

THE LATE J. A. MACGAHAN.

(From the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.)

"THE people of Ohio a few months ago awakened to a knowledge of the fact that one of her most distinguished sons lay buried in a Turkish cemetery near Constantinople, and steps were taken by the Legislature to have his remains brought home and buried in his native soil. For this purpose a United States' vessel visited Constantinople, took the body of the honoured dead on board, and in a few days it will arrive 'at home.' He who is thus honoured is the late war correspondent, J. A. MacGahan, who, despite the policy of non-interference in foreign affairs which his native country has always pursued, Archibald Forbes says, "changed the face of Eastern Europe."

Januarius Aloysius MacGahan was born in a log cabin in Perry County, Ohio, June 12, 1844. His father was born in Kings County, Ireland, and his mother in the United States, of Irish parents. In his boyhood the famous correspondent attended a country district school known as Pigeon's Roost, where he exhibited the same qualities that in later life attached many to him and enabled him the more perfectly to prosecute his work—tact, good nature, keenness of perception, courage, and pluck. His early ambition was to teach school, and his ability to interest younger children in what he had himself studied or read, indicates that he would have made a successful pedagogue. His father died when he was quite young, but fortunately for him his mother was a woman able to give the needful training to make him a man in the truest sense of the word. MacGahan early developed a taste for literature, and took especial delight in biography and history, and the result of these boyhood studies was displayed in the many interesting incidents and expressions with which his letters were adorned. One of his favourite books was the fairy story, "Alice in Wonderland," and it is related that upon the eve of a great battle during the Russia-Turkish war he endeavoured to quiet the nerves of his comrades by quoting amusing passages from it. When seventeen years old MacGahan applied for the Pigeon's Roost School, and was so disappointed when rejected on account of his youth that he resolved to leave the neighbourhood, which he did, and never returned. He first went to Huntington, Ind., and soon after to St. Louis, where he obtained a situation upon one of the daily papers. He remained there several years, and in 1868 went to Brussels to study. While there he began corresponding for the *New York Herald* and when the Franco-Prussian war broke out was employed by that paper as special correspondent. He was in Paris during the Commune, was arrested, and would probably have been hung but for the efforts of the American Minister.

The year succeeding the declaration of war between France and Germany, MacGahan spent in visiting various popular resorts in Southern Russia, and formed an extensive acquaintance with prominent and influential attachés of the Government. During the summer of 1872 he was employed in reporting the conference on the Alabama claims at Geneva, and, in 1873, was directed by the *Herald* to accompany the Russian expedition to Khiva. Going to St. Petersburg, he found that the Government had decided not to permit any newspaper correspondents to go with the army, and the several correspondents, with the exception of MacGahan, returned home. He alone was resolved to report the war. Eugene Schuyler, then Secretary of Legation at St. Petersburg, was about to start on a visit to Bokhara, and MacGahan accompanied him as far as Fort Perovsky. For four weeks he traveled over an almost trackless desert, with the thermometer a part of the time ranging from thirty to sixty degrees below zero. During the first seventeen days he passed, with a poor guide for a companion, through the country of the fierce Gburlis, arriving at Khala Ata. There he had expected to find Gen. Kauffman and the Russian army, but not only had the army passed days before, but the stern commander of the fort prohibited the daring correspondent from proceeding farther until he could write to the authorities at St. Petersburg for permission. The Russian soldier evidently knew little or nothing about war correspondents, for very much to his surprise, he found the next morning that MacGahan had disappeared, and, though he chased him for days with a squad of soldiers, never succeeded in catching up with him. After passing through almost inconceivable dangers, MacGahan, at the end of twenty-eight days, arrived at Kauffman's camp, and was received by that admirer of personal pluck and bravery with open arms and the declaration that he was a "brave fellow." When the Czar heard of his exploit, he sent him the decoration of the St. Stanislaus, and ever afterwards he was the accepted comrade of the Russian officers and soldiers.

Two or three days after MacGahan met the army. It crossed the Oxus River and began the assault upon Khiva, which he witnessed, and accompanied the victors upon their entry into the fallen city. While prosecuting a private and secret inspection of the Khan's palace he met with three adventures, his escape from death through any one of which was almost miraculous. While feeling his way through the dungeon-dark passages he noticed suddenly that the ground under his feet was soggy as though it was wet, and stooping down he found that he was standing on the brink of a curbless well, into which another step or two would have carried him to certain death. Alarmed by his narrow escape, he determined to carry a lighted match. Entering a room, he saw the floor covered with what seemed to be black earth. Curious to know what it was he picked up a handful, and was horrified to find it to be gunpowder, the room being the palace magazine. Proceeding still further, his attention was attracted by the sound of human voices. Knocking at a door, it was opened, and he found himself in the Khan's harem. Notwithstanding he knew it would be certain death to be caught there, he remained, and by signs and broken Russian carried on a long conversation with the queen of the harem, whom he described as a remarkably intelligent woman. While at Khiva, MacGahan formed that friendship with Gen. Skobelev which was likened unto that of David and Jonathan, and ended only with the death of the former.

