

POINTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

LEXINGTON—CONCORD—BUNKER HILL.

“**T**HEY (the American colonies) will no longer need her protection: she will call on them to contribute toward supporting the burden they have helped to bring on her, and they will answer by striking off all dependence.” Thus prophesied Count Vergennes, an eminent French statesman at the close of the conflict between France and England. No doubt many considered these words as but the cant of some whining Frenchman who an unwilling witness had seen the great territories in America, wrested from the control of his country by the strong arm of mighty England.

However, the prophecy has been fulfilled, Vergennes proved himself a true prophet. The American colonies soon found out they could succeed without the protection of England; they soon found out their mother country intended to force them to pay war debts incurred in both Europe and America; they soon found out that a system of taxation without representation was to be forced upon them. But the spirit of liberty that brooked no oppression had been born in them, and had remained in their souls through long ages and through long years. They appealed to the king, to the Parliament, to the people of England. All, with the exception of a very few, the most noble and learned men in all Great Britain closed their eyes and ears to their

brothers across the broad expanse of the Atlantic; Englishmen all as staunch, as brave, and as true as themselves, until it became necessary either to renounce their country and name or become slaves, low, and abject.

Measures after measures were enacted only to fail in operation because of the determined resistance of the Americans. The refusal of the colonists to submit to these worse than tyrannical laws served but to fan into a fierce flame the smouldering coals of British arrogance and jealousy. Lord North, the prime minister at the time, said concerning the subject of taxation: “the properest time to exert our right to taxation, is when that right is refused. To temporize is to yield; and the authority of the mother country if it is now unsupported, will be relinquished forever; a total repeal cannot be thought of until America is prostrate at our feet.” Noble words these, and from a noble lord. When America is prostrate at his feet, a total repeal would be granted. Generosity personified. But the noble lord should have remembered that America was a new England, peopled by Englishmen with English customs and endowed with the indomitable English spirit.

It must here be said that the Americans deserve the fullest measure of praise and commendation for having suffered so much, so