

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.



VOL. XVI.
SESSION 1871-72.
Nos. I. to V.

EDITED BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

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LONDON:
1, SAVILE ROW, W.
1872.

is described in the book as having been a buccaneer or filibuster in the days of James II., who, after acting as a pirate for some years in the Indian Seas, was at length wrecked on the coast of Madagascar. With the help of the surviving crew he built a boat and made his way to the African coast, whence he proceeded through a country which might very well be described in the words of Captain Elton's Journal, or in the terms which Dr. Livingstone used in speaking of the country between the Zambesi falls and the sea. They went through a rich, alluvial, tropical country, until they came to a steep wall, up which they had to climb to the top of the falls which they found interrupting the course of the great river which they had followed from the coast. They then got on to a sandy region, where they were very much pestered by the lions and other wild animals, and suffered greatly from want of water. After many days' journeying they at length made their way to the Portuguese settlements on the west coast of Africa. The interest of this romance lay in this, that there was ground for supposing that De Foe never wrote one of his novels without some substratum of fact he had gathered from the stories he had heard from voyagers and travellers whom he met at the taverns about London. It was a very curious fact, that the description of the country in this almost forgotten story might seem to be taken from the accounts given by Sir Roderick Murchison from the narratives of men like Livingstone and the traveller whose journal had just been read.

Mr. FRANCIS GALTON said, twenty-five years ago the map of the country about the Limpopo was nearly a blank, and, he might add, that perhaps the most appropriate memorial of the geographical labours of Sir Roderick Murchison would be two maps, one representing the world as known at the time when he first interested himself actively in the affairs of the Society, and the other representing the world as known at the present time; for in the twenty-five or thirty years that had elapsed between those two periods, the progress of geography had been immense. In the Arctic regions, in Africa, north and south, in Australia, in all parts of the world, explorations of the highest importance had taken place, and every exploration met with his heartfelt sympathy, in many cases with his guidance, and in some with his initiation. Previous to 1848, the limit of African travellers, proceeding from the south, was a dry, arid country, in the neighbourhood of Livingstone's first missionary station, not far from which the Limpopo perennially flowed, no one knew where, to the northward. It was the old story of African rivers over again,—the case of the Niger on a small scale,—that is, of a large river flowing in a direction that was not seaward. Since then, various travels had been made in the interior of Southern Africa, and a great portion of its interior had become known; but now, for the first time, complete information was obtained concerning the course of the Limpopo. The nature of its course threw great light on the general features of the geography of Africa. The Limpopo makes a curve concentric with the lower course of the Zambesi, and mimics it in many ways, showing the similarity of the physical features of the banks of the two rivers. It has also its great fall; and the position of that fall, as laid down by Captain Elton, gives very fairly the boundary line of the great African plateau in which so many rivers have their rise.

Admiral HALL said the entrance to the Limpopo was very insignificant, and he was glad to hear such a good account of the interior. It was his good fortune to command the *Nemesis*, the first iron steamer that ever rounded the Cape of Good Hope. He left the Cape in the dead of winter, and off Algoa Bay encountered a tremendous gale. At last, fortunately, he reached Delagoa Bay, where he found smooth water and let go the anchor. He stayed there three weeks, and tried to get up the Limpopo, but only succeeded in doing so for a short distance, though he met with hippopotami, zebras, and all sorts of game. The great want of English vessels going round the Cape was a good

harbour, there being none such between Simon's Bay and Delagoa Bay: he therefore recommended that England should extend her South African possessions to that bay.

Mr. SAUNDERS asked if Captain Elton in his Journal had given the altitudes of the range through which the Limpopo breaks in its course to the sea.

Mr. CLEMENTS MARKHAM said Captain Elton appeared to have lost everything when his boat capsized in the upper part of the river, so that he made no observations for height.

The PRESIDENT said the information afforded by Captain Elton's Journal formed a great stride in geographical knowledge. The curious parallel which Sir Bartle Frere had discovered between the journey of Captain Singleton and that of Captain Elton must have arisen from knowledge which Defoe picked up in conversation with Portuguese travellers, who, no doubt, in those days had passed from the east to the west coast of Africa. He quite appreciated Admiral Hall's sailor-like wish that England should extend her coast and get a good harbour; but he was afraid this was hardly consistent with a due regard to international considerations, as Delagoa Bay happened to be in the possession of our old and intimate allies the Portuguese. It was a curious fact that all the rivers on the east coast of Africa, however large they might be in the interior, were almost lost at their embouchures; some of them actually had no mouth, there being sandbanks across the entrance. The Zambesi had a bar across the mouth, and the Limpopo and the Lorenzo Marques were so small at their entrances that boats could hardly enter them. A paper had recently been submitted to the Society by Dr. Mann on this very subject. In conclusion, he asked the Society to record their thanks to Captain Elton for his very interesting paper.

Mr. GEORGE FRERE wished to inform the Meeting that the English claimed the east coast of Africa up to latitude 26°. He recollected one of our admirals stationing a party of men on Inyak Island, which lies in the bay, within that limit, in assertion of the claim. The place had the reputation of being a wretched hole, which might account for some apparent indifference about it, but its importance had not been lost sight of in the proper quarter.

Second Meeting, November 27th, 1871.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR HENRY C. RAWLINSON, K.C.B., PRESIDENT,
in the Chair.

ELECTIONS.—*Lieutenant William de Wiveleslie Abney, R.E.; Hon. J. F. Birch; Charles de la Barre Bodenham; Captain Alexander Bowers; Samuel Constantine Burke; Lieutenant Reginald Chalmer, 60th Royal Rifles; Arthur Cockshott, M.A.; Lieutenant Gustavus W. Berry Collis, 6th Royal Regiment; Rev. James W. Cook; Charles Cowper, C.M.G.; Henry Augustus Cowper; William Campbell Eyton; James Murray Foster; Captain John Clinton Greene, R.A.; Edgar Christmas Harvie; George F. Head; Dr. Henderson; Henry Tylston Hodgson; Rev. James John Hornby, D.D., Head Master of Eton College; Captain Alexander Hadden Hutchinson, R.A.; Thomas Hughes Jackson; T. Johnston; Robert Jones; Edgar John David Ludlow; Henry Major, B.A.; Baron de Maltzan; Edward Ellis Morris; H. W. Mozley, M.A.;*