

were kept busy testing the cable, but found no flaw. And here arose the question whether to attach the cable to the shore and join it in mid-ocean, or to sail together to the central point, and then proceed toward shore. The electricians favoured the former way, the engineers the latter. The electric men won the day, but it was the engineers' plan that finally succeeded.

As the ships proceeded on their way, they were to send daily messages to Valentia Harbour. One ship was to carry the cable to mid-ocean, there to join and leave it in charge of the other ship.

That first night at sea no eye slept. All were too intent watching the result of the experiment. "There was a feeling in every soul on board, as if some dear friend were at the turning point of death or life, and they were watching beside him." They spoke in whispers, they walked lightly as if they feared the slightest jar would disturb the life that seemed so fragile, would snap the vital cord. The murmur of the paying-out machine was music to their ears, each murmur being a cry of "All's well."

What an exciting voyage that was! How many the alarms that came like shadows in the night. Once, when the cable, through some defect in the machinery, slipped from the wheel, they held their breaths, fearing that all was lost. Another time, when the electrical continuity ceased, though the cable was unbroken, every heart stood still. After many trials, even the electricians gave it up, and they were about to cut the cable, when, as suddenly as it had ceased to throb—life returned. Prof. Morse was of the opinion that the gutta-percha had been strained in paying out, but as it reached the floor of the ocean the strain or parting had closed, and the electricity had be-

come again encased with a perfect protector.

The good news travelled fast. The feelings of the crew were voiced in the remarks of one poor sailor, who said that he would have given fifty dollars of his wages to have saved the cable; for they spoke of it and looked upon it as they would upon a favourite child. Their relief, when the current returned, was unspeakable. Their spirits rose. But their joy was of short duration.

They were watching anxiously, and as the machine continued to work smoothly, some of the crew ventured to snatch a little sleep, but were rudely wakened to learn that all was over. The brakes of the machinery had been so firmly applied that the strain on the cable was too heavy, and the tightly held cable parted. A wail went through the ship, the engines were stopped, and all gathered on deck, as if assembled to attend the funeral of some dear departed friend. Unbidden tears rose to many a manly eye, and all through the day the ship was like a house from which a loved one had forever gone. There was nothing to do but turn about and sail for England.

This failure, in place of discouraging Mr. Field, seemed but to spur him on to greater effort.

Writing to a friend he says: "Do not think that I feel discouraged, or am in low spirits, for I am not."

After meeting the directors of the company, and finding them willing to go on with the work, but forced to delay the expedition for a year, Mr. Field returned to America to find that "misfortunes never come singly," a commercial hurricane had passed over the country, and his wealth had been all but swept away. It was a year of disaster by sea and land, and all his hopes and work were,

"In the bosom of the deep ocean buried."