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The Island of Niuafóu

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valley in 1858, the Kabul Khel Waziris in 1859, the Mahsud Waziris in 1860, the Dawur valley in 1861, and the Ambeyla campaign in 1862. He had many adventures and hairbreadth escapes, and was honoured with the Companionship of the Bath and three medals for his military services.

He died on December 30, 1895, aged seventy-two.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### *The Island of Niuafoʻu.*

HAVING, in September 1886, landed on this volcanic island a few days after the great eruption of that year, I think it may be interesting to compare the appearance of the place at that time with its present condition as described by Lieut. Somerville, R.N., in the last number of this *Journal*.

The eruption burst forth, after a series of earthquakes, from near the north-east side of the lake, which is itself the crater of the original volcano which probably formed the island. Lieut. Somerville's drawing shows the site of the eruption as a peninsula jutting into the lake, with a couple of craters on it. The peninsula, as I saw it in 1886, consisted mainly of a rounded hill some 200 feet high of brown earth, with three seething mouths near its base, towards the land. The contents of one of these was covered with a bright green (? sulphurous) scum; another, of rectangular shape, and deep, was filled with mud and water. These are probably the two mentioned by Lieut. Somerville, and there were one or two others. The shores of the lake beyond were heaped with what might have been pumice, but looked to me more like black sand. The matter ejected from the main vent consisted of volumes of steam enveloping red-hot stones, which rose to an immense height, but fortunately fell straight back again, and which, as they fell, threw off masses of dust which had the effect of fiery tails. This dust, sometimes a brown earth, otherwise a nearly black sand, was carried everywhere by the winds, and two-thirds of the island were buried beneath it, in many places to a depth of several feet. The amount ejected, therefore, was enormous, without reckoning the amount represented by the hill above mentioned of 200 feet, rising out of a very deep lake. The lake was still bubbling, and constant slight tremors and movements of the soil of the island were going on, and gases escaping from it. Vegetation was everywhere crushed by the weight of the sand, which was damp from the steam—the coconuts looking deplorable, with their branches hanging down broken by their sides, the central shoot alone remaining erect. The yam gardens, too, which had just been planted, were overwhelmed, and the people were trying to remove some of the superincumbent weight so as to allow the plants to push through. But even the coco-palms (which bear the biggest fruit of any in the Pacific) probably recovered eventually, though they could not bear for a time, and the dust and sand have long, to judge from Lieut. Somerville's description, disappeared beneath the luxuriant vegetation; though two great lava streams, of nearly fifty and thirty years age respectively, which jut out into the sea like great embankments or breakwaters, are still scantily covered—the latter, indeed, hardly clothed at all.

The dark sand was pronounced by Prof. Bonney to be a basalt glass (tachylite), with a silica percentage of probably over 50, with specific gravity about 2.73, resembling the glassy lavas of the Sandwich islands.

It is worth noting that the principal earthquakes which preceded the eruption, as early as June 8 and 12, coincided with the first outbreak at Rotomahana, in New Zealand (June 12); while the great eruption, on August 31, was within a few hours of the severe earthquake at Charleston, U.S.A.

It may possibly be inferred, from the name Niua-fóu (*i.e.* New Niua, the old being probably Niua-tobutabu, or Keppel island), that the existence of the island is historically recent. It is said, I think, to have been seen by Tasman.

COUTTS TROTTER.

## MEETINGS OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, SESSION 1895-96.

*Fourth Ordinary Meeting, January 6, 1896.*—SIR GEORGE GOLDIE, K.C.M.G.,  
Vice-President, in the Chair.

ELECTIONS.—*Rev. John Bufton; Rev. John Meldrum Dryerre, LL.B.; Francis Arthur Farrell; Frederick Craufurd Goodenough; A. C. Hall, B.A.; Evan Hare; Evan Herring Hare, M.A.; I. D. Inverarity; John Alfred Jones; Reginald F. Knollys; Herman Le Roy-Lewis, J.P.; Sir George Glynn Petre, K.C.M.G., C.B.; J. S. Rutherford.*

The Paper read was:—

"A Journey through Somaliland, to Lakes Rudolf and Stefanie, and thence to Lamu by the Tana river." By Dr. Donaldson Smith.

### DEATH OF MR. H. SEEBOHM.

The Chairman made the following remarks: Your President, Mr. Clements Markham, has been very ill, and is unable to attend to-night. He has requested me to state that at the time of your last meeting he was already unwell, owing to which he omitted to perform the melancholy duty, which now devolves upon me, of referring to the loss the Society has sustained in the death of one of our Honorary Secretaries, Mr. Henry Seebohm. I ought, however, to say that the funeral of our esteemed and valued colleague was attended both by the President and by our other Honorary Secretary, Major Darwin. I must not dwell at present on the services to geography rendered by Mr. Henry Seebohm, but I may just remind you that there is an excellent obituary notice in the *Journal* of the Geographical Society for January.

## GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE OF THE MONTH.

### *Additions to the Library.*

By HUGH ROBERT MILL, D.Sc., *Librarian, R.G.S.*

THE following abbreviations of nouns and the adjectives derived from them are employed to indicate the source of articles from other publications. Geographical names are in each case written in full:—

A. = Academy, Academie, Akademie.	Mag. = Magazine.
Ann. = Annals, Annales, Annalen.	P. = Proceedings.
B. = Bulletin, Bollettino, Boletim.	R. = Royal.
Com. = Commerce, Commercial.	Rev. = Review, Revue, Revista.
C. R. = Comptes Rendus.	S. = Society, Société, Selskab.
Erdk. = Erdkunde.	Sitzb. = Sitzungsbericht.
G. = Geography, Geographie, Geografia.	T. = Transactions.
Ges. = Gesellschaft.	V. = Verein.
I. = Institute, Institution.	Verh. = Verhandlungen.
J. = Journal.	W. = Wissenschaft, and compounds.
M. = Mitteilungen.	Z. = Zeitschrift.

On account of the ambiguity of the words *octavo*, *quarto*, etc., the size of books in the list below is denoted by the length and breadth of the cover in inches to the nearest half-inch. The size of the *Journal* is 10 × 6½.

### EUROPE.

Greece. *Petermanns M.* 41 (1895): 273-279. Philippon.  
Zur Vegetationskarte des Peloponnes. Von Dr. Alfred Philippon. *With*  
*Map.*