without their consent. All  
 the immunities hitherto enjoyed by the colonies were  
 claimed as established rights. The Sugar Act, the Stamp  
 Act, the Quartering Acts, the Tea Act, the Boston Port  
 Bill, the act for the regulation of the government of  
 Massachusetts, and the two acts for the trial in Great  
 Britain of offences committed in America, were enume-  
 rated as violations of the rights of the colonies. In order  
 to enforce these rights, it was agreed to hold no commer-  
 cial intercourse with Great Britain and the West Indies,  
 and to take every measure to encourage domestic manu-  
 factures and the breeding of sheep.

While preparations were thus making for the American Boston  
Neck  
fortified.  
 Union, affairs were fast hastening to a crisis in Massachu-  
 setts. The military forces which had been sent out to  
 coerce or watch the colony, were commanded by General  
 Gage, who had succeeded Hutchinson as governor. He  
 fortified Boston Neck, and cut off all communication of  
 the town with the country, justifying, all the while, his  
 military preparations on the plea of self-defence. Con-  
 gress, in turn, adopted defensive measures, and appointed Commit-  
tee of  
Safety.  
 a Committee of Safety, at the head of which was John  
 Hancock, with power to call out the militia. It also took

Bk. V. measures for the defence of the province, and for procur-  
Ch. I. ing military stores. Gage denounced these proceedings;  
A. D. but none, save his own officials, paid any attention to his  
1774. proclamation. The other cities of the Union appointed  
committees of safety, volunteers were everywhere enrolled,  
and arms and ammunition were seized. The country was  
generally aroused by the expectation of serious conflicts,  
and all things indicated an approaching convulsion.

Perplex-  
ity of  
Parlia-  
ment.

Great Britain received the report of these proceedings,  
and of the general state of insubordination, with any feel-  
ings but those of indifference. The cabinet was perplexed,  
and Parliament was agitated. The more experienced and  
profound of British statesmen perceived the importance

Effort of  
Lord  
Chat-  
ham.

of the crisis. Lord Chatham resumed his seat in the  
House of Lords, notwithstanding his age and infirmities,  
and attempted to arouse his countrymen to a sense of the  
great difficulties in which they were so unappily involved.  
He besought ministers to withdraw the troops from Bos-  
ton, and revoke their obnoxious acts. He showed the  
folly of metaphysical refinements about the right of taxa-  
tion, when a continent was in arms. He spoke of the  
means thus far employed for enforcing obedience as inefficient and ridiculous. He panegyricized the American  
Congress and the American people. The Marquis of  
Rockingham and Lord Shelburne supported his motion.  
Lord Camden, as an ex-chancellor and constitutional law-  
yer, declared that England had no right to tax America.

Burke,  
Barre,  
and Fox.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Burke, Colonel Barré,  
and Mr. Fox, proposed conciliatory measures. "My hold  
on the colonies," said Mr. Burke, that great master of  
moral wisdom, "is the close affection which grows from  
common names, from kindred blood, from similar privi-  
lege, and from equal protection. These are the ties,  
which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron.

Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil privi-  
leges associated with your government; they will cling  
and grapple with you, and no power under heaven will be  
able to tear them from their allegiance. But let it once  
be understood that your government may be one thing,  
and their privileges another, then the cement is gone, and  
everything hastens to dissolution. It is the love of the  
people — it is their attachment to your government, from  
their sense of the deep stake they have in such glorious  
institutions, which gives you your army and navy, and  
infuses into both that liberal obedience without which  
your army would be but a base rabble, and your navy  
nothing but rotten timbers."

Bk. V.  
Ch. I.  
A. D.  
1774.

Nor were warning voices lifted up against the blunders  
and folly of government in the British Parliament alone.  
Dean Tucker, who foresaw a long war, with all its ex-  
penses, urged, in a masterly treatise, the necessity of at  
once giving to the Americans the liberty they sought.  
Others, who looked upon the colonies in a commercial  
point of view, respectfully petitioned Parliament to repeal  
their offensive enactments. Bollan, Franklin, and Lee,  
agents for the provinces, also petitioned to be heard at the  
bar of the House of Commons, that they might explain  
the subject of grievances, and communicate important  
information.

Infatua-  
tion of  
Parlia-  
ment.

But the moral wisdom of Burke, the reasonings of  
Tucker, and the entreaties of Franklin, were alike lost on  
an infatuated people. On Lord North, as the great repre-  
sentative of the English mind, the blame must rest for  
ever of not adopting, in season, conciliatory measures,  
before conciliation was impossible — not half measures,  
indefinite and equivocal, but, which could but partially  
allay irritation, when passion was stronger than reason or  
fear; but rather those which surrendered, in good faith,

Warn-  
ing  
voices  
disre-  
garded.

Bk. V. the unjust claims which ministers had advanced. Had  
Ch. I. he, however, at the eleventh hour, withdrawn his offensive  
A. D. measures, it is doubtful whether he would have been  
1774. sustained. It was resolved to coerce the colonies, and  
they were accordingly declared to be in a state of rebellion.

Warlike  
mea-  
sures.

This declaration was in fact a declaration of war—of no common war, but of desperate, deadly strife. It was so understood by the popular leaders in America. "We must look back," said they, "no more. We must conquer or die. We are placed between altars smoking with the most grateful incense of glory and gratitude on the one part, and blocks and dungeons on the other." Necessity now stimulated those who before were timid. The passion for liberty animated the bold. All classes of people now felt that they must choose between slavery and freedom, and every one echoed the sentiment of Henry—"Give me liberty, or give me death!" "There is," said this impassioned orator, "no longer any room for hope. We must *fight*. I repeat it, sir, we *must* fight. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as ours, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Nor is there retreat but in submission and slavery. Gentlemen may cry peace! peace!—but there is *no* peace. The war is actually begun. The next gale that sweeps from the North will bring to our ears the crash of resounding arms."

Patrick  
Henry.

Impend-  
ing con-  
flagra-  
tion.

Such were the sentiments now boldly declared in the Continental Congress. There was only needed a spark to kindle a conflagration. The tide of revolution could not now be suppressed. The moment that blood should actually be shed in defence of liberty, that moment it would prove a signal for a general rising of the people, and for the declaration of American independence.

The town of Lexington, in Massachusetts, was the Bk. V.  
immortal spot where the first altar to perpetual liberty Ch. I.  
smoked with human sacrifice—where the fire of revolu- A. D.  
tion was kindled, which spread, with the rapidity of light- 1775.  
ning, until the whole continent was in a blaze.

The fire  
kindled.

General Gage, having learned that military stores and arms were deposited at Concord, resolved to seize them, and despatched eight hundred troops, under Colonel Smith, for that purpose. His design was suspected, alarm-bells were rung, the people flew to arms, the provincial militia assembled, and preparations for resistance were made. The head of the British column confronted, at Lexington, a force of one hundred minute-men. The British officers called upon them to lay down their arms and disperse. The order was not obeyed, and the British fired. Only eight men were killed; but the blood of eight men spilled, was enough to arouse the whole nation. The militia around Concord and Lexington rushed to the aid of their brethren in arms. The British troops, surrounded by superior numbers, hastily retreated. They were pursued. Their retreat became a rout, and they would have been entirely cut off, had not Lord Percy, despatched by Gage, advanced to their relief.

Battle of  
Lexing-  
ton.

With the battle of Lexington, April 19th, 1775, opened the first act of the eventful drama of the American Revolution. The die was now cast, and, for seven succeeding years, the question for Americans to solve was—liberty or slavery.