

the Sea of Japan, and thence telegraphed *viâ* Siberia to London and Paris and the whole of Europe. Messages from China, sent through the Russian Post-office from Pekin to Kiachta, can be telegraphed from the latter place to all parts of Europe.

If the commercial interests of Europe should require it, a direct telegraph, either submarine or aerial, could be constructed to Japan and China, in connection with the Siberian line. A land line would have to be erected in the direction of Kiachta.

There are several routes from Kiachta to China through the desert of Gobi, but the one which is at present used by the Russian post traffic would have to be chosen for the construction of a land line, forming a length of 1,775 wersts (1,015 miles), though one-half of this—viz., from Urga to Kalgan, a distance of about 1,285 wersts (735 miles)—is a woodless, stony and sandy tract of land, and only inhabited by nomadic Mongols, who relieve each other at the post stations; yet there would be no difficulty in constructing a telegraph line, as at certain places where there are pasture grounds and water in abundance stations could be erected for the men guarding the line. It would also be advisable to substitute iron for wooden poles in case one or more of the poles should in time become useless, as wood in this part of the country is very difficult to procure.

However expensive such a land line would be, it deserves mature consideration whether the vastness of the commercial interests of Europe would not warrant such an outlay, as the want of wood for building purposes, the expense of supplying it, the erection of stations in the desert, and the supply of other necessities, would increase the expense by 500 rubles (about £80) per werst, which