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Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Scottish Geographical Magazine

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsgj19>

Report to council

Hugh Robert Mill D.Sc., F.R.S.E.

Published online: 27 Feb 2008.

To cite this article: Hugh Robert Mill D.Sc., F.R.S.E. (1888) Report to council, Scottish Geographical Magazine, 4:12, 655-659, DOI: [10.1080/00369228808732333](https://doi.org/10.1080/00369228808732333)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00369228808732333>

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REPORT TO COUNCIL.

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

Delegate to the Bath Meeting of the British Association, 1888.

GENTLEMEN,—I have the honour of submitting a report of the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science held at Bath from September 5th to 12th, 1888, at which I was present as your Delegate to the Conference of Corresponding Societies. This Conference has now acquired a recognised position in the organisation of the British Association, and at the Bath meeting received additional powers which add to its usefulness. Efforts are being made by its managing committee to include all the publishing Societies which can be induced to join. One important result of this will be to obtain a bibliography of the scientific papers published outside the official organs of the great scientific Societies, a class of literature that would otherwise be easily lost sight of, to the inconvenience and loss of future workers in many departments. This has, of course, no bearing on your Society, and one or two of the other leading Societies represented at the Conference, whose publications are recognised as authoritative.

I attended both the Conferences of the delegates, and took part in the proceedings. The first, presided over by Dr. John Evans, F.R.S., was mainly occupied by a discussion of the working of the Ancient Monuments Act and with proposals for the survey of the country for unrecorded prehistoric remains and the mapping of these on a uniform plan. General Pitt Rivers and Sir John Lubbock warmly supported a proposal that the local Societies of the United Kingdom should, on their own authority, undertake to approach proprietors on whose estates such monuments were liable to be injured or removed, and induce them to take proper precautions. It seems to me that the influential position in Scotland occupied by your Society eminently fits it to take action in this matter, and that the sub-committee of Council appointed after my report last year should be continued to consider what can be done in this way.

At the second conference various matters remitted from the sectional committees were considered. Much interest was taken in the report of the committee on the Surface Temperature of Rivers, etc., which was at work last year on several of the streams of Scotland, and on the motion of your delegate several of the English and Irish Societies professed themselves as ready to take up the work in their localities, a proceeding which can hardly fail to result in a great increase of our knowledge of the phenomena of river temperature. This is a novel research in physical geography, which, by the aid of the Associated Societies, may be extended widely and carried on more completely and economically than by any other means which is apparent at present. The committee is a direct outcome of the part taken by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society on the Conference. Amongst other matters brought up was a proposal that photographs of interesting geological sections should be obtained wherever such sections may be found, and that the sections be reproduced in a uniform manner for ready comparison.

The number of delegates present was 35, representing 35 societies or associations of societies, as against 32 delegates from 33 societies last year.

As your Secretary was present at the meeting in his official capacity, and secured many of the more important papers for the *Magazine*, it is unnecessary for me to enter in any detail into the proceedings of Section E. I therefore content myself with the following record of the papers submitted to the Section, many of which were interesting, although few had striking novelty or exceptional importance. The address of the President was of special value at the present time, showing by the history of past changes the importance of present trade routes; and the probable alterations which will follow in the near future. He strongly urged the importance of increased attention to Commercial Geography in education. Captain Elwes' paper describing a new route from India to Tibet, Mr. Dennet's on Explorations in Kakongo, and Mr. Barrington d'Almeida's on the interesting little Malayan State of Pahang were among the freshest records of travel communicated to the meeting. Colonel Bolland sent a very interesting account of the processes of engraving the Ordnance Survey maps, and Mr. H. J. Mackinder raised several questions of geographical nomenclature that promise to lead, through further discussion and deliberation, to some much-needed reforms and improvements.

SECTION E.—GEOGRAPHY.

President.—Colonel Sir C. W. Wilson, R.E., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.C.L., F.R.S., F.R.G.S.

Vice-Presidents.—E. Delmar Morgan, F.R.G.S.; H. W. Bates, F.R.S.; Sir Lambert Playfair, K.C.M.G.; Lieutenant-General Richard Strachey, R.E., F.R.S.; General J. T. Walker, C.B., R.E., F.R.S.

Secretaries.—J. S. Keltie, F.R.G.S.; H. J. Mackinder, M.A., F.R.G.S.; E. G. Ravenstein, F.R.G.S. (*Recorder*).

