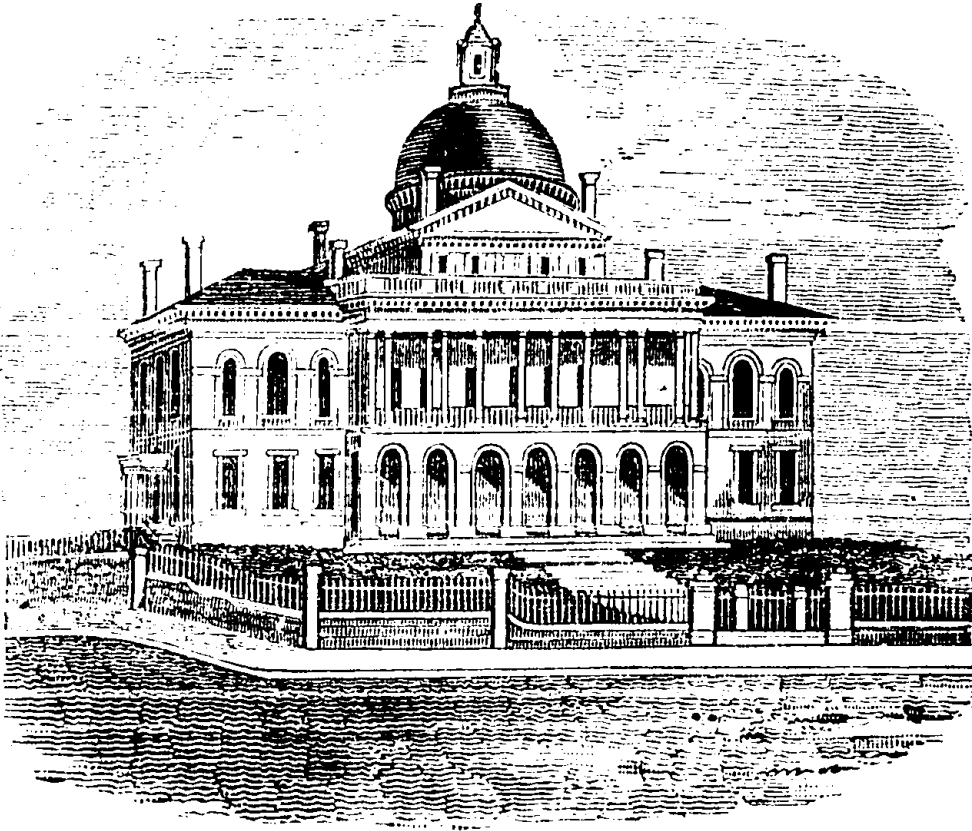


# HISTORY OF BOSTON.



BY ROBIN CARVER.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

*Samuel Adams. Education. Entrance into public life. Hutchinson's opinion of him. Anecdotes. Sent to Congress. Character. Anecdote.*

1. SAMUEL Adams was born in Boston in the year 1722. He received his education at Harvard College. On leaving college he commenced the study of divinity, but afterwards abandoned it. From early youth, he took great interest in public affairs, and by his zeal and vigilance, gained the general attention and favor of the friends of liberty.

2. In the year 1766 he was made a member of the provincial legislature. Here he soon became distinguished, and had a large share in every important measure. When his character was known in England, and it was also known there that he was poor, the enemies of the province thought he might be bribed into silence. They wrote to Governor Hutchinson on the subject. He was too well acquainted

with the character of the man, to be unaware that he could not be bribed. His answer was that Mr Adams was so obstinate and unyielding, that he could not be gained over by any office, gift, or bribe, of any amount.

3. Mr Adams was one of that class, who saw very early that it would be necessary for the colonies to fight. After he had come to this conclusion, no one could have been more unwilling to yield any thing to the British government, in the hope of purchasing peace.

4. When he had received warning at Lexington, of the intended expedition of the British, he was passing through the fields with some friends, to escape from the search which he knew would be made for him. As they were walking along, Mr Adams exclaimed, 'This is a fine day!' 'Very pleasant, indeed,' answered one of his companions, thinking that he referred to the clearness and beauty of the sky.

5. 'I mean,' replied Mr Adams, 'this day is a glorious day for America!' His own situation was at that time full of danger. He had made himself particularly obnoxious to the British government, and had nothing to hope from their forbearance. But he lost all sense of his own and his country's danger, in the prospect of the liberty, that was to follow a successful struggle.

6. About the year 1773, Governor Gage made an effort to corrupt Mr Adams, but without success. An officer of the royal army called upon the patriot, and assured him, that he should receive any benefit that the government could bestow,

if he would desist from his opposition. At the same time, he intimated that his previous conduct had excited the displeasure of the king, and might endanger his personal safety.

7. To this proposition, Mr Adams listened in silence. At its conclusion, with the indignation of a man of honor, injured by an unworthy offer, he replied: 'go, tell Governor Gage, that my peace has long since been made with the King of Kings, and that it is the advice of Samuel Adams to him, no longer to insult the feelings of an already exasperated people.'

8. In 1774, Mr Adams was sent to the first congress. He was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Of this measure he was always an active supporter, and labored with all his unwearied zeal to bring it forward. He was afterwards lieutenant governor, and governor, of his native State. He lived to a very advanced age.

9. In his religious and political opinions, Mr Adams was always very strict and rigid. No person of his time bore a stronger resemblance, in character and feelings, to one of the Plymouth pilgrims. Nothing in the world could have induced him, to relax from a principle which he considered a true one. The loss of life appeared to him a trifling matter, compared with the neglect of duty, or the unjust surrender of a right. He would sooner have been condemned as a traitor, than have paid an unlawful tax, whether in the shape of a trifling duty on tea, or a sixpence stamp.

10. At a meeting, in Boston, Mr Adams related the following fable, which is a good specimen of his style of public speaking. 'A Grecian philosopher, who was lying asleep upon the grass, was roused by the bite of some animal upon the palm of his hand. He closed his hand suddenly, as he awoke, and found that he had caught a field mouse. As he was examining the little animal who dared to attack him, it unexpectedly bit him a second time ; he dropped it, and it made its escape. Now, fellow-citizens, what think you was the reflection he made upon this trifling circumstance ? It was this : that there is no animal, however weak and contemptible, which cannot defend its own liberty, if it will only fight for it.'