In 1875 MacGahan accompanied an expedition sent by the *New York Herald* to the Arctic Sea; but the summer of 1876 found him again in Europe as the correspondent of the *London Daily News*. While in Constantinople he heard rumors of the atrocities of the Turkish bashibazouks in Bulgaria, and determined to investigate them. In the company of Eugene Schuyler he traversed the desolated region, and found that the half of the horrible story had not been told. What he saw with his own eyes was described in nine letters to the *Daily News*, and, has a picture of human fiendishness, they are without a parallel. The story is too horrible to repeat, but it can be found in the letters, which were published in pamphlet form under the title of the "Atrocities in Bulgaria." MacGahan felt called upon himself to apologize for what he described, and offered as an excuse the necessity of doing so in order to show the world what inhuman brutes and liars the Turks were. The publication of his letters aroused in the English people such indignation that Disraeli who was apologizing for the Turks, sought to belittle them by ridicule, but such was the reputation of the writer for truthfulness, and so completely were all his statements verified by later investigation, that the premier only caused the people to turn against himself. There is no doubt that these letters brought about the war between Russia and Turkey, and little doubt that they were the most powerful influence in the defeat of Disraeli and his party. MacGahan became known to nearly every inhabitant of Bulgaria. His whole being was stirred with indignation at what he saw while passing through the country, and he told them that within a year he would return with the army of the Czar. This he did; and from the day the Russians crossed the Danube the Bulgarians have looked upon him as the liberator of their country. Had he lived, and the question of the ruler of Bulgaria been submitted to the people, he would have been the chosen one; but dying, they perpetuate his memory by an annual requiem Mass in the Cathedral at Tirnova, upon the anniversary of his death—June 9, 1878.

MacGahan represented the *Daily News* with the Russians during the entire period of the Russo-Turkish war. After the cessation of hostilities he remained at Constantinople, awaiting the meeting of the Berlin Congress, which he was to report for the *Daily News*, and recruiting from the hardships of the campaign. While nursing his friend, Lieut. Greene, military attaché of the United States army, with the Russian army, who was sick with black typhus fever, MacGahan was stricken with that dread disease, and in a few days died, June 9, 1878. Such was the deadly nature of his disease that all persons were prohibited from entering the room where his body lay, but his devoted friend, Skobelev, at the risk of his life, went to see him, and over his lifeless corpse wept like a child. MacGahan was buried in the cemetery at Pera; his funeral was attended by the United States Minister and members of the legation, by the officers of the United States steamer Dispatch, and a large number of Russian officers. He left a wife, a Russian lady, who now resides in New York city, and an infant son.

Lieut. Greene says of him: "No man of his age has, in recent years, done more to bring honour on the name of America, throughout the length and breadth of Europe, and far into Asia: no man has more faithfully served the English-speaking races by telling them the truth about great events in an attractive form in their daily papers. His letters may be studied as models by those who propose to adopt his profession, and his sterling character, his pluck and energy, by every man who aims at honest success in any walk of life.

His great deeds truly merit all the honours now bestowed upon him, and Ohio may well be proud of having given to the world such a son.

THE MAKING OF THE IRISH NATION.

WE (*Nation*) have to hand this week the second of the very interesting series of letters on the Irish question which Mr. Justin M'Carthy, M.P., is contributing to the *New York Tribune*. The first of the series we gave in our last issue. In the letter at present before us, Mr. M'Carthy begins by treating as ridiculous the constant reports which English newspapers circulate that the Irish Parliamentary party is breaking up. Mr. Parnell's influence, he says, is probably greater now than ever it was before. Passing to the question of obstruction, he denies that the Irish party ever practised obstruction for the mere pleasure of seeing Parliamentary business hampered and delayed. He significantly points out what might be done in the way of delaying legislation if the Irish members turned their attention to private bills and delivered speeches on each of them. Writing of the result of Mr. Parnell's policy, Mr. M'Carthy says:—

"By the course of action which he initiated, Mr. Parnell accomplished two objects; he proved to the House of Commons that Ireland was at last determined to be heard, and he proved to the Irish people that there was at last a party of men in Parliament who were resolved that Ireland should be heard. Beginning with a party of four or five he is now at the head of a party of forty; he will soon be at the head of a party of seventy or eighty. There is not the slightest occasion now to call attention to the case of Ireland by the rough process of stopping all movement of Parliamentary business. We must be listened to now. Our vote on a critical division may decide the fate of an administration. After the next election we shall in a human probability hold the fate of any and every Ministry in the hollow of our hands. Suppose we have only seventy men—and no one expects that our number after the elections will be only seventy—seventy votes count as one hundred and forty on a division; seventy withdrawn from the Ministry, seventy added to the Opposition, or *vice versa*. In plain words, the Irish Parliamentary party will be able to decide beforehand the fate of any measure or motion brought before the House of Commons which has the support of one of the two great English parties and is opposed by the other. This is the policy of Mr. Parnell—this is and this was his policy—to create a thoroughly independent Irish party in the House of Commons which should be strong enough to hold the balance of power in its hands. He has even already accomplished much of his pur-