Manassas Journal

Friday,
October 11, 1895
fragment

page 1 & 2

...as Journal.

...NING, OCT. 11, 1895.

...IN VERSE.

...DEPARTMENT.

...THE WORK.

...The Great French ... Scientist.

so that each new form of life can find that whereon it lives. If everything that has lived were not destroyed, or, rather, were it not again divided into its elements, there could be no new life. All the material available for the creation of organic matter would soon be used up if organic matter, once made, were indestructible. A man dies, and by the process of fermentation or putrefaction that of which he was made is gradually set free and becomes available for the manufacture of another man. Pasteur did not find this out, but he did discover the nature of the process by which it is accomplished. He proved, too, that there is no such thing as spontaneous generation, but that every form of life, however small, can be attributed to a germ.

Then he studied the sickness of silkworms. The silkworms of France suffered from a mysterious disease, and no one could find any clue to its origin or nature. It was a sort of leprosy that covered their skins with brown spots, deprived them of appetite and caused them to waste away. The health of the silkworm means millions of dollars to France.

Pasteur made the wonderful discovery that the strange, dark spots on the worms were living parasites, and that one silkworm could get the parasite from another, just as a dog may acquire fleas. They got the parasites by contact with contaminated food, by inoculation of the skin and by atmospheric dust. He stamped out the disease by inflicting the death penalty upon all infected insects, by quarantining suspects and by hygienic methods, just as a smallpox epidemic would be attacked by a Board of Health. That method, now every one knows it is right, seems simple enough, but simple though it was, no one knew much about it till Pasteur told them.

It was while working over sick silkworms that the chemist became first conversant with principles of bacteriology, that he afterwards applied in the treatment of human beings.

In 1850 Davaine and Rayer found in the blood of animals killed by anthrax small filiform corpuscles about twice the size of a blood corpuscle. These, it was supposed, were some product of the disease. Pasteur was the first to find that they were a parasite and the cause of it. He isolated the micro-organism of anthrax and cultivated it in ... he could produce anthrax with the germs, and that proved his case. Further studies showed him that anthrax was peculiar to certain localities and that it would break out without apparent reason.

Bearing in mind his own repeated declaration that there was no such thing as spontaneous generation, he dug deeper. He found that if an animal that died of anthrax was buried a yard deep it would still be a centre of infection. He found that earthworms ate the parasites, brought them to the surface and left them there as seeds for other animals to eat. In this way anthrax is propogated. The remedy for that sort of distribution is obvious.

It was in 1880 that Pasteur began his work upon rabies. He found that the virus of this disease exists in a pure state only in the nervous system, brain, medulla oblongata, spine or nerves of a dog or rabbit killed by rabies. He found that by inoculating with the virus the uncertainty of incubation is done away with and that treatment is made simpler.

He attenuated the virus—that is, he treated it so that its virulence was lessened. A patient taking the disease from the attenuated virus would have it only in a mild form and subsequently be immune from another attack. That is, roughly stated, the principle of vaccination. It was found that dogs that had been bitten by dogs known to have rabies when inoculated with the virus usually recovered, or rather failed to develop rabies. In other words, they were vaccinated.

After endless experiments with animals, Pasteur in July, 1885, tried the inoculation upon a boy named Meister, who had been bitten by a mad dog. The treatment proved successful. After that it was tried again, and in each case it seemed to succeed.

One of the points about Pasteur's discovery that tended to make it seem less important to scientific men was the sudden increase in cases of alleged hydrophobia.—Physicians had recognized this as a rare disease, but with the establishment of Pasteur Institutes every one stood in fear of developing it, and thousands of persons who in all human probability were never in danger of rabies had themselves inoculated. Some doctors claim the existence of a false hydrophobia, a sort of hysterical affection produced by the fear of the disease and simulating its symptoms, and it has been said that the "Pasteur scare" multiplied this. But of course that was not Pasteur's fault.

The French chemist worked also upon inoculation for other diseases than hydrophobia. He gave to the scientific world a vast quantity of facts on bacteriology. Physicians consider that Pasteur opened a door and that it will be for others to penetrate further into the mysterious recesses of bacteriology.

