

The President, after stating the subjects of greatest interest to be discussed in this section, remarked: "In the commencement of this address, I spoke of the comparatively few means we possessed in 1838 of reaching rapidly this flourishing town; and now I need not remind you that we are surrounded by a network of railroads, which wind along valleys, or are driven under your hills. Still less at our former meeting here had the genius and sagaciousness of Wheatstone overspread the country with the electric telegraph, enabling men rapidly to transact important affairs in our largest cities, whether separated by a few miles or by hundreds of miles from their correspondents. At the last Manchester meeting, indeed, we interchanged questions and answers with the philosophers of St Petersburg during an evening assembly; and since then great advances have been made in transmitting telegrams round the world. In this way a vast stride will be made in the ensuing winter by the extension of the telegraph from Constantinople through Asia Minor; and thence, *via* the Persian Gulf, to the country of Mekran, at the head of the Indian Ocean, and so to the British possessions in India. At the same time, other efforts are in progress to carry a system of telegraphs from Russia through Siberia, and thence across the Desert of Gobi to Peking. The great desideratum, however, of connecting Europe with America by a submarine telegraph remains to be accomplished. With a view to that desirable end, the Council of the Royal Geographical Society warmly supported a proposal by Dr. Wallich to effect a complete survey of the sea bottom, as a precursor to the actual laying down of a cable upon the vast unknown irregularities of the submarine surface. We naturally supported an effort like this, which was certain to throw much light on Natural History and Physical Geography; and we rejoiced in the preliminary researches which had been made towards the establishment of an electric line overland to British India; because they, for the first time, laid open to European knowledge countries which, though unknown to the moderns, were seats of power when Alexander the Great and his lieutenants invaded India. The soundings which ascertain the nature of the bottom of the ocean, not only give us the outlines and characters of various sunken rocks, sands, and mud-banks, and of vast and deep cavities, but inform us where the under-currents prevail, and where at vast depths the surface is tranquil and unruffled in some places, whilst