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Report to council on the British association meeting at Newcastle, 1889

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The Imperial Gazetteer of Scotland (1854-7), by REV. J. M. WILSON; *The Gazetteer of England* (1836-37), by JAMES BELL; *Chambers's Gazetteer of Scotland* (1832); and the *Imperial Gazetteer* (1855), by DR. W. G. BLACKIE, who has also made other notable contributions to Geography, such as the *Imperial Atlas* (1855) and the *Comprehensive Atlas and Geography* (1880).

The standard encyclopædias, which are so valuable as books of geographical reference, are all of Scottish origin. The most famous, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, was in the ninth and last edition edited by Professor Spencer Baynes and DR. ROBERTSON SMITH. Then we have the more popular, but in its current edition equally useful, *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, edited by MR. DAVID PATRICK. The *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, first published in London, was subsequently obtained by a firm in Glasgow; the *Globe Encyclopædia* and the *Popular Encyclopædia* complete the list.

Some of the leading geographical text-books have been published by Scotsmen. Of these may be mentioned the works of PROFESSORS ARCHIBALD GEIKIE, MEIKLEJOHN, and JOHN CLELAND; DRs. JAMES CLYDE, ALEXANDER STEWART, A. REID, A. MACKAY, and HUGH R. MILL; and MESSRS. ROBERT ANDERSON, KEITH JOHNSTON, junior; THOMAS EWING, and GEORGE G. CHISHOLM.

IN CONCLUSION, I cordially thank those of my correspondents who have been good enough to revise the proof-sheets of certain sections of this Report.

REPORT TO COUNCIL ON THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION MEETING AT NEWCASTLE, 1889.

BY HUGH ROBERT MILL, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., *Delegate*.

THE meeting of the British Association at Newcastle was successful so far, that many fairly popular papers were read in comfortable rooms, and the inhabitants were extremely hospitable. The attendance of members was not large, nor was much original scientific work communicated.

Signs of approaching change in the Association appeared in the unprecedented action of the General Committee refusing to ratify an appointment by the Council. The opportunity of reform thus presented is one which should not be allowed to pass without a reconsideration of the objects of the Association, and the means by which these can best be carried out at the present time. It is questionable whether science is perceptibly advanced by the annual meetings conducted as at present. The local literature evoked by the gathering was of the usual kind. The *Handbook of Industries* edited by Mr. Wigham Richardson is the best which has been compiled for the Association for many years. It comprises thirty articles by specialists describing the leading industries of Tyneside, with historical notes and statistics. A series of good agricultural, railway, and district maps completes an excellent epitome of the commercial geography of the Great Northern Coal Field of England.

At the conferences of delegates of corresponding societies there were no noteworthy incidents, the discussions being mainly on the rules affecting the position of delegates, few of whom were empowered to report any work done by their respective societies. It was matter of surprise and comment that the Tyneside Geographical Society took no part in the proceedings of the Association, the opportunity being one which, had it been seized, would undoubtedly have strengthened the position of that young but practical and deserving Society.

Mr. Silva White, Secretary of our Society, acted this year as one of the Secretaries of the Geographical Section, and by his position was enabled to secure many of the most valuable papers for the *Magazine*. It is therefore unnecessary for me to refer to the proceedings of the Section in detail. The address of Sir Francis de Winton as President was intended to strike a key-note of Commercial Geography, which it was hoped would give tone to the following papers and discussions. The result was disappointing. Except in one or two instances the papers which made any pretensions to the title of Commercial Geography contained very little Geography, and the discussion on several occasions became purely political, the addresses of some speakers being thoroughly inappropriate to a scientific meeting.