Pasteur's life was not long enough for him to work out his discoveries, nor would any man's be.

In 1892 Pasteur inoculated animals for cholera and the experiments proved successful. A trial was made of the inoculation of a man, but it was not conducted under conditions satisfactory to the medical world, though there was a good deal of faith among many learned men in its efficacy.

That the French Republic is not altogether ungrateful is shown by the fact that it gave Pasteur a life annuity of 12,000 francs ($2,500) for his discoveries, chiefly for those bearing on fermentation.

He was given a State funeral and thousands visited his bier. The whole civilized world has expressed regret and gratitude for what the great man added to the sum of human knowledge.—*The World.*

AN ASTRONOMY CLASS.

An Interesting Lesson in Space.

An interesting discussion took place recently in Paris at a meeting of scientists as to the distance of the nearest fixed star. A number of astronomers had been asked to make observations of a certain star, and then to report the result of these observations to the meeting.

It was discovered that no two calculations agreed, but the astronomers departed with feelings of great satisfaction, for in no case was the difference between any two results greater than 20,000,000,000 miles.

There are eight planets moving about the sun, of which the earth is one, and astronomers have calculated, with very little chance of error, the distance of these bodies from each other and from the sun. The various results can be conveniently recorded in miles.

But when we come to the fixed stars, which are themselves suns, many of them far larger and brighter and hotter than our own sun, and around every one of which it is not improbable that a family of planets is moving, the task of computing distance is far more difficult. The abyss of space that separates us from our nearest stellar neighbor is so enormous that the human mind can not even form the slightest conception of it. Even astronomers, who are suspected by some of possessing minds of more than human capabilities, confess that this distance can not be adequately represented in terms of miles.

Nor is the ordinary astronomical unit, or distance of the sun from the earth, sufficiently large to be convenient in expressing the distance of the stars—that is, if we attempt to denote the distance of ... that it is "so many times the distance of the earth from the sun," it is found that this unit is entirely too small to be used with convenience, though it measures 93,000,000 miles.

Experience has shown that it is more satisfactory to take as a unit the distance that light travels in a year, which is about 63,000 times the distance of the earth from the sun. Thus, if we say a particular star is at a distance of ten light-years we mean that it is so far away that it will take ten years for its light to reach us, supposing it to have just sprung into existence.

It is curious to think that such comparatively insignificant creatures as human beings, inhabiting a fifth rate planet, revolving around a third rate sun, should be able to compute with any degree of accuracy the enormous distance of any one of these stars. The magnitudes are so great that the ordinary mind can comprehend them only when they are represented by some illustrative comparison. This may be done as follows:

If we select any flat surface, such as a level field, and place on it a globe 2 feet in diameter we may consider this the sun. Mercury, which is the nearest planet to the sun as well as the smallest of all the planets, will be represented by a grain of mustard seed at a distance of 82 feet. Venus will be indicated as a small pea at a distance of 142 feet from the aforesaid globe. The earth will be a slightly larger pea 215 feet from the globe. Mars will become a rather large pinhead at a distance of 327 feet from the central body. Jupiter, the largest of all the planets—in fact, larger than all the others put together—will assume the respectable dimensions of a moderate sized orange nearly a quarter of a mile from the globe. Saturn, the beautiful ringed planet, will be represented by a small orange two-fifths of a mile from the mock sun. Uranus will be a full sized cherry or a small plum three-fourths of a mile from the same object. Neptune, the most remote of all the planets, so far as known, will be fairly indicated by a good sized plum at a distance of 1¼ miles.

If, however, we attempt on the same scale to indicate the distance of the nearest fixed star, we impose a heavy task on our power of imagination. For such a star would be represented by another globe, about 2 feet in diameter, at a distance of 8,000 miles—in other words, at the antipodes, at the other side of the earth, on the end of a line drawn through the earth's center from the globe representing the sun.

