

the tip of an elephant's trunk, which picks up the debris from the floor of the deep. By means of this instrument they found that the ocean's floor was carpeted with the softest of materials. On close inspection they found it to be composed, not of clay or mud, but of sea-shells, discoverable only by the aid of the microscope. It was a veritable cemetery of corallines, that age after age had fallen, fallen, fallen to the soft bed of the ocean. The fact that they were unbroken was proof positive that the ocean currents did not reach to those fathomless depths. On that soft couch could rest, undisturbed and far from harm, the great nerve that was to join two worlds, "whispering the thoughts of successive generations of men till the sea should give up its dead."

Now arose the question of a perfect insulator. Only a few years before there had been found in the forests of the Malayan Archipelago a substance till then unknown, and which answered the new demand. So Nature, in gutta-percha, added her quota to the list, by giving the one thing needful to insulate the electric wire.

One day, Mr. Field and Mr. Brunel, builder of the Great Eastern, were in conversation. Mr. Brunel, pointing to the huge hulk rising before them, said: "There is the ship to lay the Atlantic cable," little thinking that ten years afterward the Great Eastern would be the ship from which the cable would be successfully laid. The last time the writer saw this huge leviathan, she was lying outside the docks at Liverpool, and she was informed that the great ship was being rented for purposes of dancing parties and assemblies. So are the mighty fallen!

The British Government was very liberal in its dealings with the company, and it was hoped and ex-

pected that the American authorities would prove equally liberal, but much to the chagrin of Mr. Field and the company, the passage of the Telegraph Bill through Congress met with great opposition. Some seemed to think that a cable between the two countries meant, as one man put it, that "England was literally crawling under the seas to gain some advantage over the United States."

Before the cable was complete, it became entangled in many a kink and knot, but none that seemed so crooked and perverse as the one in which it was twisted by the hands of the politicians. Finally, however, the Bill was passed by the majority of one, and was signed and thereby made law by President Pierce the day before he gave up the keys of the White House. Thus fortified, and with capital raised in New York and London, and with the navy of Great Britain and of the United States at his command, for the American Government made up in after days for its early ungraciousness, Cyrus W. Field started out to bring his great enterprise to an end, to link together the two countries in an iron band of peace.

The American ship Niagara, with the Susquehanna as consort, crossed to join the Agamemnon and Gorgon, for the carrying of the cable. The desired combination of strength and flexibility having been obtained, the cable was ordered, and coiled on the good ships Niagara and Agamemnon.

The word of command was given. As the representative boats of the two great nations approached, the English sailors broke out in ringing cheers, which were taken up and lustily re-echoed by their cousins of the American ships, as they sailed side by side on their errand of love and peace.

At Queenstown the electricians