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A Tour in North-Eastern Anatolia

Author(s): W. G. Palgrave

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Geologist. Both presented by His Excellency Governor Weld, of West Australia.

The following paper was read:—

A Tour in North-Eastern Anatolia. By W. G. PALGRAVE.

STARTING from the Port of Trebizond, on the Black Sea, Mr. Palgrave journeyed 130 miles in a south-easterly direction, to the town of Erzinghian, on the Upper Euphrates; skirting on his way the edge of a vast moraine, bearing undoubted evidences of ice-action. From Erzinghian he proceeded west by north to the mineral-district of Kara-Hissar, visiting the silver and lead mines in the neighbourhood, and some of the numerous hot springs that stud the whole of that region. He then continued his journey, about 160 miles westward, to the mines of Hajjee-Koi, near Marsivan, finally returning to Trebizond.

The author, after alluding to the blank spaces in all maps of that country, and the many remarkable features with which it abounded, interesting alike to the geologist, the naturalist, and the archæologist, called attention to the undeniable vestiges of the so-called glacial period, in that part of Asia Minor, traces of which he himself met with in the Pyxartes Valley and Kelkeet Plateau; and the volcanic phenomena of remote date which he found in the vicinity of Kara-Hissar.

After some remarks on the antiquities contained in Erzinghian, and a brief notice of some of the tribes, Mr. Palgrave concluded with a detailed and interesting account of a visit to the mines of Tamzerah, distant about 13 miles from the town of Kara-Hissar.

[Further notice of this paper is unnecessary here, it having appeared in full in a publication not connected with the Society.]

Major MILLINGEN said he had visited Trebizond, and had passed over the Kolat Dagh on his road to Persia. Of the geology and mineralogy of the country he knew but little, and his geographical knowledge was based upon legs more than barometers. He had, however, published a work, 'Wild Life among the Kurds,' in which he described what he knew of the country and people. From Trebizond there were two routes crossing the ranges which ran parallel to the sea: one a winter route, called the Djenizli and Yerkioprü route; the other a summer route, going from Deirmen-dereh to Gumush-haneh, and thence either to Erzinghian or Erzerum. The mountains behind Trebizond offered many facilities for the easy passage of caravans. The harbour of Trebizond was a poor and unsafe one, with no accommodation for loading or unloading vessels, but the mountains afforded means of communication with the interior. Riza had a much better harbour, but the ranges in the rear were much higher than at Trebizond, the peaks being something like 9000 feet high. In July, 1864, the lake on the top was covered with ice. The highest mountain in the range was the Emshin Dagh. In its course to

Georgia the Kolat Dagħ was cut abruptly by a curve of the River Tcholak, which ran into the sea. The mountain chain was there called Djemil-dagħ, because inhabited by a race of Caucasian origin, called the Lazes. In his book he had stated that in Asia Minor, brigands, existed. Mr. Palgrave had not met with them, but he had. He once spent a night on the top of the range, with a band of seventy brigands, led by a chief of the name of Softah-Mehemet. They were all runaways from the army, and as he was also a runaway then they did not molest him. In the morning on his way down he met a band of 100 police going up in search of the brigands, who had just plundered a caravan travelling between Riza and Erzerum. In the year 1857, a French officer with his companions was taken and cut to pieces by the robbers between Erzerum and Trebizond. On one occasion he surrounded two villages, in which a number of the brigands had assembled, caught them, and gave them 400 lashes each.

Mr. PALGRAVE said he had described the people as he found them, and, as far as his experience went, the country was one in which any person might travel with perfect security; and those who did not look about for persons of a certain character would not find them. He mentioned this simply as an encouragement to those who wished to visit the country.

The PRESIDENT thought the different accounts given by Mr. Palgrave and Major Millingen were quite reconcilable. Major Millingen referred especially to Kurdistan, which lay to the east of the district Mr. Palgrave had described, and the country from Erzerum westward was in a much more advanced state, as regarded quietude and order, than parts further to the east. No doubt Major Millingen's sharp measures of repression and coercion were very necessary in Kurdistan, but they would be quite out of place in the peaceful agricultural districts west of Erzerum. Mr. Palgrave was a gentleman, who, whether he travelled in Arabia or in Asia Minor, amongst civilised people or in the desert, always collected materials for an instructive and interesting discourse; and it was to be regretted that he should be condemned to the drudgery of a consul's office, instead of being engaged in travel, which would be more agreeable to himself, and much more beneficial to his country.

Previous to adjourning the meeting, the PRESIDENT said he had that day received a letter from Dr. Mueller, the head of the Medical College at Melbourne, announcing that an inspector, a Mr. Gillmore, had at last come upon traces of Dr. Leichhardt, who was lost in the interior of Australia some years ago. The bones of some of the party had been found; and a piece of an ornament, obtained from the natives, had been sent to the Society and identified as of the same description of ornament that Leichhardt's party had with them. On previous occasions, trees had been found marked with the letter "L," and it was to be hoped that now the exact line of his route might be traced, and the place of the final catastrophe discovered, as there must be a large accumulation of bones, not merely of the party composing the expedition, but also of the horses, mules, &c., which accompanied them. Geographical progress had been very rapid of late years in Australia. The line along which Stuart passed in his journey across the continent was now the line of the telegraph, which ran from Adelaide 1200 miles due north. There remaining but 300 or 400 miles to complete the entire distance to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and it was expected that this northern section would shortly be completed.