In 1838 Bessel succeeded in demonstrating and measuring the parallax of the star known as 61 Cygni, and then, by a protracted series of calculations, in determining the distance of this star as 60,000,000,000 miles. This announcement created a great sensation in the scientific world, and the fortunate Bessel was loaded with congratulations and medals of honor. Then Struve published the results of his observations of the same star, in which he located it at not less than [illegible] 000,000 miles. Curiously enough

CAREER OF GEN. MAHONE.

A VIRGINIA POLITICIAN PASSES AWAY.

His Life, Personal Comments and Characteristics.

[illegible] ast Tuesday [illegible] Washington, D. C., [illegible] sketch of his [illegible] Richmond Times [illegible] the State will [illegible]

[illegible] General [illegible] Virginia was [illegible] year at [illegible] been born [illegible] county, Va., [illegible]

[illegible]

the State to encompass this end, was naturally the choice of that body, and he was elected to the United States Senate.

This change to the Republicans, when a single vote was the deciding weight in a body equally divided, is too well known in history to be dwelt upon. The federal patronage of the State was placed at his disposal, and no man ever used it more effectively.

General Mahone held full sway until in 1889 when he was the Republican nominee for Governor, and was defeated by Hon. P. W. McKinney. From that time the political power of General Mahone commenced to wane, and the Democrats again gained control of the State. No man was more cordially hated and none seemed to care less than the creator of the strife.

Although his power was gone he was ever on the alert for some opportunity to foist himself again into political prominence, and the formation of the "Honest Elections party" is credited mainly to his genius and loses much of its force because it is connected with a name whose past political methods did not commend it to those with the purpose in view indicated in the name adopted. General Mahone lived in a handsome house in Petersburg, but most of his political conferences were held at Chamberlain's, in Washington, where he was overtaken by the stroke of paralysis which was the beginning of the end.

THE POLITICAL RISE AND FALL OF VIRGINIA'S HARD AND STUBBORN FIGHTER.

[Walter Wellman, in Chicago Times-Herald.]

If I were going to preach a Sunday evening sermon for your reading on Monday morning I should choose for my text a little, quaint, long-bearded man whom I saw on the streets of the Capitol City this afternoon. He is a familiar figure here, with his frilled shirt-bosom and cuffs, his gray slouch hat, his womanlike feet in the daintiest of fine boots. This man, ex-Senator William Mahone, of Virginia, is the finest example of martyrdom to his party to be found in all the land. President Andrews, in the current number of Scribner's, tells most interestingly a part of the Mahone story, but the most vividly dramatic part of it has never been in print. President Andrews' latest chapter of the history of the last quarter century gives an account of Mahone's appearance in the United States Senate in 1881. The historian does well to say that Mahone at once attracted national attention. "Not only had he been a striking figure in military uniform, but he was peculiar and unique in civilian's garb. Moreover, the party conflict raging in that body immediately centered about him. Always a Democrat, bravest and boldest of the Confederates, an aristocrat from Virginia, he had nevertheless been chosen to the Senate by Republican and negro votes. Though the Senate at that moment chanced to be a tie, an accident gave to him the power to organize it as a Democratic or Republican body. Few of the Southern men then uppermost in the councils of their party dreamed that Mahone would cast his lot with the Republicans. He did so, however, amid tremendous excitement and in the face of all sorts of threats, and to him the Republican party retained control of the upper branch of Congress at a most critical moment.

Before passing to the almost tragic sequel, a word concerning the dramatic incident. President Andrews describes it well. Naturally there was intense bitterness among the Southern Senators when Mahone deserted them. They felt that they had been betrayed by one of their own flesh and blood. Fiery Ben Hill came to the attack with bitter irony. "Who is that man?" he cried, amid laughter from the Republican side of the chamber. "Who is that man so ambitious to do what no man in the history of this country has ever done—stand up in this high presence and proclaim from his proud eminence that he disgraces the commission he holds? Such a man is not worthy to be a Democrat. Is he worthy to be a Republican?" But little Mahone, with his flowing beard and spindle legs, was not intimidated. Taking the floor, amid breathless silence, he declared that he was still a Democrat in principle, but not indebted to the Democratic party for his place in the Senate. "I want the Senator from Georgia to know, henceforth and forever," he declared, vehemently, "that here is a man who dares stand and defend his right against you and your cause."

