

## CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS assembled in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, on Monday, the 5th of September, 1774. Twelve colonies were represented. Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, was chosen president, and Charles Thomson, of Pennsylvania, was appointed secretary. The regular business of the congress commenced on the morning of the 7th of September, after the Reverend Jacob Duché, of the Church of England, in an impressive prayer, had implored the aid of Divine Wisdom in the work to be performed.

The session of that congress, so strange and bold in its inception—so unmindful of all precedents—so imposing in its array of truly great, because good and courageous men—so important to the cause of free thought and action in both hemispheres—was brief but wonderfully fruitful of results. The deputies remained in session until the 26th of October. They were far from harmonious in their action. There were antagonisms, growing out of geographical and social differences, that at times threatened to defeat the great purposes of the congress. But the deputies debated with courtesy and candor, respected each other's opinions, sought diligently for the way of truth, and finally matured public measures for future action which received the general approbation of the American people.

The congress prepared and signed a plan for a general



commercial non-intercourse with Great Britain and her West India possessions, according to the recommendation of the assembly of Massachusetts. It was called *The American Association*, and was recommended for adoption throughout the country. It consisted of fourteen articles ; and in addition to its non-intercourse provisions, it recommended the abandonment of the slave trade, the improvement of the breed of sheep, abstinence from all extravagance in living, cessation of indulgence in horse-racing, etc., and the appointment of a committee in every town, to promote conformity to the requirements of the *Association*. Fifty-two members present signed it, and it was sent forth to the people as a powerful weapon wherewith to combat the wicked enactments of the British Parliament.

The congress also put forth a Declaration of Rights, and an address to the people of Great Britain ; another to the several Anglo-American colonies ; another to the inhabitants of Quebec, or Canada ; and a petition to the King. These were remarkable state papers, and elicited the warmest encomiums from the first statesmen in the old world. But their most significant action was on the 8th of October, when they resolved :

*“That this congress approve the opposition of the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay to the execution of the late acts of Parliament, and if the same shall be attempted to be carried into execution by force, in such case all America ought to support them in their opposition.”*

Thus it was that the voice of the *nation* spoke out in harmonious and defiant tones. The quarrel of Massachusetts with the home government was then adopted as their own by the other colonies. It was the deliberate expression of the sentiments of the people of the continent, and made a most profound impression upon the civilized world. And



when full intelligence of the acts of the congress, after their adjournment, reached England, the great William Pitt manifested his admiration of their wisdom, and said: "I have not words to express my satisfaction that the congress has conducted this most arduous and delicate business with such manly wisdom and resolution as do the highest honor to their deliberation."

The congress "dissolved itself" after a session of fifty-one days; and having declared their opinion that "another congress should be held on the 10th day of May next, unless the redress of grievances which we have desired be obtained before that time," they recommended such deputies to assemble at Philadelphia, and that "all the colonies in North America choose delegates as soon as possible to attend such congress."

At the beginning of 1775, the colonies were in a blaze of excitement. Measures were every where consummated or in progress to enforce the *American Association*, by the appointment of committees of inspection; and provincial congresses, assuming the functions of regular civil government, soon began to germinate, in defiance of known preparations on the part of the British ministry to crush the rising rebellion.

In November, 1774, the Committee of Fifty-one in New York was dissolved, and at a meeting of "freeholders and freemen," held at the City Hall on the 22d of that month, a committee of sixty persons were chosen, "for carrying into execution the Association entered into by the Continental Congress."

On that day, Councillor Smith, who was already beginning to waver in his attachment to the cause of the people, in the shape it was assuming, wrote to Colonel Schuyler, saying:



“ You know what spirit prevailed in the Committee of Fifty-one before the congress had published their resolves, letters, etc. Their delegates have become converts to the prevailing sentiments of the congress. The true motives I can not positively as yet pronounce, nor would I be censorious. I am still not without suspicions, and have a little clue. Suppose some of them, who were once opposed to the Liberty Boys, should have reasoned thus at Philadelphia: ‘ The government favor we have already lost, and the question only is whether we shall court the continent or the merchants of New York. From the last we have less to fear. There is an approaching election, and with part of the trade, part of the Church, all the non-episcopals, and all the Liberty Boys, we may secure places in the assembly and laugh at the discontented.’ \* \* \* You ’ll not wonder, therefore, to learn that by the interest of the delegates the Committee of Fifty-one is to be dissolved, and a new committee appointed to execute the decrees of the congress, which is to consist of the delegates and such a set as the most active of the Liberty Boys approve, and had (through the mechanics, who were consulted,) chosen in conjunction with the Committee of Fifty-one, from which a set, who formerly dictated all their movements, have retired outwitted and disgusted, and, as they think, betrayed. With this hint you ’ll be able to predict what the conduct of some old politicians will be at the next session, and will perceive that the current will set all one way for liberty in both Houses, unless some persons will throw obstacles in the way.”\*

