

be added to the Constitution, forbidding slavery in the United States forever. The necessary number of states finally accepted this amendment, which went into force in 1865.

The Confederate States paid no attention at all to the Emancipation Proclamation, so the blacks dared claim their freedom only when the Union troops were near enough to protect them. Besides, the greater part of the slaves could not read, and did not even know they had been declared free until told the joyful news by Northern soldiers.

The first regiment of black freemen, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, had already been formed, however, and the proclamation was read aloud to them, too, very near the place where some of the South Carolinians had drawn up a law saying the black people should be slaves forever. Although many people had predicted that the former slaves never could be trained to fight properly, the 54th soon proved them wrong, and covered itself with glory when the time came. Indeed, the blacks bravely helped Union soldiers whenever they could, often risking their own lives to do so, and one of the most heroic deeds in all the war was done by a black boy, at Fort Wagner, in 1863. This lad fell in a gallant attempt to climb the wall. Seeing one of the officers hesitate because he could not get up without hurting the boy, the poor boy bravely said: "I'm done gone, massa! Step on me and you can scale the wall!"



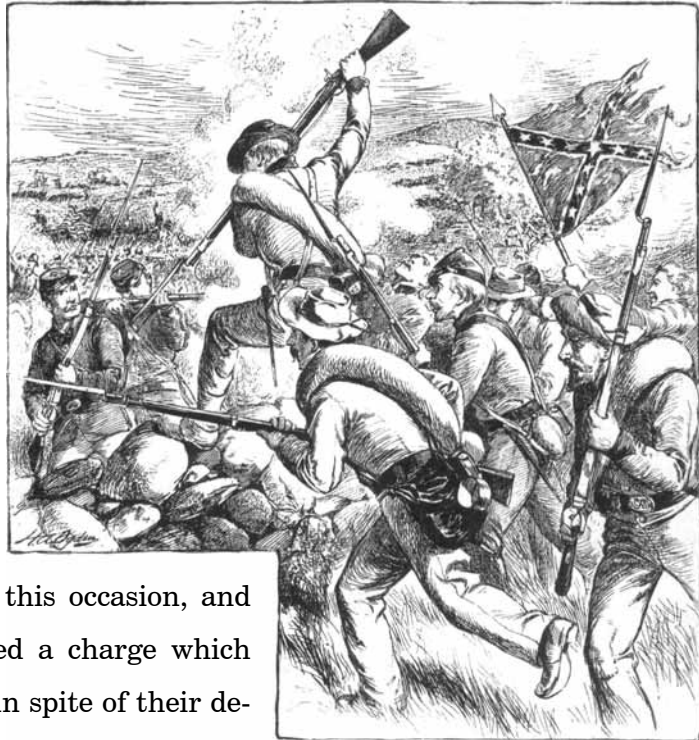
XLV. THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG.

BURNSIDE, having failed to win a victory at Fredericksburg, was now removed in his turn, and the command of the Union army was given to General Joseph Hooker, whom the soldiers called "Fighting Joe." But at Chancellorsville (1863) Hooker was stunned by a cannon ball, and as his army was thus left for several hours without a general, it was completely defeated. Owing in part, no doubt, to this accident, Lee won a brilliant victory over an army twice as large as his own; but he lost one of the bravest Southern officers, the gallant Stonewall Jackson. The latter was riding along with his staff, at nightfall, when his own men, mistaking him for the enemy, suddenly fired upon him, thus killing the man they loved so dearly.

Chancellorsville was the last great victory won by the Confederates in the Civil War, but their past successes had filled their hearts with hope. When Hooker retreated, there-

fore, Lee boldly crossed the Potomac and marched into Pennsylvania. His plan was to carry the war into the enemy's country and make the Northerners feel the hardships which the South had to suffer. Hooker, who had not expected this bold move, followed him in hot haste; but before he could overtake Lee, the command of the Union army was taken from him and given to General Meade.

It was the latter general, therefore, who overtook Lee at Get'tys-burg, on the 1st of July, 1863. Here was fought the greatest and most decisive battle of the whole war. It lasted three whole days, and about one third of the men engaged in it were killed or wounded. Both sides did



Pickett's Charge.

wonders in the way of bravery on this occasion, and the Confederate General Pickett led a charge which will ever be famous in history. But in spite of their determined valor, the Confederates were finally beaten, and Lee was forced to retreat to Virginia, having failed in his second and last attempt to carry the war into the North.

So many Americans lost their lives at Gettysburg that part of the battle ground was changed into a national cemetery. The dead of both armies are buried there, and, besides many nameless graves, there are those of some of the principal men who fell during those three awful days (July 1-3, 1863). The regiments which took part in the battle have since erected beautiful monuments on the spots where they stood during that terrible but glorious struggle, when both sides proved their valor.

Every year, on the anniversary of the battle, speeches are made in Gettysburg Cemetery, but none of them have ever equaled the short address made by President Lincoln, when he dedicated it the autumn of 1863. This speech, one of the simplest and most famous in our history, runs as follows:

“Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

“Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

“But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”



XLVI. THE TAKING OF VICKSBURG.

THE fact that the Union forces had won the victory at Gettysburg filled all Northern hearts with happiness, and they were soon to enjoy a new triumph. You remember that while the disastrous peninsular campaign was going on, Grant was on the Mississippi, where his object was to gain possession of Vicksburg. As already stated, this city stands on a steep bluff; it is more than two hundred feet above the river. It was, besides, well fortified on all sides, and very ably defended by the Confederate General Pemberton.

Grant soon saw that it would be best to attack Vicksburg from the land side; but to do that he had to convey his troops across the river at a point many miles below that