CHAPTER V

The Road to War

Repeal of the Stamp Act

In the meantime the struggle had been widened from a colonial to a national base. Sensing with true revolutionary instinct the need for transforming the struggle from a series of movements in separate colonies into a single, all-embracing structure, a national gathering was arranged at the suggestion of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. The Stamp Act Congress, as it was called, convened in New York on October 7, 1765.

Delegates appeared from all of the colonies except New Hampshire, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia —and from these unofficial messages of endorsement were received. This first national revolutionary gathering issued a declaration of American rights and petitioned the Crown and Parliament for the redress of grievances. For the first time the Americans had united on a national scale for common purposes and in its "Declarations of Rights and Grievances" the Stamp Act Congress gave to the world the colonies' first joint and united document.

By the time these petitions were given consideration in London, the effects of the American boycott against English goods were showing the full force of their relentless pressure. British merchants were in distress and were frightened by the continued and stubborn resolu-

tion of the colonists to take no cargoes unless the Stamp Tax was repealed.

The mass pressure upon Parliament, both from home and abroad, was so strong that early in 1766 the Stamp Act was rescinded. But accompanying the repeal there appeared an ominous note. Parliament, while making the immediate concession, was surrendering none of its theoretical rights. Included in the repeal was a "Declaratory Act" reaffirming the right of Parliament to pass legislation binding upon the colonies "in all cases whatsoever." The British ruling class had no intention of restoring to the Americans the commercial conditions of the days prior to 1763. The issue was merely being postponed. The ax had not yet been laid at the root of the principle involved in the fight.

Toward Revolt

The ruling class of England was determined, at whatever cost, to invoke its own particular theories and methods of colonial exploitation. The repeal of the Stamp Act, accordingly, only left matters in a state of suspended animation. It was merely a question of awaiting the opportune moment.

The rejoicing in America over the Stamp Tax repeal did not last long. In New York trouble arose over the billeting of English troops at the expense of the colony. In Massachusetts there was conflict over a demand for damages resulting from the Stamp Act riots. Illegal trade with Holland was steadily increasing,[29] to the great annoyance of the Crown. In most of the colonies there was incessant trouble over one issue or another. The more farsighted of the American leaders saw all of the dangers lurking in the shadow of the Declaratory Act. Men like Samuel Adams were working feverishly

in organizational preparation for the struggle, which they clearly saw was bound to come.

Their fears soon bore fruit when, in 1766, Charles Townshend became Chancellor of the Exchequer and head of the British ministry. He shortly proposed and secured, in May, 1767, three acts relating to the colonies. In one a list of enumerated articles—glass, red and white lead, painters' colors, paper and tea—were to be taxed by a port duty. The proceeds, anticipated at £40,000, Townshend proposed to use for the payment of the salaries of crown officers and judges in the colonies who had hitherto been dependent upon American legislatures for their remuneration—a detail which the assemblies had used as a whip over recalcitrant officials to good effect. Next, he again took measures to enforce the Navigation Acts and established a "Board of Commissioners of the Customs" with broad powers to regulate and superintend the trade laws in America. Lastly, the functions of the New York Assembly were suspended until that colony complied with the act requiring it to billet English soldiers.

The colonies saw all of the significance of these acts, and there was a new wave of protest. There were new petitions, meetings, pamphlets, violence. At the initiative of New England and New York, non-consumption and non-importation agreements against British goods were again made by most of the colonies.

It was simply impossible to enforce the new regulations. Violent outbreaks in Boston and elsewhere caused the revenue acts to collapse. When, for example, a cargo of foreign wine was landed in 1768 and openly carried through the streets of Boston under popular guard, the revenue and other officers did not dare to interfere.

