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our bows. A collision, which might prove fatal to the cable, now seemed inevitable, or could only be avoided by the equally hazardous expedient of altering the Agamemnon's course. The Valorous steamed ahead, and fired a gun for her to heave to, which she did not appear to take much notice of, was quickly followed by another from the bows of the Agamemnon, and a second and third from the Valorous, but still the vessel held on her course; and as the only resource left to avoid a collision the course of the Agamemnon was altered just in time to pass within a few yards of her. It was evident that our proceedings were the source of the greatest possible astonishment to them, for all her crew crowded upon her deck and rigging. At length they evidently discovered who we were and what we were doing, for the crew manned the rigging and dipping the ensign several times they gave us three hearty cheers. Though the Agamemnon was obliged to acknowledge these congratulations in due form, the feelings of annoyance with which we regarded the vessel which, either by the stupidity or carelessness of those on board, was so near adding a fatal and unexpected mishap to the long chapter of accidents which had already been encountered, may easily be imagined. To those below who of course did not see the ship approaching, the sound at the first gun came like a thunderbolt, for all took it as the signal of the breaking of the cable. The dinner tables were deserted in a moment and a general rush made up the hatchway to the deck, but before reaching it their fears were quickly banished by the report of the succeeding gun, which all knew well could only be caused by a ship in our way or a man overboard.

Throughout the greater portion of Monday morning the electrical signals from the Niagara had been getting gradually weaker, until they ceased altogether for nearly three-quarters of an hour. Our uneasiness, however, was in some degree lessened by the fact that the stoppage appeared to be a want of continuity, and not any defect in insulation, and there was consequently every reason to suppose that it might arise from faulty connection on board the Niagara. Accordingly Professor Thomson sent a message to the effect that the signals were too weak to be read, and, as if they had been awaiting such a signal to increase their battery power, the deflections immediately returned even stronger than they had ever been before. Towards the evening, however, they again declined in force for a short time. With the resumption of these little stoppages the electrical condition of the submerged wire seemed to be much improved. It was evident that the low temperature of the water at the immense depth improved considerably the insulating properties of the gutta serena, while the enormous pressure to which it must have been subjected probably tended to consolidate its texture, and to fill up any arborescent or slight faults in manufacture which may have existed.

The weather during Monday night moderated a little, but still there was a very heavy sea on, which endangered the wire every second minute.

About three o'clock on Tuesday morning all on board were startled from their beds by the loud booming of a gun. Every one, without waiting for the performance of the most particular toilet, rushed on deck to ascertain the cause of the disturbance. Contrary to all expectation the cable was safe, but just in the gray light could be seen the Valorous rounded to in the most warlike attitude, firing gun after gun in quick succession towards a large American bark, which, quite unconscious of our proceeding, was standing right across our stern. Both loud and repeated demonstrations from a large steam frigate were not to be despised and strange to without knowing the why or the wherefore, she quickly threw her sails aback and reversed her way. Whether those on board her considered that we were engaged by some ill-motivated expedition, or regarded our proceedings as another friendly over-
rage upon the American flag, it is impossible to say; but certain it is that apparently in great indignation, she remained there to meet us for half an hour of her in the distance.