As soon as the congress adjourned, the Loyalists and the high church party in New York undertook to weaken the *American Association*, by inducing violations of its requirements. Accomplished scholars and able divines, who had been engaged in the controversy about an American episcopate, now resumed their pens. Among the most eminent of these writers were Reverends Dr. Cooper, president of King’s College, Dr. Ingles, Dr. Seabury, and Dr. Chandler. Their chief opponents were William Livingston, John Jay, and young Alexander Hamilton. The latter entered the list of political writers at this time, and very soon he was acknowledged to be the chief of all, not excepting the veteran combatant, Livingston, who had

\* Autograph letter, November 22, 1774.



battled the church and government party so manfully for many long years. Hamilton's reply to Dr. Seabury, who assumed the character of a "Westchester Farmer," was a masterpiece of reflections and wise conclusions upon the subject of political economy; and at that early day, before cotton, the great staple of our southern States, had been dreamed of as an article of commerce, he foresaw its immense future value. "With respect to *cotton*," he said "you do not pretend to deny that a sufficient quantity of that might be produced. Several of the southern colonies are so favorable to it, that, with due cultivation, in a couple of years they would afford enough to clothe the whole continent."

Colonel Schuyler visited New York in September, for the first time in many months. He was called there by a summons to the bedside of his dying friend, General Bradstreet. He remained in the city, with the exception of one week, until the meeting of the assembly on the 1st of January following.

We have already observed that Bradstreet, from causes which do not appear, was, for several years, alienated from his family. At the time of his death, his wife and four children were living. His son was a major in the British army, and his daughters (Mrs. Agatha Buttar, and Martha and Eliza Bradstreet,) were with their mother in London, under the protecting care of Sir Charles Gould, of the Horse Guards. In an angry moment, Bradstreet had made a will cutting off his family from inheritance of his estate. Colonel Schuyler frequently remonstrated with him on the injustice and cruelty of his act, and finally obtained the General's consent to destroy the will. On the 23d of September, 1774, Bradstreet executed another, in which pro-



vision was made for his family.\* It was drawn by William Smith. Colonel Schuyler was made sole executor, and immediately after the general's death, he addressed the following letter to the widow :

“DEAR MADAM: Such are the vicissitudes of human life, that a misfortune seldom occurs but what is accompanied by some comfort. Such are the reflections which arise on the death of General Bradstreet, for whilst I mourn the departed friend, I rejoice the returned husband and parent. No characters, Madam, are perfectly free from blemish. The greatest, and almost the only one in his was an unbecoming resentment against his family, for supposed faults of which I have often told him I feared he was too much the occasion. This, however, ought to be for ever eradicated from your memory, as he died in perfect peace with all. Having set his heart at ease on this point, he seemed more cheerful than he had been for a long time before, and met his fate with all the fortitude becoming his character as a soldier, and with all the resignation inspired by a consciousness that the Supreme Being disposes all for the best.”†

General Bradstreet was buried in Trinity church-yard, in the city of New York, with military honors. His remains were taken to the church, accompanied by civil and military officers, and the 47th regiment.

The first session of the New York assembly after the Continental Congress had closed its labors commenced on the 10th of January, 1775. There was a clear majority of loyalists or Tories, as the friends of the government were now called, in both Houses, and Colonel Schuyler, as the acknowledged leader of the opposition, nobly seconded by Clinton, Woodhull, Tenbroeck, Boerum, Van Cortlandt, Livingston, De Witt, and Thomas, resolved to have the political issues between the government and the people distinctly drawn and specifically considered.

The venerable Lieutenant Governor Colden, in his mes-

\* Substance of an autograph letter (rough draft) of Colonel Schuyler to Sir Charles Gould, October 2, 1774.

† Autograph letter, October 2, 1774.



sage, called the attention of the Legislature to the disturbed state of the colonies; spoke of the "alarming crisis;" and told the assembly that the country looked to them for wise counsel. "If constituents are discontented and apprehensive," he said, "examine their complaints with calmness and deliberation, and determine upon them with an honest impartiality." He directed them to supplicate the throne, and they would be heard; exhorted them to discountenance measures calculated to increase the public distress, and promised them his aid.