In September, 1768, about 1,000 British troops were landed at Boston to intimidate the town. The masses, determined to accord the invaders the same courtesy

they would to "Serpents and Panthers," refused to obey the billeting law and the soldiers had to be quartered in hired buildings. There was much bad blood between them and the thoroughly aroused inhabitants. The Sons of Liberty serenaded them almost daily. Early in 1770 trouble started. It culminated on March 5 in an open conflict between an aroused crowd and all of the troops in Boston. Five Americans were killed and six were wounded on that day—the event is known in American history as the "Boston Massacre." Among those who headed the colonials on this occasion was Crispus Attucks, a Negro who was killed at the first British volley. News of this incident, in greatly exaggerated form, traveled like wild-fire over the American continent. In Boston the victims were given a public funeral. Everywhere protest and indignation meetings were held. The New England militia prepared to drive out the British troops by force. The influence of the incident was probably unparalleled in the march of immediate events leading to the revolution. The protest and the pressure were so strong that the soldiers were shortly thereafter withdrawn from the town.

The revenues from America, the British cabinet soon learned to its dismay, were only £295 more than the administrative expenses involved in collection. Moreover, the military expenses in America were £170,000, and the spirit of resistance was increasing. Although Lord North, who now headed the ministry—due to the death of Grenville in September, 1767—had declared that the Townshend Acts would not be repealed "till we see America prostrate at our feet," he, like his predecessors, was compelled to yield. All of the duties levied by the Townshend Acts were repealed save the one on tea. That, like the Declaratory Act, was retained for the sake of the principle involved—the maintenance of the parliamentary right to levy such taxes.

Colonial Unity

In the meantime the colonies were drawing closer together in the common cause of resistance. In February, 1768, two years prior to the Boston Massacre, the Massachusetts House of Representatives had sent a circular letter to the other colonial legislatures urging the necessity of unity in order that the activities of each colony "should harmonize with each other." [80] The letter was rather moderate in tone and still recognized Parliamentary authority. However, colonial unity was the revolutionists' big objective of the moment and they recognized that this could as yet be achieved only on moderate ground. Men like Samuel Adams were taking no chances of isolating themselves by proceeding too far ahead of public opinion. They were still laying the groundwork with extreme care, and biding their time.

On that occasion more than half of the colonies had returned sympathetic answers. The colonial governors had been ordered by England to forbid all such "unwarrantable combinations." They threatened dissolution of assemblies as the penalty for failure to treat the Massachusetts suggestion "with the contempt it deserves." Every colony defied this injunction and reendorsed the idea of united action.

Now, in 1772, Samuel Adams conceived another practical plan in the same direction. Noting that protest was still largely localized, he determined to accomplish the goal of setting up the machinery necessary to bring about concerted action in all localities and colonies. He therefore proposed the formation of Committees of Correspondence—a revolutionary machine which proved to be so effective as to call forth from a contemporary Tory pamphleteer the invective: "the

foulest, subtlest and most venomous serpent that ever issued from the eggs of sedition."

It was late in November, 1772, that Adams was able to induce the town meeting of Boston to create such a Committee of Correspondence to exchange views and information with other Massachusetts towns and, if necessary, plan joint action. In the few remaining weeks of the year, over eighty towns responded to the suggestion and set up similar committees. The following year Virginia, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and South Carolina also endorsed and carried out the suggestion.

Here was a central, permanent revolutionary apparatus. Before long, it developed, that Adams' suggestion * had brought into being the most powerful engine yet devised for arousing sentiment throughout the colonies. The inter-colonial committees became leagues through which to direct and control events. They developed opinion and originated action on a municipal, provincial and inter-provincial plane. They consolidated the masses, brought about harmony of action and saw that their dictates were obeyed. "Whoever does not comply with anything proposed by them," reported General Gage to the British ministry, "their persons and property were not safe." † By this time the revolutionary leaders had concluded that the time to strike for free-

* Some evidence has been advanced to prove that the plan really originated eight years earlier in New York. See H. B. Dawson, *The Sons of Liberty in New York*, pp. 60-64, 86. For additional information on the Committees of Correspondence, see J. C. Miller, *Sam Adams, Pioneer in Propaganda*, pp. 256-275.

† The American scheme of Committees of Correspondence was later used by European radicals to spread revolutionary doctrines. In the 1790's and 1800's, English radical leaders founded a Corresponding Society for the purpose of developing British opinion and of consolidating the masses. In 1845, Marx and Engels established a Communist Correspondence Committee which blossomed forth two years later as the Communist League.

dom had come. They were busily and systematically at work provoking a crisis, which they knew full well must lead to war and eventual separation.

