

[From the London Times, Sept. 12.]  
**THE OCEAN BED—THE SEARCH FOR THE CABLE.**

A three weeks' dairy in our columns yesterday told the simple tale of a triumph over one of those impossibilities that have become typical in the human mind. To recover anything once gone to the bottom of the ocean seemed utterly out of the question. To lay a cable along the depth of the Atlantic, and thereby hold a conversation between Osborn and Washington, or between Lombard street and Wall street, New York, had not even been conceived till a few years ago, and was not thought impossible only because it had not been thought of at all. But we know too well that there must be incalculable wreck at the bottom of the ocean; and many memories and many hearts follow dear friends and precious stores into that abyss, and would gladly imagine some possible discovery. Only a few years ago, however, the Atlantic had not been fathomed, nor was it thought fathomable. It might be many miles deep; its cavernous recesses might go to the very heart of the earth; there might be mountains, unknown monsters, strange creations, terrible currents, stupendous vegetable growths, another creation, and the beginning of a new world. The tale of the Sicilian diver shows how writers will people any depth a little more than common, even in a narrow strait. When deep sounding was tried at first as a speculative amusement for scientific captains, the public hardly believed that a line twelve or fifteen hundred fathoms long had really reached the bottom, and had not been wafted far away by currents not taken account of. When curious little contrivances brought up a few grains of mud, it required a strong faith to believe this was really from the bed of the ocean. Anyhow it was all science, and no practical good could ever come of it. The line could only carry its own weight. At last the Atlantic was thoroughly sounded, and it certainly did not belie the anticipations of a very respectable depth, for it was found to be in parts three miles deep. Mont Blanc himself, on such a base, would find his airy summit a sunken rock, and every mountain in Europe would be submarine. One has heard of giants setting on rocks and fishing for whales, with tall pines and cables for their tackle; but even when we did come to know the ocean was fathomable, it could only be reached by a line that would also plumb our greatest mountain altitude. Only a twelvemonth ago to recover the broken cable seemed a desperate hope. Could it be even found or reached, or could its place be certainly known? Was there a chance that it lay so quietly on its bed that any tackle could catch and hold it?

Now that the thing has been done, and we see how it has been done, it may always be said that the difficulty has not been over-estimated. It has been overcome by men who thought the achievement not impossible, but exceedingly difficult. They could measure the difficulty and adapt their means. They cannot even be called lucky, as having met with fine weather, or happened to hit on the right spot, for they had rather more than their share of gales, and dead calms, and fogs, and drifting currents; accidental failures, drawing of splices, miles of rope lost, twisting of grapnel flukes, breaking of strands, and noisless slipping of the cable out of hold, no one knew how. The means were in proportion to the end, and were only just sufficient. Here was the largest ship ever built, and it was aided by two ships, one of them the Terrible which once ranked high in the navy, and was to be the conqueror in many a sea duel, but has lived to do better service, though not to fulfill the promise of its name. The grapnel ropes were several miles long, and made to stand the strain of many tons exactly measured by the dynamometer. There were first-rate seamen, first-rate electricians, first-rate engineers, first-rate cablemen, with every possible appliance. There were enormous iron buoys ready to be dropped instantly to mark a spot, or to hold the light of the cable if it should be caught. The cable was caught some half-dozen times, only to slip, to break the tackle, or to be itself broken. It was once recovered, and actually seen by mortal eye, with its white oozy coat; but only to be lost again. It was necessary at last, to sacrifice eighty miles of the cable, and to try a less depth, which however, proved not much less. Who, indeed, can say that the task was found a bit less difficult than had been supposed, when he attempts to realize this struggle with known and unknown difficulties? Think of the sunless skies, the midnight dark-

ness, the loss of bearings, the separations, and the general absence of certain information or safe conjecture in which these ships were dredging for a cable hoped to be still in existence three miles below their keels. It was midnight when it made its appearance, as if from another world, and was secured. With this messenger from the deep a communication was immediately opened with fellow-laborers setting on the cliffs of Valentia two thousand miles off, and with all the inhabitants of the civilized world.

The recovered cable verifies what was hoped, and also what was feared, of its ocean bed. That vast submarine desert has not the terrible, insurmountable obstructions that the world had imagined. It consists apparently of immense plains, with mountainous ridges, the whole covered with a fine ooze the slow deposit of countless ages, and found by the microscope to consist of shells. All the ages, it would seem, have not covered the bottom to a depth more than sufficient to bury half the cable, which came up particolored, like a snake with black back and white belly. So far all looks well for future operations of this kind. But, on the other hand, the damage done to the grapnel irons, and changes of pressure on the drawing-in gear, prove that there are serious obstructions in that oozy bed—rocks in situ, probably huge blocks dropped by icebergs. Man himself has contributed a good deal, for, not to speak of the sunken argosies the poets love to dream of, the smallest craft weighty enough to lie at the bottom would break a grapnel or its rope. But it is not probable that either these or any other obstructions occupy more than a very small part of the bed, which in other respects is just what men would have desired it to be for the purpose of an electric cable. It rests there on its soft bed, in unbroken calm, and at an inaccessible distance from its human foes. No tempest, no war, no other casual mischief can reach it there, and its only enemy will be that material decay, which science will soon be able to measure, and in some degree counteract. But already a great mystery has been dispelled, and one more impossibility struck off the old list. What next? Well, a good deal remains to be done. There is work enough for many such expeditions, and openings for many such successes, if people will but perceive that what they choose to call impossibilities are only difficulties, to be encountered by adequate means.

**PLAN FOR THE OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE.**—New York, September 28.—A correspondent writing from Basile, Suisse, gives some particulars of the formation of a powerful society for the occupation of Palestine and wresting it from the control of the Turkish Sultan. The society is being rapidly formed, with the strongest influences, financial and political, at its back. The Rothschilds, Sir Moses Montefiore and other great capitalists among the Jews are actively in sympathy with the undertaking.

The plan has the favor of more than one Convention held in Europe, among them the Emperor Napoleon, of whose special theory of nationalities it is a welcome development. Several prominent noblemen of England and the leading names of the Faubourg St. Germain are among its friends.

As soon as the organization is completed the society will obtain a concession from Turkey, and proceed to establish the bureaus and build the roads.

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