The assembly, in its response to the governor's message, took conservative ground. It was drawn by Mr. De Lancey. Colonel Schuyler was one of the committee, and before it was reported he moved to strike out the words "and with calmness and deliberation pursue the most probable means to obtain a redress of our grievances," and to substitute the following: "And consider and examine, with the utmost calmness, deliberation, and impartiality, the complaints of our constituents; and endeavor to obtain a cordial and permanent reconciliation with our parent state, by pursuing the most probable means to obtain a redress of our grievances." This was thought too strong language, and it was negatived. Schuyler voted for the address, which had been slightly amended, for there was nothing in it particularly offensive to a patriot.

On the 26th of January, a question came up which tested the political character of the assembly. On that day Colonel Tenbroeck moved that the House should "take into consideration the proceedings of the Continental Congress, held in the city of Philadelphia in the months of September and October last." The motion was negatived by a majority of only one, the previous question having been called by Colonel Phillipse. Notwithstanding the



meagreness of the majority, the result gave great joy to the Tories.

“I have the most perfect satisfaction,” wrote a New York Loyalist, to his friend in Annapolis, “in acquainting you that this day was made, in our assembly, a motion for appointing a day for examining the proceedings of the Continental Congress, and that it was thrown out of the House by a majority of one voice. Of this event I heartily wish you joy, and that this example may be adopted by the senators in your province; but my fears almost preclude the hope of such good.”

Another wrote, on the 30th, to a gentleman in Boston, saying :

“The enclosed will unriddle the joy that fills the breasts of all the friends to government, decency, and good order. Since the glorious eleven, with Colonel Phillipse at their head, have carried the day, two more members have come, both of which are on the right side, so that there is now no chance of the assembly’s aiding or abetting the congress. The friends of the government plume themselves on this victory, and are now open-mouthed against the proceedings of congress, and no one dares among gentlemen to support them. Worthy old Silver Locks (Lieutenant Governor Colden), when he heard that the assembly had acted right, cried out, ‘Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.’”

On the 31st of January it was agreed to take into consideration the state of the colony, and to enter upon the journals such resolutions as they should pass. It was determined to prepare a petition to the King, a memorial to the House of Lords, and a statement and a remonstrance to the Commons. For the latter service Colonel Schuyler was associated with some of the leading members of the House, and they reported on the 3d of March.

Meanwhile other action, coöperative with the patriots in the sister colonies, was attempted in the House. On the 16th of February, Colonel Schuyler moved that certain letters which had passed between the committees of correspondence of New York and Connecticut, in June, 1774, on



the subject of another congress, and also a copy of a letter to Edmund Burke, the agent of New York at the court of Great Britain, written by the assembly committee of correspondence in September, 1774, "be forthwith entered in the journals of the House, and that the clerk be ordered to supply copies for publication in the newspapers. This motion was negatived by a vote of sixteen to nine.

On the following day Colonel Woodhull moved that the thanks of the House should be given to the delegates from New York in the late Continental Congress "for their faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them." This was negatived by fifteen to nine. A motion to tender the thanks of the House to the merchants and inhabitants for their patriotic adherence to the non-importation league, was negatived by the same vote. On the 23d a motion to appoint delegates to the proposed second Continental Congress was negatived by a vote of seventeen to nine. Each of these motions were debated with zeal, and foremost among the speakers who voted in the affirmative were Schuyler and Clinton.

On the 3d of March the committee appointed to prepare a statement of the grievances of the colony presented a timid report, far too delicate in its condemnation of certain acts of Parliament to suit the views of Schuyler and his friends. He spoke out boldly but courteously concerning the hesitation of the committee, and then moved that a certain act of Parliament, "so far as it imposes duties for the purpose of raising a revenue in America—extends the admiralty courts beyond their ancient limits—deprives his Majesty's American subjects of trial by jury—authorizes the judges' certificates to indemnify the prosecutor from damages which he might otherwise be liable to—and holds up an injurious discrimination between the subjects in



Great Britain and in America, is a grievance." He supported his motion with great zeal and was warmly seconded by Clinton. It was adopted in committee of the whole by a vote of seven to two.

Mr. De Lancey, who voted in the negative, now moved that the opinion of the committee of the whole should be taken "whether his Majesty and the Parliament of Great Britain have a right to regulate the trade of the colonies, and to lay duties on articles that are imported directly into the colonies, from any foreign country, which might interfere with the products of Great Britain." It was decided, by the same relative vote, that they had the right, Schuyler and Clinton voting in the negative. Schuyler then moved the following addition to De Lancey's resolution: "excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external, for the purpose of raising a revenue on the subjects in America without their consent." This amendment was defeated.