The Boston Tea Party

The colonial radicals well realized that the ruling class of Great Britain had not relaxed in its determination to fit colonial exploitation into the mercantilist pattern. In 1773, the expected came to pass in connection with the tea tax, which had been retained when the other Townshend Acts were repealed.

The new tea tax proposed and passed by Lord North had a twofold purpose: to help the East India Company out of the dire financial straits into which it had fallen—partly due to the accumulation of a surplus stock of tea amounting to seventeen million pounds—and to break through the American resistance to parliamentary taxation. In this way the issue would be forced once and for all.

The company was therefore permitted to bring its tea into England, duty free,* but the threepence a pound import duty in America was retained. Moreover, the company was no longer to be required to sell this tea to an English middleman for reëxport, but was permitted to handle the entire transaction itself and to organize its own direct agencies in America.

By eliminating the English merchant and the American importer, and selling directly to the American retailer, profits formerly paid by the ultimate consumer were thus removed. This, plus the withdrawal of English import duties, would have enabled the company

*It had formerly been required to pay twelvepence per pound duty on all tea imported, whether the tea was sold in England or not. The necessity of first landing the tea cargo in England, regardless of its ultimate destination was, of course, in accordance with requirements of the Navigation Acts.

BOSTON, JUNE 22d, 1775.

SIR,

THE Committee of Correſpondence of the Town of *Boſton*, conformable to that Duty which they have hitherto endeavoured to diſcharge with Fidelity, again addreſs you with a very fortunate important Diſcovery; and cannot but expreſs their grateful Sentiments in having obtained the Approbation of ſo large a Majority of the Towns in this Colony, for their paſt Attention to the general Intereſt.

A more extraordinary Occurrence poſſibly never yet took Place in *America*; the Providential Care of that gracious Being who conducted the early Settlers of this Country to eſtabliſh a ſafe Retreat from Tyranny for themſelves and their Poſterity in *America*, has again wonderfully interpoſed to bring to Light the Plot that had been laid for us by our malicious and inſidious Enemies.

Our preſent Governor has been exerting himſelf (as the honorable Houſe of Aſſembly have expreſſed themſelves in their late Reſolves) "by his ſecret confidential Correſpondence, to introduce Meaſures "deſtructive of our conſtitutional Liberty, while he has practiced every "method among the People of this Province, to fix in their Minds "an exalted Opinion of his warmeſt Affection for them, and his "unremitted Endeavours to promote their beſt Intereſt at the Court "of Great-Britain." This will abundantly appear by the Letters and Reſolves which we herewith tranſmit to you; the ſerious Peruſal of which will ſhew you your preſent moſt dangerous Situation. This Period calls for the ſtricteſt Concurrence in Sentiment and Action of every individual of this Province, and we may add, of THIS CONTINENT; all private Views ſhould be annihilated, and the Good of the Whole ſhould be the ſingle Object of our Purſuit—"By uniting we ſtand," and ſhall be able to defeat the Invaders and Violaters of our Rights.

We are,

Your Friends and humble Servants,

Signed by Direction of the Committee for Correſpondence in *Boſton*,

William Cooper } Town-Clerk.

To the Town-Clerk of , *to be immediately delivered to the Committee of Correſpondence for your Town, if ſuch a Committee is choſen, otherwiſe to the Gentlemen the Seleſtmen, to be communicated to the Town.*

CIRCULAR OF THE BOSTON COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE

to sell tea in America about 50% cheaper than the smuggled product—which was being illegally brought in in great quantities from Holland. By thus making the arrangement attractive to the American consumer, it was expected that on purely economic grounds the entire plan could be quietly slipped over and accepted by the masses.

But by this time the revolutionary acuteness of the Americans was too well developed to be taken in by so obvious a political trick. They were not going to surrender the taxation principle in return for the saving of a few pennies per pound on tea. The colonials were now determined to resist English oppression. They could not be bribed into surrender.

Moreover, as a contemporary writer pointed out, the Americans well realized that "Tho' the first Teas may be sold at a low Rate to make a popular Entry, yet when this mode of receiving Tea is well established, they, as all other Monopolists do, will mediate a greater profit on their Goods, and set them up at what price they please." [31] It was also very clearly understood that success in the tea venture would soon be reflected in every other phase of colonial economic activity.

