

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH EXPEDITION

The successful progress of the operation of laying the Atlantic Telegraph cable is reported among our latest news. We have already narrated, in two or three previous notices, the earlier proceedings of this expedition, from the day when the Great Eastern set out from Sheerness, with the main length of cable on board, to go round to the south-west coast of Ireland, whence she was to begin her ocean voyage, after splicing the main length to the shore end, which was landed from the William Corry at the Isle of Valentia, Kerry, in the same place as the cable of last year. Several Illustrations, from the pencil of Mr. Robert Dudley, the Special Artist who is allowed to accompany the expedition to Newfoundland, have been engraved for this Publication.

One of the most amusing incidences of the passage down the Channel, which has been mentioned in a former account, was the amateur dramatic production got up on board the Great Eastern for the diversion of the large party of gentlemen and ladies, including the families of several directors and officers of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, the Telegraph Construction Company, and the Great Eastern Ship Company, with the correspondents of the London newspapers and other privileged passengers in the saloon of that magnificent ship. The play represented on this occasion was a lively impromptu, composed jointly by Mr. N. A. Woods, of the *Times*, and Mr. J. C. Parkinson, of the *Daily News*, and entitled "A Cable-istic Extravaganza," its theme, of course, being the mighty business of laying the telegraph cable at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. The elements of the marvellous, romantic, and supernatural, however, as might be expected in such a work of fancy, predominated considerably over those of scientific and practical calculation; and the achievements of the financial potentates—the contractors, engineers, and electricians—by whom this grand undertaking has so far been carried into execution were made to depend on the consent and goodwill of Father Neptune, the tritons, and the mermaids, who had certainly a right to be consulted about them. The authors contrived, nevertheless, to pay a compliment to almost every person who had distinguished himself in any department of the enterprise, but especially to Mr. Cyrus Field, the original projector of the Atlantic telegraph, and Mr. Glass, or Messrs. Glass and Elliott, the manufacturers of the cable; not forgetting Mr. Gooch, a director of the Great Eastern Ship Company; Mr. Pender, and other directors of the Telegraph Construction Company; Mr. Clifford, Mr. Canning, Professor Thomson, and Mr. Varley, the electricians; with Captain Anderson and Mr. Halpin, the commander and the chief officer of the ship. The part of

Neptune was played by Colonel de Bathe, Mr. Robert Dudley appeared in the character of "Glass," and Captain Bolton in that of "Field," while Lord Hastings was the representative of "Clifford," and Mr. G. W. Elliott bore the impression of "Gooch;" Mr H. F. Barclay was a Sea Monster, and Messrs. Poore, Vaughan, and others were mermaids and tritons. The orchestra, consisting of a pianoforte and a fiddle, was led by Dr. Ward. The scene was in the submarine abode of Neptune and his family. The costumes and other theatrical accessories are shown in the Illustration of the finale. It should be remarked that the authors borrowed the idea of this part of the action from a cartoon which appeared in *Punch* last year, which represented a bevy of merry mermaids swinging on the telegraph cable and Neptune warning them off:—

[The cable is lowered and the mermaids swing upon it.]

Neptune—Come out of that! Is that how you disable Our new Manilla twist galvanic cable? You're sitting on the messages! Get up!

* * * * *

Gooch—My dears, beware of sitting on or tampering with the cable.

Field—But give the messages a shove, and help them, if you're able.

Neptune—Ev'ry time the current flies, t'will give you delectation.

Glass—And ev'ry separate shock will cause a curious sensation.

Chorus—For it's here and there, and everywhere, we find the symbols flying.

The more they puzzle us to read, the more we keep on trying.

With a dot and a dash, and a dash and a dot, by Bolton's numeration,

Trying to read it is useless indeed, but it makes a new sensation!

[Messages on slips of paper drop from the top of the stage, and are picked up by the mermaids.]

First Triton—Here's Mr. Jones to Mrs. Jones, "My dear, how is poor Bobby?"

First Mermaid—Here's Mrs. J to Mr. J., "The child is looking nobby."

Glass—Here's Uncle Sam to Mistress Vic., "I see we now may laugh, eh?"

Field—Here's Mistress Vic. to Uncle Sam, "Success to telegraphy!"

Chorus and dance. The curtain falls.

The Great Eastern, soon after her arrival in the harbour of Berehaven, Bantry Bay, where she had to take in a supply of coals, preparatory to her voyage across the Atlantic, was joined by several of the smaller vessels employed to attend upon her in this expedition. One of Mr. Dudley's sketches, as seen in the Engraving on page 84, represents the cable squadron lying at anchor in that place. To the left hand is the paddle-wheel frigate, of 21 guns, H.M.S. *Terrible*, appointed by the Government to escort the Great Eastern and to take soundings in advance of her course. The next vessel, with her steam up, nearer the opposite shore of the harbour, is the screw-steamer *Medway*, of 1800 tons, carrying the Newfoundland shore end of

the cable, besides an extra supplementary piece of main cable, 500 miles in length, in case the 2730 miles carried by the Great Eastern should prove too short, or in case any part of it should be lost or should be made unserviceable. The Great Eastern herself is sufficiently conspicuous, with the two collier steam-vessels alongside her, from which she is replenishing her stock of what may be called the sinews of modern navigation. The other screw-steamer, which lies at a short distance to the right hand, is the *Albany*, of 1500 tons burden, which is employed for the purpose of sounding, and which carries, as the *Medway* also does, a complete grappling apparatus, to be used in the search and recovery of last year's broken cable.

Besides the vessels appearing in the present Illustration, which form the squadron that has proceeded to Newfoundland, a third screw-steamer, the *William Corry*, of 1200 tons, was sent to the Isle of Valentia with the heavy shore end of the cable, thirty miles in length, to be laid separately, and to be afterwards connected with the main line on board the Great Eastern. The operation of landing the shore end and connecting it with the telegraph-house at Foilhommerum Bay was quickly and satisfactorily performed at noon on Saturday, the 7th inst., as was described a fortnight ago in this Journal. This is the subject of our third Illustration, from a sketch taken by Mr. Dudley on the deck of the *William Corry*, looking towards the shore. A bridge of boats, held together by a stout hawser, extended from the vessel to the beach at the foot of the cliffs, and several hundred men, some of them in the boats, and some wading up to their waists in the water, handed the massive cable along till the end of it reached the shore, when it was let down easily to the bottom. The *William Corry* then moved out to sea, laying the cable as she went, to a distance of thirty miles from land, where the end was buoyed in 140 fathoms water, till the Great Eastern came to join it to the main line, in the manner already related.

[Taken from *Illustrated London News*, Vol. XLIX, 1866, p.94]