To-day I saw the sequel. Gen. Mahone walks the streets of Washington bankrupt, hopeless, though not wholly friendless. He is virtually a pensioner on the generosity of one of his old associates, John Chamberlain, the innkeeper. Too honorable to run away from any just claim upon him, too high-spirited to attempt to save anything out of the wreck of his own property, Mahone has nothing in the world but his pride and the home in Petersburg which belonged to his wife before their marriage. Contrast this with his condition when he entered the Senate and broke a tie in favor of the Republicans. Then he was, perhaps, the richest man in Virginia. He had the esteem and the society of all the first families. His name associated with a new enterprise was a guarantee not only of good faith, but of success. The leading men of the State were proud to claim his friendship and partake of his prodigal hospitality. His fine old place was almost baronial. Dozens and scores were often at his table, eating the produce of his farm and garden, famous for the quality of their meats, game, and vegetables. The members of his family were sought in the highest circles of a society always aristocratic and exclusive. The daughter of the hero of Petersburg was welcome everywhere.

When Gen. Mahone cast his lot with the Republican party in the Senate a change like that of a devastating flood or a recurrence of the glacial epoch swept over his home, his family, his social position, his business. From that moment he was as completely ostracized in Virginia as he would have been had he committed a crime. His former associates spoke to him in the street, but did not shake his hand or go to his office, save when necessity left no alternative. No one that cared anything for the opinion of society crossed his threshold, over which so many had just before been proud to step. From the midst of social activity most incessant and delightful Gen. Mahone's family suddenly found themselves strangers in the midst of those who were once their friends. The grass grew in the path leading to their door. The army of servants found no company to wait upon. The many guest chambers were untenanted. Mrs. Mahone's friends of a lifetime cut her in public. Miss Mahone's companions appeared to forget her existence. The Senator's business affairs fell under the same blight. Everything in which he was interested was shunned by the men who had formerly been his associates [illegible]. For a time residence in Washington [illegible] the Senate [illegible] these blows all less heavily. It was thought that time might soften them and remove all rancor, that the ostracism would break down through sheer injustice. Instead, it has survived all the passion of the times, has outlived all the questions then under discussion, and has continued till the present day.

This social and business boycott brought Gen. Mahone to bankruptcy. Last winter he essayed to sell to the government a piece of land in Washington. Had he succeeded, his failing fortune might have been retrieved. But the opposition met with at the hands of Southern Senators and Representatives was so relentless that nothing could be done. Gen. Mahone, to save the rights of his creditors, made an assignment. He is to-day a bankrupt, a failing, but still a proud and pugnacious old man.

The sermon? It does not have to be preached. The story does its own preaching. In these days of the new South, of its awakening to new commercial life, of great Southern expositions and splendid reunions of social and political life, let us hope we have seen the last of that Virginia bourbonism which persecuted poor Gen. Mahone, and pursued him till it had compassed his ruin for the offense of choosing one political party instead of another.

Commenting on this the Richmond Times said editorially:

A LITTLE [illegible] ANENT MAHONE.

Of all the scribbling that has been done or will be done, we guarantee that none of it will contain a greater mixture of truth and nonsense than an article by a Mr. Walter Wellman, in the Chicago Times-Herald. It sounds strangely, indeed, to the people of Virginia who know the relation Mahone had already established with the negroes, and that the idea of Mahone leading a campaign to repudiate the State debt giving a guarantee of good faith and success to any new enterprise by associating his name with it, is enough to make a corpse laugh.

But this flashy sketch was necessary as the ground work of the picture that is sought to be painted, [illegible] to make a martyr [illegible]. As the glory of his old estate is magnified, so of course the dark coloring of his present condition must be the more strongly laid on. And no other artist rambles on to tell us that when Mahone's deep devotion to the principles of the Republican party had carried him, with their resistless force, where he belonged the proscriptive spirit of the people of Virginia and the South could leave no stone unturned that might bruise and wound him for having the elevation of spirit and nobleness of mind to turn his back upon their medieval savagery, and cast his lot in with the "New South" and the march of progress.

