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A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jtvi-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php)

JOURNAL OF  
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EDITED BY THE SECRETARY.

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1902.

## ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.\*

REV. F. A. WALKER, D.D., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following elections were announced :—

The SECRETARY (Prof. E. HULL, M.A., LL.D.) read the following on the "Submerged River-Valleys of the Atlantic" :—

### A COMMUNICATION ON THE

#### *SUBMERGED RIVER-VALLEYS OF THE ATLANTIC.*

By the SECRETARY, Professor EDWARD HULL, LL.D., F.R.S.

THOSE members who have taken an interest in the investigations I have had the honour to lay before the Institute from time to time on the above subject, will probably be pleased to learn that I have recently had two confirmatory statements regarding my conclusions drawn from distinct and independent sources. It will be recollected that from the plan of tracing the isobathic contours (or lines of equal depth) on the Admiralty charts, I was able to show that most of the river-valleys opening on the North Atlantic Ocean from the coasts of the British Isles and Western Europe—and, indeed, of Africa as far as the Congo, after traversing the Continental Platform and descending to great depths, opened out on the floor of the abyssal ocean at a general depth of 1,200 fathoms (or 7,200 feet) below the surface of the ocean; and from this it was inferred that at the time when these

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\* Monday, May 12th, 1902.

channels, or cañons, were being eroded down to their floors, the region must have stood about 7,200 feet higher than it does at the present day. A great many leading geologists and men of science have, to a greater or less extent, accepted my conclusions as borne out by the contour lines—but there are others who doubt or disbelieve them altogether.

Amongst the former was, till recently, Lord Avebury, F.R.S., who has just brought out an elaborate and interesting work on *The Scenery of England*, of which his lordship was so good as to present me with a copy. I was gratified to find that my investigations had received recognition in very handsome terms, but with this was added a statement of caution to the effect that I had, perhaps, carried the argument farther than the facts entirely warranted. On seeing this, I wrote to Lord Avebury to say that if he would allow me I would be glad to show him the charts with the contour lines in order that he might satisfy himself as to whether the caution was justified. Accordingly, on a prearranged day, I took the charts to his house, and for half-an-hour he went over them very carefully, satisfying himself on the various points of interest or difficulty—and I left the charts for some days in his keeping. The result was that I received from him a note dated 27th April, in which he says in reference to the new edition of his book which he is preparing, that after seeing my charts he is omitting the sentence (p. 106) in which he expresses the "cautious doubt" above referred to; practically recognizing that the conclusions I had arrived at were justified.

The second confirmatory statement is of a totally different nature, and though confirmatory of the view of the great elevation of the European lands at which I had arrived, is based on physical or biological evidence. Professor W. C. Brøgger of the University of Christiania, in a recent work *Om de Senglaciale og Postglaciale nivåforandringer i kristianiafjellet*, states (p. 683) "the occurrence at great depths in the Norwegian sea of the high Arctic fossil shallow water mollusca of the Yoldia-fauna is explained by the hypothesis, that the sea-bottom during the time of the greatest ice-sheet of Europe, must have been uplifted at least 2,600 mètres (8,328 feet) higher than it is at present. In a discussion of this hypothesis, Dr. Frithjof Nansen concludes that the explanation of the occurrence of these arctic shallow water fossils at great depths in the Norwegian sea by the theory of transportation by

floating ice or icebergs is extremely improbable. If so, no other explanation is left than the supposition of a former uplift of the sea bottom." It will be observed that the *amount* of the uplift, as well as the special *epoch* referred to, closely coincide with those which have been determined in my essays read before the Institute, namely, 7,200 feet of uplift at the commencement of the glacial epoch. The great uplift and the glacial epoch are, as it appears to me, contemporaneous, and clearly stand in the relation of cause and effect.

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The following paper, by Thomas Chaplin, M.D., on "Some Diseases mentioned in the Bible," was then read by the Secretary in the absence of the author :—

### ON SOME DISEASES MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE.

By THOMAS CHAPLIN, ESQ., M.D.

THE diseases mentioned in the Bible, especially those of the Old Testament, form a study of much difficulty. In some instances only the name of the disease is given, and the precise meaning of the term has to be inferred from its etymology, its rendering in early translations of the Scriptures, or the traditional interpretation of it handed down by the Jews. In other cases only certain local affections or symptoms are mentioned, which may or may not be sufficient to determine the nature of the disorder. Thus we are told that King Asa "in the time of his old age was diseased in his feet," but there is nothing to show what was the character of the disease; whilst the account in 2 Kings iv., 18–20 of the death of the Shunammite's child leaves little room for doubt that the cause of death was either sunstroke or inflammation of the membranes of the brain from exposure to the sun in the harvest field. Such cases are of frequent occurrence in that country at the present day. A further difficulty arises from the fact that, in early Biblical times, even the wise and learned did not yet know how to describe diseases with perspicuity and accuracy. Medicine as a science was not yet born. It is partly owing