

PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

[PUBLISHED JULY 23RD, 1877.]

SESSION 1876-7.

Twelfth Meeting (ANNIVERSARY), *May 28, 1877.*

SIR RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

THE proceedings commenced by the Secretary (Mr. C. R. MARKHAM) reading the Regulations which govern the Anniversary Meetings, and the Minutes of the Meeting of 1876.

The following new Members were elected:—*Rev. Sir Talbot Hastings Bendall, Bart.*; *Rev. George Brown*; *Walter Coates, Esq.*; *Frederick J. Dean, Esq.*; *Charles Edward Hamilton, Esq.*; *William Arthur Harrison, Esq.*; *J. Newby Hetherington, Esq.*; *William Grey E. Macartney, Esq.*; *Henry Turton Norton, Esq.*; *General John Meredith Read*; *Robert Stewart, Esq.*; *John Lloyd Wynne, Esq.*

Captain TOYNBEE and Professor TENNANT were then appointed scrutineers of the Ballot.

The Report of the Council was next read by the Secretary, after which followed the

PRESENTATION OF THE ROYAL AND OTHER
AWARDS.

ROYAL MEDALS.

THE FOUNDER'S MEDAL was awarded to Captain SIR GEORGE S. NARES, R.N., K.C.B., for having commanded the Arctic Expedition of 1875-6, during which the ships and sledge-parties respectively reached a higher Northern latitude than had previously been attained, and a survey was accomplished of 300 miles of coast-line, facing a previously unknown Polar Sea; also for his Geographical services in command of the *Challenger* Expedition. The VICTORIA or PATRON'S MEDAL to the Pundit Nain Singh, for his great journeys and

Surveys in Tibet and along the Upper Brahmaputra, during which he has determined the position of Lhása, and added largely to our positive knowledge of the map of Asia.

Addressing first Captain Sir George Nares, the PRESIDENT spoke as follows:—

“ Sir GEORGE NARES,

“ In delivering to you the Founder’s Medal of the Royal Geographical Society, the highest honour it is in their power to bestow, I am discharging one of the most agreeable duties of the President of this Society. I will only add that its primary object, which is to encourage Geographical Science and Discovery, does not exclude a just appreciation of the many high qualities displayed in your conduct of the Arctic Expedition, and without which the results attained could never have been secured. The discoveries which you, and the officers and men under your command, made of advanced Polar lands, were due to the energy, perseverance and endurance manifested by all, under hardships and difficulties of the gravest character. But especially do the records now before the world show the bold and skilful manner in which the ships of the Expedition were conducted, the leading vessel to the highest latitude yet attained, and probably possible of attainment by keel, and their safe return home from the hazards of ice-navigation of no ordinary character, even for Arctic Seas, with all appliances intact, and without accident to vessels or crews.

“ With regard to the additions to our Geographical knowledge made by you, they cannot be better described than in the official language of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty when conveying their approval to you of the conduct of all engaged in the important service, which is as follows:—

“ ‘ Notwithstanding, however, that it was found impossible for the sledging parties to attain a much higher latitude than that reached by Sir Edward Parry, the addition to geographical knowledge has been considerable. The conjectural open sea to the north of Smith Sound, and the land assumed to be there, have been proved not to exist. The coast line of the northernmost land yet known, adjoining the American continent, has been accurately charted for 220 miles. The north coast of Greenland has been examined for 80 miles, and traced as far as Cape Britannia in lat. $82^{\circ} 54' N.$, long. $48^{\circ} 38' W.$ The western shores of Smith’s Sound have been corrected in detail; and, lastly, the question of the possibility of reaching the Pole by way of Smith Sound has been set at rest, whilst a higher latitude than any hitherto attained, viz. $83^{\circ} 20' 26''$, has been reached.’ ”

SIR GEORGE NARES replied :—

“Mr. PRESIDENT and Gentlemen :—It is with much pride that I receive this gift, and I accept it as a token that the work I have performed has obtained the approval of so distinguished and leading a body as the Royal Geographical Society. The bestowal of such a highly wished-for honour is of itself one of the highest rewards I could possibly ever have foreseen for my work, and it entails considerable responsibility for the future ; for if, hitherto, I have done my utmost to advance our knowledge of the Globe we inhabit, so, hereafter, it will be my endeavour to bear worthily the very high distinction which has now been conferred upon me.”

Colonel H. Yule, C.B., then came forward to receive the Medal on behalf of the Pundit Nain Singh. The PRESIDENT addressed him as follows :—

“Colonel YULE,

“Since Nain Singh’s absence from this country precludes my having the pleasure of handing to him in person, this, the Victoria or Patron’s Medal, which has been awarded to him for his great journeys and surveys in Tibet and along the Upper Brahmaputra, during which he determined the positions of Lhása, and added largely to our positive knowledge of the map of Asia, I beg to place it in your charge for transmission to the Pundit.

