

The World's Famous Events

1913



IN THE WOODS OF ANTIETAM

(The Heroic Self-Sacrifice of the Northern Soldiers Checks the First Confederate Invasion of The North)

WHILE Grant and Farragut were thus successful in the West, the Union forces were still meeting disaster upon disaster in Virginia. This State remained naturally the chief seat of war, the scene of the fluctuating advance and retreat between the rival capitals, Washington and Richmond. Here the Southerners were commanded by General Robert Lee, one of the world's ablest military geniuses; and though Lee's troops were outnumbered from the start, he managed to do more than hold his own against the various generals who, one after another, were appointed by President Lincoln to oppose their great antagonist.

Lee repeatedly broke and drove back the advancing Union armies. Then in the summer of 1862, he took the aggressive and invaded the North. His eager and victorious soldiers hoped to sweep successfully over the entire country. But they were met in Maryland at Antietam Creek by the Union army commanded by General George McClellan. The battle that ensued was the bloodiest and most costly single day of strife in all this awful war. Neither side would give way. The Northerners, fighting now on their own soil, stood staunch and perished in whole regiments, or advanced through the marshy woods in face of certain death. Night closed the grim slaughter; and the following day Lee, seeing that advance against such resistance was impossible, withdrew his weakened army back to Virginia. The North was saved.