

CHAPTER XXII.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. — TOWN CONSENTS TO A STATE CONSTITUTION. — LOAN FOR THE POOR. — ENLISTMENT. — THE PRIVATEER "WARREN." — OTHER PRIVATEERS. — STATE ARMED VESSELS. — TOWN-MEETING. — LARGE CLASS OF POOR. — LOSS OF THE PRIVATEER "GLOUCESTER." — DR. SAMUEL ROGERS. — PRIVATEER "SPEEDWELL." — STATE CONSTITUTION REJECTED. — THE TOWN DELINQUENT. — A COMPANY RAISED. — SMALL-POX. — THE PRIVATEER "STARKS." — DISTRESSED CONDITION OF THE TOWN. — DEPRECIATED CURRENCY AND EXORBITANT PRICES. — THIRD CRUISE OF THE "STARKS." — NOTICE OF OTHER PRIVATEERS. — LOSS OF THE "TEMPEST." — TRUE HISTORY OF REVOLUTIONARY PRIVATEERING A SAD ONE.

THE advice and sympathy of the wise and good pastor — the subject of the preceding chapter — were, at this time, of great value. Questions of grave importance were constantly arising, which, together with the distressed condition of many families in the town, called into exercise all the wisdom, courage, and benevolence of our fathers. The war had borne with great severity upon them; but they did not waver for a moment in the support of their principles. On the 24th of June, the great question of a declaration of independence by Congress came before them at a large town-meeting called on purpose to consider it; and they voted unanimously, if that body should resolve upon the measure, to support them in it with their lives and fortunes. In ten days, the Declaration was proclaimed to the world. The immortal document was read from all the pulpits of Gloucester, and copied into the records of the town.

Another subject of great interest at this time was a form of government for Massachusetts, which came before our citizens on the 20th of September; when they voted their consent, that