“I will myself address a letter to the Viceroy in India calling his attention to this award of one of the two Medals of the year, the highest honour this Society can confer on any Geographer, however distinguished by his services to Geographical Science or Discovery, and with a request that His Excellency will take such steps as he may deem best for its presentation to Nain Singh.

“But, in the mean time, I would beg you, who were the first to propose that this Medal should be so conferred, and took such generous and earnest interest in the recognition by the Society of Nain Singh’s high claims to that distinction, to convey to him from me, as the President of the Royal Geographical Society, the satisfaction the Council have felt in thus publicly marking their high appreciation of the noble qualities of loyalty, courage and endurance, by the display of which in no ordinary degree he achieved success, and was enabled to add so largely to our knowledge of that portion of Asia which no European could explore. I would ask you also to add that the Council have not failed to see that he has not worked as a mere topographical automaton ; and were perfectly aware that, notwithstanding he was a native of Asia and familiar with Tibetan dialects, his journeys were not

accomplished without great peril to life. I would finally wish you to convey to Nain Singh, who in the performance of these distinguished services has suffered seriously in health by the extreme hardships attending his journeys, that I trust this public recognition of his merits as a Geographer from the Royal Geographical Society, which in its awards knows no distinction of nationality, race or creed, will be a source of satisfaction to him in his retirement, of which nothing can ever deprive him, to the end of a life he has devoted so faithfully to the public service and the advancement of Geographical knowledge."

Colonel YULE, in reply, said :—"I was taken by surprise when I was asked to officiate on this occasion as the recipient of the Medal for Nain Singh. The man who, beyond all others, ought to have occupied the position is Colonel Montgomerie, and I am sure that nothing but ill-health could have caused that gentleman to be absent on an occasion so interesting to him. Not only had Colonel Montgomerie given Nain Singh the most essential part of his training, but he was himself one of the most distinguished Himalayan explorers and surveyors, and had spent a considerable portion of his life at an altitude of 18,000 feet above the sea. I am utterly unknown to Nain Singh, and I shall therefore, by the leave of the Society, communicate the intimation of his having been assigned the Medal through Colonel Montgomerie. But though I do not know Nain Singh personally, I know his work, and can affirm that what the President has said about him is very just. He is not a topographical automaton, or merely one of a great multitude of native employés with an average qualification. His observations have added a larger amount of important knowledge to the map of Asia than those of any other living man, and his journals form an exceedingly interesting book of travels. It will afford me great pleasure to take steps for the transmission of the Medal through an official channel to the Pundit."

A Gold Watch, with an appropriate Inscription, was also presented to Captain A. H. Markham, R.N., for having commanded the Northern Division of sledges in the Arctic Expedition of 1875-6, and for having planted the Union Jack in $83^{\circ} 20' 26''$ N., a higher latitude than had ever before been reached by any previous Expedition.

In delivering the Watch, the PRESIDENT said :—

"Captain MARKHAM, I have much pleasure in presenting to you, in the name of the Royal Geographical Society, this Watch, in public recognition of their appreciation of the valuable services you rendered in command of the Northern Division of Sledges in the Arctic Expedition of 1875-6, in the course of which you reached

the latitude of $83^{\circ} 20' 26''$ N., the highest that had been attained by any previous Expedition."

Captain MARKHAM replied:—

"Mr. President and Gentlemen:—I have to express my grateful thanks for the high honour conferred upon me. Though I have been selected as the recipient of the more substantial part of the honour, I know it will be felt and appreciated by my companions, without whom I should not have been placed in the position I now occupy. I cannot help thinking also, that apart from my having planted the Union Jack in the highest Northern latitude yet reached, I have been selected for this honour because I was the senior officer of the extended sledging parties of the Expedition, and that it is an acknowledgment on the part of the Royal Geographical Society of the geographical services which those parties rendered."

PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PRIZE MEDALS.*

The following was the award of the Examiners for the present year:—

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY. *Gold Medal*.—Walter New, Dulwich College. *Bronze Medal*.—Arthur Smyth Flower, Winchester College. *Honourably Mentioned*.—John Chisman, City of London School; J. A. Robinson, Liverpool College; Frank Stanton Carey, Bristol Grammar School.

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY. *Gold Medal*.—William John Newton, Liverpool College. *Bronze Medal*.—John Wilkie, Liverpool College. *Honourably Mentioned*.—Arthur Reed Ropes, City of London School; William Wallis Ord, Dulwich College; Samuel Fowler Blackwell, Clifton College; George Arnold Tomkinson, Haileybury College; Henry Colthurst Godwin, Clifton College.

