

these, the prognostic of "the Atlantic cable," (long before Lieut. Maury's deep-sea survey of the Northern Atlantic Ocean,) which up to that time seemed equally chimerical.

When we consider, Sir, that by our short Northern circuit of the globe, an air-line from Quebec to New Westminster, British Columbia, is only two thousand and twenty (2,020) miles, and from Quebec to Liverpool by the Straits of Belleisle, by the Allans' line route, only two thousand five hundred and two (2,502) miles, it required no extraordinary flight of fancy to predict at a public lecture, delivered some years ago by me in this city, that this being the shortest route to "La Chine"—China—India—from Great Britain, many of my hearers would live to see the trip from Great Britain to the Pacific Ocean accomplished within the short space of a fortnight, without any increased railroad speed, but with steamers of a class to equal the best sea-going vessels afloat, of which the *Polynesian* is now an ensample.

It is surprising, sir, what a trifle will sometimes make or mar the greatest enterprise ; and this has eminently been the case until now with the North Shore Railroad, as I will shew you.

During the progress of the construction of the Quebec and Richmond Railway, and when it was approaching completion, a spasmodic effort was made to float the North Shore Railway, when Mr. Jackson (of Jackson, Peto, Brassey and Betts) was present, and several of the provisional directors of the road. On my remarking to Mr. Jackson that the railroad ought to have been on this side of the river, instead of on the South Shore, he replied : "Yes, it ought, and would have been but for these gentlemen"—referring to the directors. As I did not know their engineer, Mr. Stavelly, I could not, of course, give a tender on his survey and estimates ; and I therefore offered them, if they would advance £500, I would give £1,000 for an experimental survey by our engineer, Mr. Ross ; but they declined. Had