Meetings of protest and widespread newspaper discussion prepared a hostile public opinion for the arrival of the first tea shipments under the act. Resolutions were passed that the tea must not be permitted to land and that no duty be paid. Friction and violence were inevitable. In New York, the first ship to arrive with tea under the act was forced by the Sons of Liberty to return without unloading its cargo; a second cargo was dumped into the harbor by an aroused crowd. At Philadelphia, the captain of a ship with a cargo of tea, when confronted by an indignant meeting of eight thousand people, saw the wisdom of returning home without undertaking to unload. In Charleston the tea

was landed but was sent to warehouses where it remained untouched for three years, whereupon it was expropriated and auctioned for the benefit of the revolutionary government.

Most far-reaching in its influence and effect was the destruction of the tea brought into Boston on the ship "Dartmouth"—the Boston Tea Party. On December 16, 1773, the largest meeting ever held in Boston—nearly eight thousand people—had assembled to induce the governor of the province to permit the owner of the ship to leave, as he desired to do, without unloading. When efforts to prevail along these lines were unsuccessful, Samuel Adams adjourned the meeting with the fateful declaration, "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country." [32]

These words were apparently a prearranged signal. Immediately there were shouts such as "Boston harbor a tea-pot tonight." [33] Instantly a disciplined crowd of men, disguised as Indians, hastened to Griffin's Wharf where the tea lay on board the "Dartmouth" and two other ships which had also arrived with tea. They clambered aboard and for two hours silently and systematically hoisted the tea chests from the holds, broke them open and dumped the contents into the harbor.

A great crowd silently watched these proceedings from the shore. The whole affair was conducted quietly and methodically. No person was harmed, no property save the tea was injured, no tea was carried away. And when the job at hand was concluded, order prevailed and the "Indians" vanished.

Property to the value of £15,000 belonging to the East India Company had gone overboard that night. The participants could not be "identified" but it is accepted that citizens of high position and merchants as well as carpenters, masons, farmers, blacksmiths and

barbers had all been numbered among the "Mohawks" who had taken this action.

From the moment of the sinking of the tea in Boston harbor, American revolutionary activity took a new and more radical turn. Evidence was clear that the colonists were ready to resist, by violent means if needs be. Six additional colonies hastened to appoint Committees of Correspondence to keep in touch with the revolutionary center at Boston—leaving only Pennsylvania still holding off. The Americans were clearly preparing for struggle. They had crossed the Rubicon.

The Five "Intolerable Acts"

The challenge to Great Britain was clear and direct. And the mightiest imperial power of the day, recognizing that the period of conciliation and concessions was passed, met it with equal firmness. The British ruling class finally stiffened its attitude and determined to see the struggle through to the bitter end. The five "Intolerable Acts" were forthcoming almost immediately.

When the news reached London of what had happened in Boston, the fury of the ruling class knew no bounds. "Boston ought to be knocked about their ears and destroyed," shouted one parliamentary representative. He would "burn and set fire to all their woods." Another could now see that "the Americans were a strange set of people . . . instead of making their claim by argument they always . . . decide the matter by tarring and feathering." [34] In any event, although the Whig minority, represented by Chatham in the House of Lords and by Burke in the Commons, was reluctant to take punitive measures, the inevitable consequence of which they were farsighted enough to envisage,[35] the reactionaries in power set their faces against the "agitators" on the American side of the Atlantic. The ruling party of commercial monopoly was intent upon prosecuting a policy which inadvertently pushed ahead the date of its own doom. Accordingly, measures of the most stringest nature were adopted.

The first measure closed the port of Boston, moved the customhouse to Salem, forbade the landing or shipping of merchandise through the harbor of Boston and stationed ships of war on the spot to enforce the law. Thus, the town, which owed its prosperity to commercial activity, was forbidden to engage in sea commerce. The ban was to be lifted only when compensation was made for the destroyed tea and the Crown's officers were satisfied as to the likelihood of future obedience to royal authority.

