

colonists had no thought of encouraging secession, and no reason to believe that the American Congress would violate its professions of loyalty. As late as November, 1775, the legislature of Pennsylvania passed a resolution giving to its delegates the following instructions: "We direct that you exert your utmost endeavours to agree upon and recommend such measures as you shall judge to afford the best proposal of obtaining redress of American grievances, and restoring that unity and harmony between Great Britain and the colonies so essential to the welfare and happiness of both countries. Though the oppressive measures of the British Parliament and Administration have compelled us to resist their violence by force of arms, yet we strictly enjoin you, that you, in behalf of this colony, dissent from and utterly reject any propositions, should such be made, that may cause or lead to a separation from our mother country or change the form of this government." Could words be framed to express in stronger language the attachment of the legislature to the British constitution and its determination to adhere to it?

When we consider the feelings of the loyal colonists, who, although ready to assert by force of arms their rights under the British Constitution, were averse to substituting another form of government, we can readily conceive how their long cherished attachment to the British flag received a cruel and unexpected shock when the unheralded Declaration of Independence was passed by the Congress. Contrast the assurances given out on both sides of the Atlantic to the friends of the persecuted colonists with the concluding paragraph of that historic document: "We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that the United Colonies are, and of right ought to be Free and Independent States; and that they are absolved from allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved: and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a pious reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour."

Let us glance for a moment at the manner in which this remarkable change of front was brought about, and we shall see that it was far from the unanimous voice of the delegates, although it was so announced