The committee appointed under the resolution of the 31st of January, to prepare a series of resolves to be placed on the journal of the House, reported on the 8th. These resolutions were five in number, and as there was nothing in them particularly offensive to the republicans, they were adopted without much discussion by a handsome majority, after some amendments had been rejected. But when, on the 24th, the petition to the King was reported, it was so obsequious, so disappointing to the friends of popular liberty, that Schuyler took fire, and offered amendments to almost every paragraph, in language more becoming the dignity of freemen. He moved to strike out of the fifth paragraph the sentence which spoke of the King as "an indulgent father"—that said there were "some measures pursued by the colonies that might be construed



to their disadvantage," and which they condemned, and besought him to view them leniently, as "the honest though disorderly struggles for liberty, not the licentious efforts of independence." For these fawning words Schuyler proposed to substitute "And as we have too much reason to suspect that pains have been taken to induce your Majesty to think us impatient of constitutional government, we entreat you, Royal Sir, to believe that our commotions are honest struggles for maintaining our constitutional liberty, and not dictated by a desire for independence. Could your princely virtues, as easily as your powers, have been delegated to your servants, we had not, at this time, been reduced to the disagreeable necessity of disturbing your repose on an occasion which we sincerely lament." This was such a severe commentary on the conduct of the royal governors that the loyal assembly rejected it by a vote of fifteen to eight.

Colonel Schuyler then moved to strike out of the sixth paragraph the passage which spoke of the colonies having, as infants, "submitted hitherto, without repining, to the authority of the parent state," but now thought "themselves entitled to their birthright," which was "an equal participation of freedom with their fellow subjects in Great Britain," and to substitute these words: "Although your Majesty's American subjects have, in some instances, submitted to the power exercised by the parent state, they nevertheless conceive themselves entitled to an equal participation of freedom with their fellow subjects in Great Britain." This more manly and dignified mode of expression did not suit the Tory members, and this amendment was also rejected by a vote of fourteen to seven.

Unflinching in his determination, Colonel Schuyler immediately moved to strike out the paragraph in which



they assured the King that they cheerfully acknowledged subordination to the Parliament, and wished "only to enjoy the rights of Englishmen, and to have that share of liberty, and those liberties secured to them, which they were entitled to," and to substitute the words, "Conscious of the incompetency of the colonial Legislatures to regulate the trade of the empire, we cheerfully acknowledge such a power in that august body [the Parliament] as is founded in expediency, and confined to the regulation of our external commerce, with a view to the general weal of all your Majesty's subjects, and in such manner as will leave to us, unimpaired, those rights which we hold by the immutable laws of nature, and the principles of the English constitution ; but the exercise of powers incompatible with those rights, not justified by expediency, and destructive of English liberty, induces us," etc. This, also, was negatived by a vote of fifteen to eight.

Colonel Woodhull, Mr. Clinton, and Mr. De Witt, offered substitutes for paragraphs with the same desire to have the petition manly in tone, but they were all voted down.

At the afternoon session of the same day, the memorial to the House of Lords was considered, and Colonel Schuyler offered several amendments, so as to more distinctly enunciate the Whig view of the powers of Parliament, but they were negatived by a strict party vote. Amendments to the representation and remonstrance to the Commons, offered by Clinton, shared the same fate. Thus, in the course of a month, the political ideas considered by the Continental Congress were reviewed by the New York assembly.

These papers, expressive of the feelings of the majority of the representatives, but not of the people of the province,



were ordered to be transmitted to Edmund Burke, the agent of the colony ; and on the 3d of April the colonial assembly adjourned, never to meet again.

What now was to be done ? The republicans of the province of New York, composing by far the greater portion of the inhabitants, labored under severe disabilities. Acting Governor Colden was a Loyalist, and his council held office by the King's will. The assembly, though chosen by the people, continued in existence only by the King's prerogative. They might be dissolved by the representative of the crown (the acting governor) at any moment. There was no legally constituted body to form a rallying point for the patriots as in Massachusetts, where there was an elective council and an annually elected assembly. In all the other colonies there was some nucleus of power around which the people might assemble, and claim to be heard with respect. But in New York they were thrown back upon their own resources, and nobly did they preserve their integrity and maintain their cause, in spite of every obstacle.

