

Between these two telegraphic stations there is that large ocean, the Pacific (several thousand miles broad), which, towards the north, becomes narrowed to about 50 miles, and forms the Behring Straits. To this, the sole point of connexion of the Old with the new World, the attention of several scientific gentlemen has been drawn, who considered it practicable to construct a telegraph between the two shores, and many, amongst whom were Colonel Shaffner (in the year 1854), Liger di Libessard (in 1857), Slegb (in 1859), and the American Collins (in 1861), offered their services to the Russian Government.

But the impracticability of carrying out such a project arises from a fact with which these gentlemen were not acquainted—viz., the nature of the countries around Behring Straits and the Behring Sea, such as Tschukischy and the North-western parts of America, through which aerial lines would have to be constructed. They are so wild, and covered with perpetual ice, that even the maintenance as well as the construction would be impossible, as no human being could exist there for any long period of time, and the length of the requisite line would of necessity require some intermediate stations.

No notice need therefore be taken of a project to lay a line in this direction.

But there is another direction—viz., in the southern part of the Behring Straits, which almost seems to be pointed out by nature as the only link by which the Old could be connected with the New World. This connecting link appears in the shape of small adjacent islands, called the Aleutic Islands; and the line from Kamtschatka to America, across these islands, would be about 1,600 miles long. The sea in this region is as broad as the Atlantic between Valentia (Ireland) and Trinity Bay (Newfoundland), but