Next, the charter of Massachusetts was remodeled. Members of the Council, or upper chamber, hitherto chosen by the elected assembly, were henceforth to be appointed by the Crown. And since, as Lord North put it, "If the Governor issued a proclamation, there is hardly found a magistrate to obey it," the judges, sheriffs and magistrates were made appointable by the royal governor and removable at his pleasure. At the same time, to strike at the revolutionary actions which were emanating from town meetings, the rights of those bodies were seriously abridged. Recognizing that the town meetings were the originators of the measures striking at royal government, Lord North decided that they must be definitely curbed. For one thing they might not meet at all, save for elections, without the consent of the governor and no subject might be discussed, even when they were convoked, without his specific authorization.

In anticipation of trouble and even open resistance, Lord North moved to protect officers brought to trial for capital offenses committed in the execution of their

duties. It was provided that should persons be indicted for acts committed while aiding a magistrate to suppress tumult or riot the Governor might send them for trial to another colony or to England.

Next, a quartering Act was passed. Local authorities were required to find suitable quarters for English troops sent into the colony. Also, General Gage, Commander-in-Chief of the English army in America, was appointed Governor of Massachusetts and made responsible for executing the coercive policies of Parliament.

At about the same time Great Britain promulgated the Quebec Act. The land ceded by France in 1763 between the Appalachians and the Mississippi was made part of the province of Quebec and within it the Catholic religion was established by law. Massachusetts, Virginia, New York and Connecticut all claimed lands under their charters—with their rich fur trading and land speculating possibilities—in the region between the Ohio and the Great Lakes. They thus saw their claims, and their plans to extend and expand westward into the Mississippi Valley, shattered at one fell swoop.* In addition, the religious aspects of the bill

* Economically speaking, of all the colonies, Virginia was the most adversely affected by the Quebec Act of 1774. By uniting the old Northwest with Quebec province, the British government not only shattered the dreams of land speculators in Virginia but also sounded the death knell of the plantation system in the "Old Dominion." From the very beginning, the Virginia planting economy was conducted on a narrow margin of profit which, by the second half of the eighteenth century, had reached almost the vanishing point. Yet, during this time, the plantation system had been able to maintain itself chiefly on the basis of credit drawn from British sources. English capitalists had been willing to extend short- and long-term capital largely because they believed that Virginia planters would be able to pay their debts by garnering profits derived from speculative land ventures in the West. In short, the solvency of the Virginia plantation system had been dependent upon the subsidiary activity of land speculation. With the passage of the Quebec Act all hope in such activity was virtually ended. The plantation economy of the "Old Dominion" began to reel as English capitalists began to think twice before extending credit. Was it any wonder that the Quebec Act drove Virginians "almost unanimously into the party of the American revolutionists"? (See L. M. Hacker, "The First American Revolution" [*Columbia University Quarterly*, September, 1935, vol. xxvii, no. 3, pp. 269-271]. For the effect of the act itself upon Virginia as well as for the quotation cited consult C. W. Alvord, "Virginia and the West" [*Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, vol. iii, no. 1, p. 25].)

fanned the anti-Catholic flames of New England Protestantism. The slogan "no popery" became additional grist for the revolutionary mill.

The First Continental Congress and the Outbreak of War

By this time America was on the verge of open war. The colonials realized that their happiness and prosperity hung in the balance and the radicals among them saw that the time for open resistance was at hand.

A shower of denunciatory pamphlets immediately appeared. Wheat, corn, flour, meat and other commodities were shipped from as far as Virginia and South Carolina to aid the poor of distressed and blockaded Boston —people thrown out of employment through the closing of the port. "The heads of the nobility grow dangerous to the gentry, and how to keep them down is the question," commented the aristocratic Gouverneur Morris as he saw the masses taking greater power into their own hands and the issue shift from a demand from mere trade reform into political channels with a mounting sentiment for independence. "The mob begin to think and to reason," he continued. "Poor reptiles! it is with them a vernal morning; they are struggling to cast off their winter's slough, they bask in the sunshine, and ere noon they will bite, depend upon it. The gentry begin to fear this." [88]

VOTES and PROCEEDINGS

the Town of

B O S T O N,

JUNE 17, 1774.

AT a legal and very full meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Boston, *by adjournment at* Faneuil-hall, *June* 17, 1774.

The Hon. JOHN ADAMS, Esq; Moderator.