The whole continent was now moving in the direction of rebellion. The newspapers were filled with every species of writing which the occasion called forth—epigrams, parables, sonnets, dialogues, as well as grave essays ; and the great subject was presented to the public mind in every conceivable form of literary expression, remarkable for point and terseness. The following is a fair specimen of the logic in rhyme which often appeared :

“Rudely forced to drink tea, Massachusetts in anger  
Spills the tea on John Bull—John falls on to bang her ;  
Massachusetts, enraged, calls her neighbors to aid,  
And give Master John a severe bastinado.  
Now, good men of the law, pray who is in fault,  
The one who begun, or resents the assault ?”



The warlike demonstrations of the people had alarmed General Gage at Boston, and he commenced fortifying the Neck leading to the main at Roxbury. He also seized and conveyed to that city, quantities of gunpowder found in the neighboring villages, and employed stringent measures to prevent intercourse between the patriots in town and country. Fierce exasperation followed these impolitic measures. Hundreds of armed men assembled at Cambridge. At Charlestown the people took possession of the arsenal, after Gage had carried off the powder. At Portsmouth, New Hampshire, they captured the fort, and carried off the ammunition. At Newport, Rhode Island, the people seized the powder, and took possession of forty pieces of cannon at the entrance to the harbor. In Philadelphia, Annapolis, Williamsburg, Charleston, and Savannah, similar defensive measures were taken.

The excitement in New York was equally intense. Toward the close of the preceding December, the Liberty Boys were called to action by the seizure of arms and ammunition, which some of them had imported, and had consigned to Walter Franklin, a well known merchant. These were seized by order of the collector, because, as he alleged, of the want of cockets, or custom-house warrants, they having been in store several days without them. While they were on their way to the custom-house, some of the Sons of Liberty rallied and seized them, but before they could be concealed they were retaken by government officials and sent on board a man-of-war in the harbor.

Some days afterward a warning letter, directed to Collector Elliot, was thrown into the post-office, informing him that the arms would be called for when wanted. It concluded with these words :



“Do not slight this admonition, or treat it as a vain menace, for we have most solemnly sworn to effect it sooner or later, and you know our nation is implacable. We would not have you imagine that it is in the power of any set, either civil or military, to protect or shield you from our just revenge, which will be soon done, and in such a manner as not to be known until it is fatally experienced by you.

“FROM THE MOILAWK RIVER INDIANS.”

This letter, with Elliot's answer, was posted at the Coffee House, and was generally disapproved, as the collector was a just and humane man. But that night a printed hand-bill, supposed (as well as the letter) to have been written by Lamb, was thrown into almost every house in the city. It was an exciting appeal to the people, urging them to resistance.

“In the name of heaven,” said the appeal “throw off your suspicions; assemble together immediately, and go in a body to the collector; insist upon the arms being re-landed, and that he must see them forthcoming or abide the consequences. Delays are dangerous; there is no time to be lost. It is not a season to be mealy-mouthed or to mince matters; the times are precarious and perilous, and we do not know but the arms may be wanted to-morrow.”

It was in this spirit that the republicans acted every where, and yet the British Parliament, blind to the best interests of the nation, persisted in their hostile attitude to the colonies. When that body assembled, in January, 1775, they presented a scene of great excitement. Dr. Franklin, and others in England, had given a wide circulation to the state papers put forth by the Continental Congress, and the English mind was already favorably influenced in behalf of the Americans. Pitt went on crutches into the House of Lords, from his retirement in the country, to cast the weight of his mighty influence into the scale of justice by action in that House. There he proposed conciliatory measures. They were rejected. Burke, Conway,



and Hartley, all in turn, proposed similar measures. They were not only rejected, but the majority in Parliament struck another severe blow at the industry of New England, by prohibiting fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland, a business in which four hundred ships, two thousand shallops, and twenty thousand seamen were engaged. The ministry also attempted to sow dissensions among the Americans, by crippling the trade of the southern and middle colonies, but exempting New York, Delaware, and North Carolina from the oppression, these provinces having, of late, evinced the most loyalty. But the people of these colonies indignantly spurned the bait to win their allegiance, and the scheme for disunion signally failed. The continent was united more strongly than ever by the presence of common dangers and a perception of common interests; and when the spring of 1775 opened, all hope of reconciliation between England and her American colonies had vanished. Relying upon the justness of their cause, and the favors of the Lord God Omnipotent, the republicans resolved to defy the fleets and armies of Great Britain with which they were menaced.