General Mahone's present helpless condition forbids any such discussion of this article as justice requires, nor is any discussion of it necessary before the people of Virginia. They all remember well how Mahone, to accomplish personal aims of his own, only effected a union between the solid mass of negroes and a handful of white men, and then established a government in Virginia that was an insult to every self-respecting man, and that seemed to have as its object the deification of all that was indecent and the proscription of all that was honest and pure.

TWO PICTURES.

Megargee, in the Philadelphia Times, draws two pictures of Mahone as follows:

"Whenever his name is mentioned Mahone appears before my mental vision in two forms, the one presenting him in a bed in the Continental Hotel in this city, and the other, standing for the second time in his life on the field of Gettysburg, where he had seen 43,000 men killed, wounded, or counted among the missing.

He was in Philadelphia in 1882, and one night news came to this city of a duel between two well-known Virginians, who had resorted to the arbitrament of the code of honor, to settle a dispute which had arisen out of the raging condition of affairs political in Virginia, consequent upon the formation of the Readjuster party, which one year previously had sent Mahone to the United States Senate, and which had as its temporary basis of popularity a partial repudiation of the State debt under the nominal guise of readjustment. I carried the news to Mahone at the Continental Hotel. He was abed. When I was ushered into his room the sight that met my eye was startling. The apartment was brilliantly lighted. The bed coverings were apparently undisturbed, but upon the pillow was what appeared to be the head of a living man, with piercing eyes, a mass of tangled hair, a very long, straggling beard, but no body. It was nerveshaking. But this was Senator William Mahone; not exactly all of him, but his body was so small and attenuated that it gave the bed coverings no elevation, and the upper sheet, being drawn up to his chin and under his beard, gave the startling impression of a living but bodiless head resting upon a pillow. Information of the duel caused his eyes to gleam still more brightly and fiercely, but the tone in which he discussed the affair was cold and careless. The mere question of whether either man was mortally wounded did not appear to specially interest him, his one concern apparently being that the public at large should know that the cause of the Readjuster was just.

When I next saw Mahone, of Virginia—it was in April, 1893—he stood with General James Longstreet, Lee's chief-of-staff; General E. P. Alexander, Longstreet's chief of artillery, and who conducted from the Confederate side the famous artillery duel, which designated the third day's fight at Gettysburg; General O. O. Howard, who commanded the Union forces during the first day's battle, General Daniel E. Sickles, who lost a leg upon that memorable occasion; General David McMurtie Gregg, who led the 30,000 cavalrymen who met and overthrew a similar force of horsemen, who sprang to the charge at the command of the famous Jeb Stuart, and many other prominent opponents in the civil conflict, on the scene of that fratricidal fray, which handed the names of Hancock, Meade, and Reynolds down to enduring fame, and placed those of the members of the Pennsylvania Reserves on the world's roll of heroes. Thirty years had elapsed since that day of blood, and during the intervening time, Mahone had not once placed his foot upon the historic spot. In the Gettysburg fight he commanded a brigade, although he was never actively engaged in the contest, his men being held in reserve, but so close to the fighting line that a number of them were killed even while in a state of passiveness. As he stood among the group of famous warriors two years ago, little more than half as high as some of them, he presented a most striking aspect. I recall him now with baggy trousers, a baggy coat, from the ends of whose sleeves delicate ruffles of the finest linen peeped forth; patent leather boots with the high heels of a woman's French shoe, disclosing the outlines of a foot that any belle might envy; long white hair, surmounted by a dingy white hat of the pattern worn by brigadier-generals; fierce eyes blazing from a pallid face, and beneath a long gray beard reaching almost to his waist. The talk was of the tragic occurrences of thirty years before. Alexander was telling of Pickett's disastrous charge, and was pointing out to Longstreet the spot where he stood, when he sadly bowed his head in assenting silence to the young Virginian's inquiry as to whether he should move forward to the attack which after events demonstrated was a march of death for the flower of Southern chivalry, when Mahone excitedly interrupted him, saying: "I was farther out on the left. I was held in reserve to support Pickett, and had received the order to march, and had just given the command when an aide galloped up shouting 'Halt, halt!' Lee saw the hopelessness of the contest, and he determined to sacrifice no more lives uselessly."

