

The second Paper read was—

2. *Remarks on Portuguese Journeys in Central Africa.* By JAMES MACQUEEN, Esq., F.R.G.S.

SILVA PORTO is a Portuguese trader, who has written an account of three journeys that he undertook in Southern and Central Africa, starting from Benguela. In the first he reached Castange, in his second he travelled still farther, and in his third he crossed the entire continent on a parallel to the north of Livingstone's route.

He emerged at Mozambique, having journeyed in the company of some Zanzibar Arab traders, who had themselves previously crossed the continent, and were then returning homeward. He was on the road from June, 1853, to November, 1854, of which time he employed 190 days in actual travel.

Silva Porto's itinerary is little more than a statement of days' marches and of their directions, recorded very roughly, together with a mention of the rivers he crossed and an estimate of their breadth. From these materials, and from an occasional similarity of names, Mr. Macqueen endeavours to bring Silva Porto's geographical facts into comparison with those of Livingstone and other travellers, and has exhibited the result in a diagram which accompanies the present paper. Without the aid of this diagram it is wholly impossible to do justice to Mr. Macqueen's minute analysis. It will be published in the Journal of next year, together with his paper in full.

With the exception of three culminating points, Silva Porto's route usually lay through fertile plains, subject to heavy rains, and cut up with rivers in many places.

At the close of his paper Mr. Macqueen makes the following remarks on the commercial value of South Central Africa :—

“In taking a general survey of Africa, it is at once evident and undeniable that the Portuguese possessions or dominions in South Africa are the most valuable and most important and useful portion of that vast and hitherto neglected continent. Expanding along the East Coast 1000 geographical miles, and along the West Coast 700, they command the entrance into every part of the interior, well known to be comparatively wealthy and all fertile, capable of producing every article of agricultural produce that is known in the tropical world. Their claim also to most of the interior is preferable and well known. More than one river, especially the Zambesi, opens up to some distance a communication with more remote countries in the interior. It is also in many places very populous, but these people are generally engaged in internal wars. The greatest misfortune that ever befel Portugal was the withdrawal of her attention from Africa to the Brazils, and the removing of such multitudes of her population from the former to the latter. In Africa itself her population can be best and most profitably employed, and that employment only can regenerate Africa and raise her to wealth, independence, and civilization, so as to become useful to herself and to the rest of the world.

The ablest Portuguese statesmen now clearly understand this truth, and their exertions will shortly produce in Southern Africa as great a revolution in the commerce of the world as the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope did soon after it was made."

The PRESIDENT.—I see a great African explorer here, Captain Burton, and ask him if he has any observations to make upon this part of Central Africa?

CAPTAIN BURTON, F.R.G.S.—My experience of Central Africa is more in the eastern than in the western country. Perhaps some little account of the Arabs, to whom Mr. Macqueen has just alluded, may be permitted, especially as Dr. Livingstone met them in the very centre of the African continent. They left Zanzibar about 1842, and travelled over the Unyamwezi country. They crossed the Tanganyika Lake, viâ Ujiji, and from that point they went to the south-western country of Marungu: there they fell into trouble in consequence of a blood feud with the people. Their boats were burned, and they found themselves unable to return to Ujiji. They were almost the first traders that crossed the Tanganyika Lake. They were compelled to go on from Marungu again to the south, and, as well as I remember, Dr. Livingstone met one or more of them at Linyanti.

MR. MACQUEEN stated this was not the party of Arabs to which he had alluded.

CAPTAIN BURTON.—I understood Mr. Macqueen to allude to the party of Arabs who crossed over from Zanzibar. I left Zanzibar in February last, and no other party had gone from Zanzibar to the western coast.

MR. MACQUEEN said it was another party.

CAPTAIN BURTON.—Mr. Macqueen seems to allude to some other party, but I have never heard of any except those Arabs who left in 1842. Another point which strikes me in Mr. Macqueen's account is the immense length of the marches—11½ geographical miles in Central Africa. I believe that hitherto such marching in the country in which I have been is quite unknown: 10 statute miles, or about 6 geographical rectilinear miles, would be a high average.

The PRESIDENT.—I am sure we are much indebted to Mr. Macqueen for his Paper, and particularly for that interesting and remarkable sketch with which it concluded of some of the general geographical features of the region of Central Africa, and especially of the character of its rivers. The whole subject is one which has occupied the attention of this Society and of the public so very much of late years, since the explorations of Dr. Livingstone and of Captains Burton and Speke, that we are always glad to receive any addition to our stock of knowledge. The history of the journey of these Portuguese Arabs from one coast of Africa to the other is full of interest, and I have no doubt that, when the Paper is printed in full, we shall find that many points of importance have unavoidably been omitted this evening. Mr. Macqueen will fully understand that it is impossible to read the entire Paper this evening.

The third Paper read was—

3. *Notes on the Island of St. Helena; to accompany his new Map of that Island.* By MAJOR EDMUND PALMER, R.A., F.R.G.S.

CAPTAIN PALMER'S map of St. Helena was executed during a residence of nearly six years on that island. It is shortly to be published, on the reduced scale of $\frac{1}{475000}$, by the Topographical Department of the War Office. The present paper is a concise memoir of the history.