Explorers always attract the public, and this year they were well represented. Dr. Nansen as he recounted his adventures on the Greenland ice must have felt that his heroic journey had been fully appreciated. The simple manly style in which he told the now familiar story, and his quaint and unexpected gleams of humour, commanded the closest attention of a crowded and enthusiastic audience. Another Norwegian, Mr. Karl Lumholtz, was remarkably interesting in describing his travels among the aborigines of Queensland. Mr. Basil Thomson's original information regarding the islands near New Guinea, and Mr. Theodore Bent's descriptions of his archaeological researches in the Bahrein Islands of the Persian Gulf were well worthy of the hearty reception accorded them. Sir Robert Biddulph's account of Cyprus, and the description of Uganda by the Rev. R. P. Ashe were also deservedly appreciated; but the minute details of long topographical and commercial papers, such as that of Colonel Bell on the Russo-Chinese frontier region, and Mr. Gundry on China, somewhat wearied the audience, although they will prove of much value when published. Almost the only contribution to Physical Geography was Mr. Flinders Petrie's most interesting note on wind-action in Egypt. This paper ranks, along with Mr. Ravenstein's corrections on some recognised latitudes in the Nile valley, as an original communication of positive scientific value.

Following is a list of the office-bearers of Section E, and the papers read on the various days :

SECTION E.—GEOGRAPHY.

President.—Colonel Sir Francis de Winton, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.C.L.

Vice-Presidents.—General Sir H. E. L. Thuillier, R.A., C.S.I., F.R.S., F.R.G.S.; R. Spence Watson, LL.D.; J. Batalha-Reis.

Secretaries.—J. S. Keltie (*Recorder*); H. J. Mackinder, M.A.; R. Sullivan; A. Silva White, F.R.S.E.

Committee.—Theodore Bent; C. E. D. Black; Dr. Walter G. Blackie; Sir

George Bowen, G.C.M.G. ; Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Bart. ; Paul B. Du Chaillu ; F. W. Dendy ; Francis Galton, F.R.S. : Chevalier R. Froehlich ; J. G. Gurney ; Lieutenant Kund ; Dr. H. R. Mill ; Dr. F. Nansen ; Sir Lambert Playfair, K.C.M.G. ; Admiral Sir Erasmus Ommanney, C.B., F.R.S. ; Dr. John Rae, F.R.S. ; E. G. Ravenstein ; H. Seebohm, F.L.S. ; Eli Sowerbutts ; Rev. Canon Tristram, D.D., F.R.S. ; Coutts Trotter.

Papers read on Thursday, September 12, 1889.

1. President's Address.
2. *Sir Robert Biddulph, G.C.M.G.*—Cyprus.
3. *Captain Thys.*—The Congo Railway.
4. *Dr. H. R. Mill.*—Physical Basis of Commercial Geography.
5. *Rev. R. P. Ashe.*—Uganda.
6. *His Excellency Governor Moloney.*—The Yoruba Country, West Africa.

Papers read on Friday, September 13, 1889.

7. *Colonel Mark S. Bell.*—The Russo-Chinese Frontier Region.
8. *R. Gundry.*—China.
9. *Hon G. Curzon, M.P.*—The Central Asia Railway in relation to the Commercial Rivalry of England and Russia.
10. *W. J. Flinders Petrie.*—Wind-Action in Egypt.
11. *Captain Hore.*—Lake Tanganyika.
12. *J. Batalha-Reis.*—Recent Portuguese Explorations in Africa.
13. *Captain Lugard.*—Nyassaland.
14. *J. Rankin.*—The Mouths of the Zambesi. (*Read in absentia.*)

Papers read on Monday, September 16, 1889.

15. *Karl Lumholtz.*—The Geography and Resources of Central Queensland.
16. *Alexander Cook.*—British North Borneo.
17. *H. Guillaume.*—Recent Explorations in Peru and Bolivia.
18. *E. G. Ravenstein.*—Geographical Co-ordinates in the Valley of the Upper Nile.
19. *R. Sullivan.*—The Resources of Siberia and the Practicability of the Northern Sea-route.
20. *Dr. Fridtjof Nansen.*—Greenland.