THE HILL MAHONE INCIDENT.

"But it was Ben Hill's speech, delivered at the very beginning of that memorable session, which left Mahone nothing to stand upon of middle ground. He must leave the Democracy for the Republicans, or he must stay with the Democracy. He couldn't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Hill's speech was a wonder in its way, and no one but Hill could have delivered it. Its attacks upon Mahone were of the oblique sort. He would describe what Mahone was about to do, and say it was impossible for any southern senator to pursue such a course. He showed how it would be treason to the people of the south; a Judas-like betrayal of their interests. He would announce an hypothesis based on what was assumed would be the course of Mahone, and then denounce the character he described as too base and black for words to paint. He said no southern senator would dare pursue such a course; that he could not live in the south, nor hold up his head among his fellow-men were he to do so.

"Hill's speech was as complete a shelling of the woods in the vicinity of what was esteemed Mahone's position, as anything of the speech sort I ever listened to, and it drove Mahone out of the bush. Whatever may have been Mahone's intention as he went into the matter, before Hill got through, he had made up his mind to go wholly and completely to the Republican side, and fight it out on that line, if it took all of every summer of his life.

"When Hill got through Mahone replied to him. His eye was flashing and his heart was [illegible]. He was as fierce and relentless as ever on any day of battle. He defied Hill and all who thought and spoke as he did. He sneeringly notified him that there was one man in the south whose record was as good as his, who would do exactly as Hill described, and that, in spite of Hill and all whom he might represent.

"After that Mahone went wholly with the Republicans, and the southern members of the senate never forgave him. He was ostracised by all the southern element in Washington as well as in his own state of Virginia; but from first to last he met it all with a hardy nonchalance, returning stare for stare, frown for frown, taunt for taunt, and showed a perfect willingness at all times to go on to the extreme of powder-burning with anybody who felt personally aggrieved at his course."

MAHONE AND EARLY.

There were several occasions since the war when General Mahone was [illegible] with [illegible]. The most notable instance of this kind was with Gen. Jubal A. Early. Mahone had prepared a biographical sketch of his military career for a Northern publication. In it reference was made to Early at which the latter took umbrage, and he demanded that the objectionable matter should be omitted. He was emphatic in this demand and Mahone recalled the publication and destroyed all that referred to Early. The old General never forgot nor forgave Mahone for this matter.

General Mahone was [illegible] in his efforts to make Gen. James L. Kemper Governor in 1873 and was successful. His efforts in that behalf caused him to assume that he ought to influence Kemper's administration, [illegible] executive on one occasion rebuked Mahone in such [illegible] manner that he never again attempted to offer his advice on the subject.

General Mahone and Gen. Bradley T. Johnson had a misunderstanding in the seventies, which at one time seemed likely to result in a meeting on the field of honor.

LEE AND MAHONE.

Lee held Gen. Mahone in the highest esteem, [illegible] he said, according to report [illegible] commander of the Confederate forces. Gen. Lee's words as they were reported were: "If I had been killed Gen. Mahone would have succeeded me in command." Mahone had the reputation of being one of the calmest of men on the battle-field. He was trained to be a civil engineer, and in the planning of a battle this knowledge was invaluable to him.

A very interesting collection of Napoleonic relics is possessed by Mr. Murat Willis, of Warren County, Va., who inherited them by direct descent from Murat, the eldest son of Napoleon's Marshal, the King of Naples. They embrace chairs, china, table linen, and a very valuable collection of miniatures, together with numerous articles of furniture and pieces of bric-a-brac once the property of Queen Caroline.

At a municipal election in Indianapolis last Tuesday, the democrats carried the day by 5,000 majority.