

It was a trying few minutes for men whose battle blood was up and made them as eager to get at the foe as a hound to break away from the restraining leash; the discipline which failed at Montmorency was unshakeable in face of a galling shower which left gaps in the British ranks. Wolfe at that moment seemed to pervade his army; every detail seemed to be under his immediate control and he had a word of encouragement for those who waited so loyally for his commands, a word of sympathy for those who fell martyrs to discipline. As Wolfe surveyed the enemy, declared one who observed him closely, his expression became "radiant and joyful beyond description." Some slight confusion and a momentary pause was caused in the French ranks by the action of the irregulars who true to the practice of Canadian as well as New England rangers—a practice that might have saved Braddock's force from annihilation if it had not been misunderstood—threw themselves on the ground after firing in order to re-load. The French regulars were apparently as little prepared as Braddock for the movement. But they swept on until they were within some forty paces. Then Wolfe's command came, and the British muskets rang out as one: "the most perfect volley ever heard on a battlefield" sounding to British and French alike as if fired from "a single monstrous weapon." There were few British bullets which did not find a billet in that point-blank discharge. Montcalm's army reeled before it. As the smoke cleared away it revealed the hideous writhing chaos of human agony; in the brief interval the British had reloaded and again they fired. It was more than flesh and blood could stand, and Montcalm attempted in vain

The
victory.