UPON a motion made, the town again entered into the conſideration of that article in the warrant, Viz. "To conſider and determine what meaſures are proper to be taken upon the preſent exigency of our public affairs, more eſpecially relative to the late edict of a Britiſh parliament for blocking up the harbour of Boſton, and annihilating the trade of this town," and after very ſerious debates thereon,

VOTED, (With only one diſſentient) That the committee of correſpondence be enjoined forthwith to write to all the other colonies, acquainting them that we are not idle, that we are deliberating upon the ſteps to be taken on the preſent exigencies of our public affairs; that our brethren the landed intereſt of this province, with an unexampled ſpirit and unanimity, are entering into a non-conſumption agrement; and that we are waiting with anxious expectation for the reſult of a continental congreſs, whoſe meeting we impatiently deſire, in whoſe wiſdom and firmneſs we can confide, and in whoſe determinations we ſhall chearfully acquieſce.

Agreable to order, the committee of correſpondence laid before the town ſuch letters, as they had received in anſwer to the circular letters, wrote by them to the ſeveral colonies and alſo the ſea port towns in this province ſince the reception of the Boſton port bill; and the ſame being publicly read,

VOTED, unanimouſly, That our warmeſt thanks be tranſmitted to our brethren on the continent, for that humanity, ſympathy and affection with which they have been inſpired, and which they have expreſſed towards this diſtreſſed town at this important ſeaſon.

VOTED, unanimouſly, That the thanks of this town be, and hereby are, given to the committee of correſpondence, for their faithfulneſs, in the diſcharge of their truſt, and that they be deſired to continue their vigilance and activity in that ſervice.

Whereas the Overſeers of the poor in the town of Boſton are a body politic, by law conſtituted for the reception and diſtribution of all charitable donations for the uſe of the poor of ſaid town,

VOTED, That all grants and donations to this town and the poor thereof at this diſtreſſing ſeaſon, be paid and delivered into the hands of ſaid Overſeers, and by them appropriated and diſtributed in concert with the committee lately appointed by this town for the conſideration of ways and means of employing the poor.

VOTED, That the townclerk be directed to publiſh the proceedings of this meeting in the ſeveral news papers.

The meeting was then adjourned to Monday the 27th of June, inſtant.

Atteſt,

WILLIAM COOPER, Town Clerk.

Meanwhile, town meetings were being held despite their prohibition. Workmen of Boston refused through their Committee of Mechanics to provide labor with which to erect barracks for Gage's troops and, when the General in turn sought to recruit the necessary labor in New York, the workers of that city refused to be transported to do "scab" work of this type.[37] Councilors appointed under the new acts were finding life most uncomfortable. Gage sent a hurry call to England for an additional 20,000 troops.

It soon became evident that the colonies were not to be intimidated by the coercive legislation and that the acts directed against Boston were tending to draw the colonies closer together. Riots broke out almost daily. Conspicuous Tories were roughly handled. The Committees of Correspondence were increasingly active. A "Solemn League and Covenant" was entered into, pledging all its signers to abstain from trade relations with England. "The die is now cast," wrote the King. "The colonies must either submit or triumph." The Americans similarly recognized that the hour had come. "It must come to a quarrel with Great Britain sooner or later," said Samuel Adams, "and if so, what can be a better time than the present?" [38]

Meanwhile, the people were rapidly arming themselves. Guns and munitions were being collected, militias were organizing and drilling, volunteers called "Minute Men" were pledging themselves to be ready for any emergency at a moment's notice. The British ministry was fast learning that the people with whom it was dealing could not be broken or intimidated.

In anticipation of the breaking of the storm the revolutionists saw the need of a national congress which would represent all of the colonies—after the model of the earlier Stamp Act Congress. Virginia took the lead and when the House of Burgesses was dissolved by

the Governor for acts of solidarity with blockaded Boston, the members reassembled at the Raleigh Tavern and issued a call to the other colonies for a general Congress.