The flame of war was first lighted in the east. General Gage beheld with alarm the work of the people of Massachusetts, in collecting arms and ammunition. He was informed that some artillery was deposited at Salem, and in February he dispatched Lieutenant Colonel Leslie by water to Marblehead, to seize and carry them to Boston. The whole movement was made in secret. The troops landed at Marblehead on Sunday morning. An express carried the news of danger to the people of Salem. They were worshiping God in their churches. The congregations were immediately dismissed, and rallied around Colonel Timothy Pickering. Led by him, they opposed



the British, who had then reached the draw-bridge, near the town. A compromise was effected, by which the troops were allowed to cross the bridge and immediately return, and they marched back without having produced bloodshed or secured their plunder. This ridiculous performance allowed Trumbull, the poet, to write a few weeks afterward :

“Through Salem straight, without delay,  
The bold battalion took its way ;  
Marched over a bridge, in open sight  
Of several Yankees armed for fight ;  
Then, without loss of time or men,  
Veered round to Boston back again,  
And found so well their projects thrive,  
That every soul got back alive !”

But a more serious affair occurred soon afterward, when an attempt of a similar character was made. On the 1st of April Gage had three thousand armed men under his command in Boston. He felt confident in his strength, and in the pride of that confidence he felt assured that he could easily repress insurrections and keep the people quiet. He did not like the accumulation of warlike stores in the hands of the people, which he was informed was going on in every direction. He knew full well what effect the boldness of the people's representatives would have upon their constituents—representatives who, in spite of his frowns, had met, ninety in number, and formed a provincial congress, with John Hancock at their head. They had repudiated royal authority ; made provision for an army of twelve thousand men ; solicited other colonies to follow their example, and augment the army to twenty thousand ; and commissioned officers of experience in the French and Indian war to be the generals of the host.

When Gage reflected upon these movements he felt uneasy, notwithstanding his confidence in his balls and



bayonets ; and towards midnight, on the 18th of April, he dispatched eight hundred men, under Lieutenant Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn, to destroy military stores which the republicans had gathered at Concord, less than twenty miles from Boston. The expedition was conducted with the most perfect secrecy, yet vigilant eyes were upon the actors. Dr. Joseph Warren, one of the early martyrs of the Revolution, had been watching Gage's movements with sleepless vigilance. Early in the evening he became aware of the expedition, and as soon as the troops moved from the city, Paul Revere, by Warren's direction, crossed to Charlestown, and made his way toward Concord with all possible dispatch, to arouse the inhabitants and summon the minute-men to the field. The effort was effectual. The clangor of church bells, the roar of cannon, and the sharp crack of musketry, soon heard in all directions, aroused the country ; and when at dawn, on the morning of the 19th, Pitcairn, who led the advance, reached Lexington, a few miles from Concord, he found seventy determined men drawn up on the village green to oppose him. With bitter scorn, as he rode forward, he called them "Rebels !" He shouted "Disperse ! disperse ! Lay down your arms and disperse, ye rebels !" They stood firm, and he ordered his men to fire. Then the first blood of the Revolution flowed. Seven citizens were killed, and several were wounded. The survivors returned a feeble fire, and then, by order of their leader, they dispersed. "Oh what a glorious morning is this !" cried Samuel Adams, who, with John Hancock, had been attainted by royal decree as arch-rebels, and had slept that night in Lexington.

It was indeed a glorious morning. The Source of Day arose in splendor an hour after the delicate grass on the green at Lexington had been sprinkled with the blood of



martyrs, and typified the ascension of the Sun of Liberty, which on that day arose and shed its vivifying rays over the continent. While the British troops, spurred on by a sense of gathering danger, were shedding more blood at Concord, in a vain endeavor to execute their master's orders, or were making an inglorious retreat towards Boston, terribly smitten by the exasperated people on every hand, intelligence of the massacre was speeding over the land as fast as fleet horses could bear the messengers; and with one impulse the colonists grasped their weapons and prepared for the inevitable struggle. Deliberation's voice was hushed, and the strong right arm was regarded as the asserter of the people's rights henceforward. The sword was now drawn, and the scabbard was cast away. From the Penobscot to the St. Mary—from the capes of the Atlantic coast to the most shaded valley beyond the Alleghanies where the smoke of the pioneer's camp fires were seen, the sentiment "LIBERTY OR DEATH!" which had just been uttered by the lips of Patrick Henry, vibrated upon the strings of every heart in tune with the song of the angels, over the plains of Bethlehem, when the Prince of Peace was born.