

In the next place, the declaration, avoiding specious and vague generalities, grounds itself with anxious care upon the past, and reconciles right and fact. Of universal principles enough is repeated to prove that America chose for her own that system of politics which recognises the rule of eternal justice; and independence is vindicated by the application of that rule to the grievous instructions, laws, and acts, proceeding from the king, in the exercise of his prerogative, or in concurrence with the lords and commons of Great Britain. The colonies professed to drive back innovations, and not, with roving zeal, to overturn all traditional inequalities; they were no rebels against the past, of which they knew the present to be the child; with all the glad anticipations of greatness that broke forth from the prophetic soul of the youthful nation, they took their point of departure from the world as it was. They did not declare against monarchy itself; they sought no general overthrow of all kings, no universal system of republics; nor did they cherish in their hearts a lurking hatred against princes. Till within a few years or months, loyalty to the house of Hanover had been to them another name for the love of civil and religious liberty; the British constitution, the best system that had ever been devised for the security of liberty and property by a representative government. Neither Franklin, nor Washington, nor John Adams, nor Jefferson, nor Jay, had ever expressed a preference for a republic. The voices that rose for independence spoke also for alliances with kings. The sovereignty of George III. was renounced, not because he was a king, but because he was deemed to be "a tyrant."

The insurgents, as they took up self-government, manifested no impatience at the recollection of having been ruled by a royal line, no eagerness to blot out memorials of their former state; they sent forth no Hugh Peter to recommend to the mother country the abolition of monarchy, which no one seems to have proposed or to have wished; in the moment of revolution in America, they did not counsel the English to undertake a revolution. The republic was to America a godsend; it came, though unsought, because society contained the elements of no other organization. Here, and in that century here