Every colony except Georgia was represented when the First Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774. The delegates were variously selected—some by their provincial assemblies, others by rump bodies. As Joseph Galloway, delegate from Pennsylvania, later observed, the conservative forces present were quickly pushed into the background and "measures for independence and sedition were soon after preferred to those of harmony and liberty, and no arguments . . . could prevail on a majority of the Colonies to desert them." [39]

The first fruit of the Congress was the issuance of a "Declaration of Rights," in which the views of the colonials were stated and defined. They defended the American position, "by the immutable laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters or compacts," [40] demanded internal self-regulation, and conceded to Parliament the rights of regulation only in such matters as may relate to "external commerce, for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole Empire." [41] As to the acts passed since 1763, however, the Congress declared in unmistakable language: "To these grievous acts and measures Americans cannot submit." [42]

The members of the Congress next bound themselves and their constituents to what they called the "Continental Association," and declared unanimously that until such times as redress might be made "there be no importation into British America, from Great Britain or Ireland of any goods, wares or merchandise whatsoever." [43] To non-importation was added a non-consumption agreement and arrangements were made

to abolish extravagances of all kinds, promote frugality and encourage local manufacture.

Powerful addresses were sent to the Crown and to the English people and a reaffirmation was made of the colonial ties and basic loyalty to Great Britain. Before adjourning, arrangements were made for convening a Second Continental Congress the following May (1775) to give further consideration to the affairs of the colonies.

Meanwhile, in England, all efforts of the Whig minority in Parliament to effect some sort of reconciliation were defeated by large majorities.* Benjamin Franklin, sensing the uselessness of further efforts, returned to America. Parliament, taking measures to compel obedience, declared Massachusetts in a state of rebellion, arranged for the dispatch of additional armed forces to America, and answered the American "Association" by a counter act restraining the colonies from trade with Great Britain.

On the night of April 18, 1775, General Gage, commanding the troops at Boston, sent about 800 men to seize the military stores which the provincials had collected at Concord, eighteen miles north of Boston. As soon as they set out, riders sped in every direction to warn the inhabitants. As the British passed through Lexington, on the road to their objective, they found armed villagers behind every fence, corner and wall. From every sort of ambush volleys were fired at the on-coming Britishers. The latter were able to move on to Concord from where, however, they were forced to retreat to Boston, with a loss of close to three hundred killed, wounded or prisoners. The American loss was about 90 men.

The war was on. When the Second Continental Con-

* On an American question this opposition could muster only about 90 votes out of approximately 350.

WILLIAM JACKSON,

an *IMPORTER*; at the

BRAZEN HEAD,

North Side of the TOWN-HOUSE,

and *Oppoſite the Town-Pump, in*

Corn-hill, BOSTON.

It is deſired that the SONS and DAUGHTERS of *LIBERTY*, would not buy any one thing of him, for in ſo doing they will bring Diſgrace upon *themſelves*, and their *Poſterity*, for *ever* and *ever*, AMEN.

BOYCOTTING POSTER

gress gathered in May, 1775, there was no longer any question of ways and means of peaceful resistance. Organization of the war was the only order of the day.

The job in hand was tackled with energy and haste. George Washington, a somewhat reticent but extremely sagacious member of Congress, who had had military experience in the French and Indian Wars, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. Arrangements were entered into for the importation of munitions and supplies. A call for volunteers was sent forth. Provisions were made for financing the war—through the issuance of floods of paper money. The war machinery was put into gear and prepared for action.

CHAPTER VI

In the Throes of Revolution

The Dual Government

The bodies which organized and prosecuted the American Revolution operated outside of the existing channels of established English law. Not authorized—and even prohibited—by the Crown, they were without legal bases or sanction. In their very existence they constituted a defiance of authority—a revolutionary usurpation and seizure of political power. They epitomized Civil War.

The members of the Stamp Act Congress, the First Continental Congress and the Second Continental Congress were variously selected. Some, to be true, were elected by their colonial assemblies—but usually in defiance of an express prohibition from the superior authorities. Sometimes these assemblies reconvened without being called by authority and under these irregular conditions, in extra-legal bodies of one type or another unknown to the law, selected their representatives. Others were delegated by their Committees of Correspondence or directly elected by defiant voters in their town or country voting places. In each of the colonies the revolutionists, determined upon the end they had in view, adapted themselves to local exigencies. When delegates could not be selected in one manner, another was resorted to—legal precedent and established procedure notwithstanding. Besides Continental Congresses, there were county and provincial