Mr. FRANCIS GALTON said it gave him much pleasure, on this as on many previous occasions, to be able to assure the Society of the public appreciation of the Examinations. Nearly all of the more important schools had at one time or another sent candidates. Eton had won no less than 5 out of the 36 Medals that had hitherto been adjudged, and 11 other schools had each contributed one or more names to the list of Medallists. There were at present only two important schools which had never sent a candidate, Harrow and Rugby. Many testimonies had been borne to the

* The Medals offered by the Society for Geography, through the OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS, were awarded for the year 1876, as follows:—OXFORD (June), *Silver Medal*, John Wilkie, Liverpool College. *Bronze Medal*.—Herbert Marlow Ward, Bridgnorth Grammar School (both for General Geography). CAMBRIDGE (December), *Silver Medal* (Physical Geography), *Silver Medal* (Political Geography), both to H. C. Temple, Brighton Grammar School.

great service rendered to the cause of Education by these prizes. In a communication to the Conference of Head Masters held last Christmas, the Rev. George Butler, the Principal of Liverpool College, said he was grateful for the stimulus they afforded to the masters and boys, for the books that were suggested in the yearly programmes, and for the appointment of Examiners who had special knowledge of the country whose geography was the subject for the year. Invitations to compete were sent to 51 schools. Of these 17 responded, sending 22 competitors in Physical Geography, and 20 in Political Geography. The Medallists were reported by the Examiners to fully deserve their respective honours, and those who had received Honourable Mention, to be well entitled to that distinction. It had always been hoped that some of the very ablest youths at the schools would be induced to take an interest in Geography, and there was one remarkable proof that this had been accomplished, for Mr. McAlister, the Senior Wrangler of Cambridge this year, won the Gold Medal for Physical Geography in 1871. He (Mr. Galton) wrote to ask his candid opinion whether the time he had spent on Geography, in preparing to compete for the Medals, had on the whole been a help, a hindrance, or of no effect, in his academical career. His reply was full of gratitude for the benefits he received from that source, and his allegiance was still strong to the Society for the encouragement they had given him by their award.

Mr. F. Galton then introduced Mr. WALTER NEW, of Dulwich College, to receive the Gold Medal for Physical Geography, stating that he ranked decidedly first among the candidates. Last year he obtained the Bronze Medal, and this year the general style of his answers was such as would have done credit to a mature scholar.

The PRESIDENT, in presenting the Medal, said he was glad to find that the promise given by Mr. New in 1876 had been so richly and amply fulfilled.

Mr. F. GALTON said, before introducing the next in order of merit who was to receive the Bronze Medal, he wished to recall the memory and service formerly rendered to the Society by Admiral Smyth, who died twelve years ago, full of years and scientific honour, and to whom was due just one-half of the credit of the foundation of the Society, which was established by the combination of two contemporary and independent schemes, of one of which Admiral Smyth was the sole originator. It was he who revived the declining fortunes of the Society in 1849, when its numbers were diminishing, its expenses exceeding its income, and it was doubtful whether it would not entirely collapse. In that crisis, Admiral Smyth was elected President, and, under his sagacious and energetic guidance,

new life was infused into the decaying Society; its influence made itself more widely felt, its numbers rapidly increased, and its resources were established on a firm footing. According to the reiterated expression of Sir Roderick Murchison, who was his immediate successor in the Chair, it was to Admiral Smyth that the first step was due that led to its present prosperous condition. The Bronze Medallist, Arthur Smyth Flower, of Winchester College, was the grandson of Admiral Smyth.

The PRESIDENT, in presenting the Medal, said it was peculiarly gratifying to him to do so; and he was quite certain that the manner in which the questions had been answered was merely an indication of what Mr. Smyth Flower would do thereafter.

Sir RAWSON W. RAWSON, as the Examiner in Political Geography, said he was very much disappointed that he had not the opportunity of introducing the two boys who had gained the Medals for Political Geography, more especially as the Bronze Medallist, John Wilkie, gained the Gold Medal last year for Physical Geography, and ran his competitor so close this year, that the papers had to be looked through twice, before it could be decided which was the best. He had heard that, if it had not been for the boy's attention having been devoted to other examinations, it was very likely that he would have won the Gold Medal. At the same time it enhanced the merit of the Gold Medallist, that he was a year younger than Wilkie. They were both from the same school, Liverpool College. Both the papers were excellent.

The PRESIDENT handed the Medals to Sir Rawson W. Rawson for transmission to the recipients.

The Hon. G. C. BRODRICK, in announcing the next year's subject as "The Nile Basin, and that part of Africa which lies to the East of it," said this might be called the classic region of Africa: for it was the oldest, as it certainly was the most recent, field of African geographical discovery. It possessed a special interest at present, because if the great scheme for the systematic exploration of Africa now in contemplation should be carried out, it was certain that one, if not more routes to be selected, would pass across that very region. So that in this case, as in the last two years, the candidates for the prizes would have the satisfaction of feeling that they were following in the footsteps of travellers who were actually engaged in making Geography. He was quite sure that by thus connecting geographical education with geographical exploration, the Society was rendering good service to both, and also promoting the interests of general education.