

would soon be exterminated. He ordered them to retire. Then the first gun of the American Revolution was fired, and the echo of that discharge reverberated again and again throughout the length and the breadth of America.

The morning of that day had been beautiful, but now there lay eight of America's bravest sons weltering in their blood. Oh! what a sight! but they died not in vain, the blood of those martyrs moistened the ground and into their places hundreds sprang.

What did the English victors do to commemorate such a glorious triumph? Paraded in front of the meeting house they fired a volley, and huzzaed thrice, and then proceeded on their way to Concord. About seven o'clock they entered that village in two divisions. No resistance was offered to them, and immediate preparations were made to destroy the stores. Both bridges were guarded by detachments, and other companies searched for the stores—of course they found none. The reason is simple.

From day break the minute men had been gathering around the house of their captain, Issac Davis. They were eager for the fray, and many were the importunities made to their commander to lead them to the attack. The number of the Americans was between three and four hundred men. They were formed on a hill over looking the town. At their feet flowed the Concord river, and within gunshot was the bridge held by the British.

Finally each officer spoke a few encouraging words to his men, and then the order to advance was given. The English soldiers saw them approaching and began to take up the planks of the bridge. The patriots

hurried forward to prevent this, and a few shots were fired by the soldiers; then a volley followed and two of the Americans fell. Buttrick one of the leaders cried out as if inspired "Fire, fire, my fellow countrymen, for God's sake fire." Two soldiers were killed and several wounded. The British retreated in precipitate disorder toward the main body and left the minute men in possession of the bridge. "This is the world renowned Battle of Concord; more eventful than Agincourt or Blenheim."

The English commander, Smith, gave the order to retreat about noon. The minute men crossed over the country and from every rock, every tree there was poured forth a murderous fire. The soldiers began rather to run than retreat and it was only by the most strenuous efforts on the part of their officers that they could be kept in any formation whatsoever.

Just before they reached Lexington, Lord Percy met them with the reinforcements for which Smith had sent early in the morning. They came in the nick of time, for the English would certainly have all been captured or killed. The soldiers were received into a hollow square and threw themselves upon the ground to snatch a moment's repose, so fatigued were they.

From now on, the villagers contended against fully two-thirds of the forces stationed at Boston. But still, with all this number, delay, possibly, meant ruin, and Percy, after a rest of about thirty minutes, began his retrograde movement to Boston. Every moment the number of patriots increased, and a continued sheet of flame met the British. It must be said to their