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band our coal as much as possible, but it generally soon fell calm, and obliged Captain Preedy reluctantly to get up steam again. In consequence of these continued delays and changes from steam to sail, and from sail to steam again, much fuel was expended, and not more than eighty miles of distance made good each day.

On Sunday, the 25th, however, the weather changed, and for several days in succession there was an uninterrupted calm. The moon was just at the full, and for several nights it shone with a brilliancy which turned the smooth sea into one silvery sheet, which brought out the dark hull and white sails of the ship in strong contrast to the sea and sky, as the vessel lay all but motionless on the water, the very impersonation of solitude and repose. Indeed, until the rendezvous was gained, we had such a succession of beautiful sunrises, gorgeous sunsets, and tranquil moonlight nights, as would have excited the most enthusiastic admiration of any one but persons situated as we were. But by us such scenes were regarded only as the annoying indications of the calm which delayed our progress and wasted our coal. In spite of the unusual calmness of the weather in general, there were days on which our former unpleasant experiences of the Atlantic were brought forcibly to our recollection—when it blew hard, and the sea ran sufficiently high to reproduce on a minor scale some of the discomforts of which the previous cruise had been so fruitful. These days, however, were the exception, and not the rule, and served to show how much more pleasant was the inconvenient calm than the weather which had previously prevailed. By dint, however, of a judicious expenditure of fuel, and a liberal use of the cheaper motive power of sail, the rendezvous was reached on the evening of Wednesday, the 28th of July, just eleven days after our departure from Queenstown.

The rest of the squadron were in sight at nightfall, but at such a considerable distance that it was past ten o'clock on the morning of Thursday, the 29th, before the Agamemnon joined them. We were as usual greeted by a perfect storm of questions as to what kept us so much behind our time, and learned that all had come to the conclusion that the ship must have got on shore on leaving Queenstown harbor. The Niagara, it appeared, had arrived at the rendezvous on Friday night the 23d, the Valorous on Sunday the 25th, and the Gorgon on the afternoon of Tuesday the 27th.

The day was beautifully calm, so no time was to be lost before making the splice; boats were soon lowered from the attendant ships, the two vessels made fast by a hawser, and the Niagara's end of the cable conveyed on board the Agamemnon. About half-past twelve o'clock the splice was effectually made, but with materials very different from carefully-rounded semicircular boards which had been used to inclose the junctions on previous occasions. It consisted merely of two straight boards hauled over the joining, with the iron rod and leaden plummet, attached to the centre. In hoisting it out from the side of the ship, however, the leaden sinker broke short off and fell overboard; and there being no more convenient weight at hand, a thirty-two pound shot was fastened to the splice instead, and the whole apparatus was quickly dropped into the sea, without any formality, and, indeed, almost without a spectator, for those on board the ship had witnessed so many beginnings to the telegraphic line that it was evident they despaired of there ever being an end to it. The stipulated 210 fathoms of cable having been paid out to allow the splice to sink well below the surface, the signal to start was hoisted, the hawser cast loose, and the Niagara and Agamemnon started for the last time for their opposite destinations.

For the first three hours the ships proceeded very slowly, paying out a great quantity of slack, but after the expiration of this time, the speed of the Agamemnon was increased to about five knots per hour, the cable going at about six, without indicating more than a few hundred pounds of strain upon the dynamometer. Shortly after six o'clock a very large whale was seen ap-