Papers read on Tuesday, September 17, 1889.

21. *Joseph Thomson.*—Report to the Committee appointed to investigate the Geography and Geology of the Atlas Ranges in the Empire of Morocco. (*Read in absentia.*)
22. *Basil Thomson.*—Exploration of New Guinea and Neighbouring Islands.
23. *Theodore Bent.*—The Bahrein Islands.
24. *Sir Lambert Playfair.*—The Jedars and other objects of interest in the District of Tiaret in Algeria.
25. *A. W. Clayden.*—Models to illustrate the Action of Winds on Ocean Currents.
26. *J. G. Colmer, C.M.G.*—The N.W. Territories of Canada.
27. *Dr. Guppy.*—Eastern Java. (*Read in absentia.*)

The exhibition of Dr. Nansen's famous *ski* and the sledge used in crossing Greenland, was appropriately combined with Mr. Riis Carstensen's beautiful paintings of typical Greenland scenery. Mr. A. W. Clayden exhibited instructive models, illustrating on a real water

surface the action of wind in promoting the formation and direction of the surface currents in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. This model will, it was stated, shortly be made for sale as an aid in education.

Of papers read in other sections which were interesting geographically, the most important was Professor Osborne Reynolds' report on the investigation of estuaries by means of models, in which he describes further experiments with miniature tides in sorting out sand into banks and channels dependent on the form of the coast-line.

Dr. Sorby communicated to Section A a valuable series of temperature observations in the estuaries of the south-east of England. Professor Haddon, in the course of his recent visit to Torres Strait, collected some new information about the people as well as the marine animals of that locality, which he communicated to the proper sections. Amongst other facts of interest, he reports that no evidence of upheaval is to be seen in the coral islands of Torres Straits. The fauna and flora of many islands, and parts of continents, were described in Section D, while in C several valuable papers on geology were much akin to geography: Professor Milne and Professor Michie Smith on Earthquake Phenomena in Japan, and Mr. R. Swan on the Marble Quarries of the Isle of Paros, may be instanced as typical examples.

The Chemical Section rarely transacts business of geographical interest, but Professor Armstrong's report on the Teaching of Chemistry in Schools was really an extremely able scheme of scientific education in its widest form. It is gratifying to observe that he looks upon physical geography or earth-knowledge as pre-eminently the science for elementary schools, combining as it does great scope for instilling the scientific method of thought, and illustrations of every-day occurrences, the explanation of which is readily grasped and tenaciously remembered.

In consequence of the small attendance at the meeting, a less sum than usual fell to be allotted as grants in aid of research, and with the exception of those to Professor Osborne Reynolds to continue his experiments on estuaries, and to Mr. Bent for the further exploration of South-Western Asia, few of the grants affected subjects of geographical interest.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

EUROPE.

The Forests of Europe.—The *Deutsche Rundschau* (Bd. xi., Heft 12) gives the following table, extracted from the *Bulletin du Ministère des travaux publics* (Tome xvii., Jan. 1888):—

Area of Forests.	Acres.	Percentage of total Surface.	Area of Forests.	Acres.	Percentage of total Surface.
Russia in Europe,	494,200,000	36.9	Roumania, . . .	4,942,000	15.2
Sweden, . . .	43,413,000	39.7	England, . . .	3,116,000	4.0
Germany, . . .	34,347,000	25.7	Servia, . . .	2,394,000	19.9
Austria, . . .	24,159,000	32.5	Greece, . . .	2,100,000	13.1
France, . . .	23,198,000	17.7	Switzerland, . . .	1,930,000	18.9
Hungary, . . .	22,654,000	28.4	Belgium, . . .	1,208,000	19.6
Spain, . . .	20,964,000	17.0	Portugal, . . .	1,164,000	5.3
Norway, . . .	19,289,000	24.5	Holland, . . .	568,000	7.0
Italy, . . .	9,034,000	12.3	Denmark, . . .	469,000	4.8