HAMILTON ASSOCIATION.

PAPER BY PROF. WRIGHT.

RECENT EXPLORATIONS IN AFRICA

The first meeting for the year of the Hamilton Association was held on the evening of January 6th, in the Council Chamber, City Hall. A considerable number of visitors was present, including several ladies. After routine business had been disposed of, Professor Wright, of the Wesleyan Female College, read the following paper on the above-mentioned subject:

GEOLOGY PECULIAR.

The geological formation of Central Africa is primitive—showing an altitude above the sea level averaging nearly 4,000 feet. This elevated portion of the globe, built up in great part of granite sandstone rocks, has never been submerged, nor does it appear to have undergone any changes, either volcanic or by the action of water. Time, working through countless ages with the slow but certain instrument of atmospheric influence, has rounded the surface and split into fragments the granite rocks, leaving a sandy base of disintegrated portions; while, in other cases, the mountains show as hard and undecaying a surface as though fresh from Nature's foundry.

Along the coasts there are tertiary formations containing shells similar to those of the adjoining sea; but, as the traveler penetrates to the elevated table-lands of the interior—all of them on an average 4,000 feet above the level of the sea—he leaves all trace of calcareous rocks, and finds only the native granite, sandstone and trap rocks.

The surface of this vast interior is entirely exempt from the coarse, superficial drift that encumbers so many countries, as derived from lofty mountain chains, from which either glaciers or great torrent streams have descended. All other continents have been successively submerged under the ocean to receive calcareous deposits. Thus, Africa, in a geological sense, is unique among the continental systems.

NILE ANOMALIES.

Egypt has been an extraordinary instance of the actual formation of a country by alluvial deposit; it has been created by a single river. The great Sahara, that frightful desert of interminable, scorching sand, stretching from the Red Sea to the Atlantic, is cleft by one solitary thread of water. Ages before man could have existed in that inhospitable land, that thread of water was at its silent work; through countless years it flooded and fell, depositing a rich legacy of soil upon the barren sand, until the delta was created. Thus furnishing a land of uninterrupted productiveness and having an unrivaled position for commerce, it took the lead in history as the most civilized and prosperous land upon earth.

As the Nile was among the first of known rivers, so it was unlike all others. In July and August, when European streams were at their lowest in the summer heat, the Nile was at the flood! In Egypt there was no rainfall—not even a drop of dew in those parched deserts, through which