

every British subject, and many of England's wisest statesmen, trusting in their repeated professions of loyalty, were the strongest champions of their cause.

In the autumn of the year 1774 a general convention of delegates from twelve of the thirteen provinces—Georgia not sending any delegates—was held at Philadelphia. The principal acts of this Congress, as it was called, were a *Declaration of Rights*, an address to the King, an address to the people of Great Britain, a memorial to the Americans, and a letter to the people of Canada. A close study of these several documents will not disclose a single expression of disloyalty to the Crown. Their arguments were based upon the constitutional rights of the colonists as subjects of Great Britain. There is no hint or suggestion of secession; but on the contrary they entreat "His Majesty's gracious interposition to remove such grievances and thereby to restore to Great Britain and the colonies that harmony so necessary to the happiness of the British Empire, and so ardently desired by all America."

In the address of this Congress to the people of Great Britain they specifically deny any idea of seeking independence in the following words: "You have been told that we are seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independence. Be assured that these are not facts but calumnies." It was upon the assurance that independence was not the object in view that the colonists supported the delegates in their *Declaration of Rights*, the principles of which could be advocated by every Canadian to-day, without detracting one iota from his loyalty. It was upon this assurance that Lord Chatham, and many other English statesmen of unquestioned loyalty to the throne, so ably defended their brethren across the sea. Can it be supposed for one moment that the authors of the words I have quoted would have had the support of their fellow colonists, if they had announced their intention of invoking the aid of England's bitterest foes, who, with their Indian allies, had raided the towns and villages of New England and laid in ashes the homes of the frontiersmen? The colonists were determined to insist upon what they considered to be their rights under the British Constitution and, if necessary, were prepared to defend those rights by force, not as revolutionists, but as British subjects, and the delegates to Congress had no mandate from the people to adopt any other policy. To depart from the principles outlined in the *Declaration of Rights* and in the address to Great Britain was a breach of faith, not only with the colonists themselves, but with their sympathizers in Great Britain, who were fighting their battles for them in Parliament. The despotic rule of King George, seconded by his corrupt ministers and Parliament, was as loudly denounced in England as it was in America: but the champions of the