

THE SOUTH SEAS

ELECTRICITY had been laying one ocean after another under tribute, besides all the continents until the world was enmeshed with its conductors, with but one great bare spot,—the vast Pacific Ocean. This wide expanse of some 8,000 miles looked too formidable to financiers, as well as to cable engineers. But there were men whose moving spirit embraced something besides dollars and cents, whose horizon was not bounded by the circle of self-aggrandisement, men with prevision, who build for future generations. Such men saw the Pacific laying the shores of part of the British Empire on the east side, as well as on the west side. Let us bring these sides together, let them clasp hands, let them no longer be strangers to each other, let the bond be complete, so that all parts of the British Empire be united by one continuous guide for mutual progress and solidarity, such were the feelings and sentiments that actuated the men to whom we owe the Pacific Cable, and to no man is more credit due for unselfish and steadfast devotion to the cause for upwards of a quarter of a century, than to our own fellow citizen, Sir Sandford Fleming. I will not recite the difficulties encountered and obstacles thrown in the way to thwart the enterprise; suffice it to say that Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand jointly agreed to lay the cable. On October 31st, 1902, the last section was laid.

A few words about the cable and laying it. Let it be remembered that the section from Vancouver to Fanning Island was about a thousand miles longer than any cable that had hitherto been laid, and gave rise to differences of opinion among experts as to how much copper was necessary in the conductor for efficient work; for evidently it was useless to have the other three sections of the cable more efficient than the long one. It may be remarked that with the same sized conductor, a short cable is far faster than a longer one.