Committee.—Rev. C. D. Ginsburg, D.C.L., LL.D.; Admiral Sir Erasmus Ommanney, C.B., F.R.S.; Professor Baron F. von Richthofen; General Sir H. E. L. Thuiller, R.A., C.S.I., F.R.S.; Coutts Trotter; the Right. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells; Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, F.R.S.; the Hon. George Brodrick; The Very Rev. E. H. Plumptre, D.D., Dean of Wells; Rev. H. B. Tristram, D.D., F.R.S., Canon of Durham; A. Silva White, F.R.S.E.; Cope Whitehouse, M.A.; Colonel Woodthorpe, R.E.; C. E. D. Black; Rev. Canon A. J. Carver, D.D.

Delegate Members.—F. J. Faraday; H. R. Mill, D.Sc.

Papers Read on Thursday, September 6th, 1888.

1. The President's Address.
2. Le Canal de Panama, par M. de Lesseps (read, in M. de Lesseps' absence, by Mr. H. J. Mackinder).
3. Meteorological conditions of the Red Sea (communicated by Lieutenant-General Strachey, Chairman Meteorological Council).
4. Sea Temperatures in the neighbourhood of Cape Guardafui (by the same).
5. *Dr. H. R. Mill.*—Salinity of the Clyde Sea-Area.

6. *Dr. H. R. Mill.*—Ocean Temperatures on the Continental Shelf.
7. *H. W. Clayden, M.A.*—Perspective Maps and Common Maps.
8. *Delmar Morgan.*—Little Russia.
9. *Admiral Sir Erasmus Ommanney.*—Report of a Committee appointed for the purpose of drawing attention to the desirability of prosecuting further research in the Antarctic Regions.

Papers Read on Friday, September 7th, 1888.

1. *Colonel Woodthorpe, R.E.*—Explorations on the Chindwin.
2. *Captain W. J. Elwes.*—A New Route from India to Tibet.
3. *E. Delmar Morgan.*—Russian Topographical Surveys.
4. *Rev. Henry George Tomkins.*—Notes on the Geography of the region from the Nile to the Euphrates, as known to the Ancient Egyptians.
5. *Major Conder, R.E.*—Remarks on Mr. Tomkins's Paper.
6. *Captain A. M. Mantell, R.E.*—Recent Explorations East of the Jordan.
7. *George St. Clair, F.G.S.*—Jerusalem: Nehemiah's Wall and the Royal Sepulchres.

Papers Read on Monday, September 10th, 1888.

1. *Sir Lambert Playfair.*—Tunis as a French Protectorate.
2. *Sir Francis De Winton.*—The Commercial Future of Central Africa.
3. *Rev. John Mackenzie.*—Bechuanaland and the Land of Ophir.
4. *P. H. Ford.*—The Transvaal, or South African Republic.
5. *H. H. Johnston.*—The Cameroons.
6. *E. G. Ravenstein.*—Dr. Livingstone and Bangweolo.
7. *Joseph Thomson.*—Notes from the Atlas Mountains (read by one of the Secretaries).
8. *R. G. Haliburton.*—Akkas and Dwarfs in Southern Marocco.
9. *R. E. Dennett.*—Through Kakongo.

Papers Read on Tuesday, September 11th, 1888.

1. *Colonel J. H. Bolland, R.E.*—Photographic and Photozincographic processes employed in the Ordnance Survey (read by the President).
2. *H. J. Mackinder, M.A.*—Note on Geographical Terminology.
3. *Cope Whitehouse, M.A.*—The River of Joseph, the Fayum and Raiyan Basins.
4. *Captain Conyers Surtees.*—A Mission to El-Wedj.
5. *G. K. Gilbert.*—Notes on Maps produced by the United States Geographical and Geological Survey.
6. *W. Barrington d'Almeida.*—On Pahang, an independent State in the Malayan Peninsula.
7. *George Taylor.*—Formosa: characteristic traits of the Island and its aboriginal inhabitants (read by Mr. Mackinder).
8. *Cesare Tondini de Quarenghi.*—On the general adoption of the Gregorian Calendar in relation with that of the universal hour.

The sections were rather less crowded with papers than usual, and the arrangements for reading them were consequently more satisfactory to the authors. The necessity of a change in the system of sitting continuously from eleven to three was more apparent than ever; in fact the

Geographical Section had on one occasion to adjourn for half-an-hour at one o'clock, as there was no audience.

Many papers of much geographical interest were presented to Section H, Anthropology, and the substance of some of these will probably appear as *Notes* in the Magazine. In Section G, Mechanical Science, a most interesting account was given by Mr. J. Wolfe Barry of the new dock and railways constructed at Barry Island on the Bristol Channel to serve as an outlet for the South Wales collieries. The whole project is a commercial application of geographical principles which determined the site and approaches of the new dock as more favourable than those of the docks of Cardiff both for access to the coal mines and to the open sea. A Saturday excursion of over 100 members of the Association to the Docks, which will be opened for shipping next year, gave a very vivid impression of the manner in which engineering skill had taken advantage of the configuration of land and sea-margin in arranging the basins and railways. Beautiful weather and the hospitality of the directors of the dock company combined to heighten the pleasure of this visit of inspection.

In Section A, Mathematics and Physics, there were several papers of geographical importance including some valuable advances in our knowledge of tropical hurricanes, with new rules for handling ships in cyclones, by Hon. Ralph Abercromby, and an interesting account of the magnetic survey of Japan, by Professor Cargill G. Knott of Tokyo.

In a joint-meeting of Sections C and D, Geology and Biology, a discussion on Coral Reefs was announced; but although a number of speakers took part in the meeting, following up a paper on the origin of coral islands, by Dr. Hickson of Oxford, there was practically no difference of opinion expressed. The applicability of Mr. Murray's theory was generally recognised, although some doubt was expressed as to the power of solution in hollowing out lagoons; and it was generally held that the new view did not exclude the possibility of Darwin's explanation in particular cases.

The following 17 money grants, amounting to £1163, made to committees for carrying on special researches of a more or less geographical nature were passed by the general committee; the total number of grants was 37 and the sum given £1645, representing rather more than the profits made by the Association on the sale of tickets for this meeting:—

Mathematics and Physics.—Ben Nevis Observatory, £50; Measurement of Solar Radiation, £10; A Differential Gravity Meter, £10; Seasonal Variations of Temperature in Lakes, Rivers, and Estuaries, £30.

Geology.—Erratic Blocks, £10; Volcanic Phenomena of Japan, £25; Volcanic Phenomena of Vesuvius, £20.

Biology.—Zoology and Botany of the West India Islands, £100; Marine Biological Association, Plymouth, £200; Flora of China, £25; Naples Zoological Station, £100; Natural History of the Friendly Islands, £100.

Geography.—Geography and Geology of the Atlas Ranges, £100.

Mechanical Science.—Investigation of Estuaries by means of Models, £100.

Anthropology.—North-Western Tribes of Canada, £150; Exploration of Roman Baths at Bath, £100; Characteristics of Nomad Tribes of Asia Minor, £30.

The Bath meeting of the Association evidently taxed the resources of the city to the utmost, but, the numbers attending being considerably under the average, the consequences were not so much felt as might have been expected.

A word of praise must be given to the admirable *Handbook to Bath*, a well-edited collection of well-written accounts of the chief features of interest, mainly archæological, in the neighbourhood. It is illustrated by a handsome geological map printed in colours by Messrs. Gall and Inglis, Edinburgh.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

THE Annual Business Meeting of the Society was held in Dowell's Hall, Edinburgh, on the afternoon of the 5th November—Mr. James Currie in the Chair. The Annual Report of Council, which is published this month, was submitted by the Secretary, and, on the motion of Mr. William C. Smith, was adopted by the Society. The following Resolution, on the motion of Mr. J. G. Bartholomew, was adopted by the Society:—

“That the President and Vice-Presidents be re-elected for the current Session.

“That the Honorary Secretaries, Treasurers, and Map-Curator be re-elected.

“That Professor James Geikie be elected Honorary Editor in place of Mr. Hugh A. Webster, resigned; and that Mr. John Gunn be elected Honorary Librarian in place of Mr. David Petrie, deceased.

“That in the room of Members of Council retiring at this time by rotation, the following gentlemen be elected Members of Council, namely:—Dr. Bruce Bremner; Professor Butcher; Captain Dunlop, R.N.; Henry Goudy, Esq., Advocate; David Guthrie, Esq., Glasgow; William Jolly, Esq., Glasgow; Christopher Salvesen, Esq.; and Professor Wallace. And that the following Members of Council retiring by rotation be re-elected, namely:—W. Scott Dalglish, Esq.; Edward Cox, Esq., Dundee; Sir Alexander Christison; Colonel Dods; Dr. R. W. Felkin; Rev. George A. Smith, Aberdeen; David Stewart, Esq., Aberdeen; W. Renny Watson, Esq., Glasgow; James Stevenson, Esq., Largs; Coutts Trotter, Esq.; Dr. George Smith; and Robert Cox, Esq., of Gorgie.”

This concluded the business before the Meeting.

The Anniversary Meeting of the Society was held in the United Presbyterian Synod Hall, Edinburgh, on the evening of the 6th November, the Right Honourable the Earl of Rosebery, President of the Society, in the Chair. A large number of members and guests were present. The Anniversary Address, which forms our leading article this month, was delivered by Sir William Wilson Hunter, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., etc. A Report of the speeches made on this occasion has been appended to Sir W. W. Hunter's Address.

Mr. Cope Whitehouse opened the Session of the Glasgow Branch of the Society with a Paper on *The Lost Lake Mæris: Egypt and its Engineers*. The