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THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH
IN ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECTS.
A SERMON
PREACHED IN THE RACE ST. G. EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH.
August 22, 1858.

BY THE PASTOR,
Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D.D.

PHILADELPHIA:
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 LODGE ALLEY.
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[The following sermon is published by a number of friends who heard it delivered on last Sabbath morning. They fully agree with their pastor in thinking it ill-advised, and even derogatory to the high character of a Gospel pulpit, to court notoriety, or excite popular applause, by dragging into it all sorts of novel themes, and unusual incidents. But they feel that it was proper to make the present case an exception; and they believe that the attempt made in the following discourse to contemplate the great event treated of, in its religious bearings, will commend itself to the approbation of all Christians, and that the circulation of the views set forth, will exert a salutary influence. They have, therefore, obtained the consent of the author to its present publication and gratuitous distribution.]
This glorious Psalm celebrates the providential wisdom and goodness of God, as exhibited in the daily course and operations of nature. With inspired discernment the pious author shuns alike the gross superstitions of surrounding heathen, who confounded the Creator with creation, making nature God, and the still more gross and certainly more fatal error of those atheist fools who wholly denied the existence of a personal Deity, and substituted, instead, the blind laws of matter. He has a true eye for the matchless beauties of nature, and a true ear for its manifold harmonious voices. But his clear spiritual understanding perceives that those beauties are mere reflections, and that those voices are mere echoes. They serve their highest end when they become witnesses for Him who, though He is above them all, and over them all, and independent of them all, is yet pleased to use them as
the material means of showing forth His own greatness and glory.

Whilst, therefore, the Psalmist can most heartily admire the wonders of nature, for their own peculiar excellence and beauty, he does not allow himself to rest with such admiration. For him nature is a mirror reflecting proofs of the infinite power and beneficence of God. For him nature is a prophet, revealing how infinitely majestic and worthy of adoration and love, the Jehovah who made and supports nature must be. And he will heed those proofs. He will strive to render that adoration and that love. He will summon his soul, with all the faculties with which the Creator has endowed it, to bless the Lord who is very great, and sing praise unto his God while he has any being.

It was in this spirit the Psalm before us was conceived, and in the execution of this noble and exalted purpose that its particular description of the Divine Providence was produced. And what but an inspired mind could have surveyed, with a view so minute and yet so comprehensive, the ever-active and diversified scene here contemplated? What but an inspired pen could have described its parts with such truthfulness, such beauty of diction, such faultless proportions, and such ardor of deep poetic feeling, as charm and gladden us here in every line?

We shall not attempt, of course, this morning to
appropriate the precious lessons of every part of
this most excellent hymn of praise. We shall do
well if we succeed in exhausting the treasures of a
single verse. Let us then fasten our minds upon
the import of the significant passage announced as
our text: "Who maketh his angels spirits, His
ministers a flaming fire."

This sentence, stripped of its poetical form, and
taken in its literal sense, may be stated thus: Who
makes the winds His messengers, and the lightnings
His ministering servants. The doctrine, therefore,
which is here taught is this: God, in His providen-
tial management of the world, makes use even of the
most subtle agencies of nature, and continually em-
ploys them in subserviency to His will, and the in-
terests of His kingdom. And if we interpret this
Old Testament doctrine in the light of the New
Testament revelation, especially remembering that
all power, in heaven and on earth, is vested in God
the Son, the heir of all things, we obtain one of the
most significant and cheering doctrines of the entire
Christian system. All the elements and agencies of
nature, are under the sovereign control of Jesus
Christ, the great Head of the Church, and He employs
them continually in subserviency to the advancement
and ultimate triumph of His cause.

This most blessed truth must commend itself to
the joyful faith of Christians at all times. But it
possesses peculiar interest for us to-day. Since we last met in this sacred place, we have had confirmed to us the triumphant issue of one of the most wonderful undertakings of science in any age of the world, the submarine electro-magnetic communication established between the two great continents of our globe. This may fairly be considered as the crowning achievement of practical scientific invention and adventure.

You can all testify, my hearers, that I am not prone to take advantage of every unusual secular incident, in order, by means thereof, to invest pulpit ministrations with fictitious interest, by the freshness of captivating novelties. The pure gospel should, uniformly, possess sufficient attractions for those who stand in constant need of its messages of grace, to render such novelties superfluous. There are, however, events in which the finger of God is so remarkably apparent, and the bearings of which upon great religious interests are so manifest, that they seem to justify an exception being made in their favor, and, indeed, to demand attention in the sacred desk. And it becomes the more proper to give them this attention, when we consider that it is the materialistic tendency of our age to allow the merely secular and earthly view of events like these to absorb the minds of the masses.

Such an event I regard that to which reference
has already been made. Let us endeavor, therefore, to contemplate it from the high religious point of view we are permitted to occupy this morning:

1. In its true character.  
2. In its practical uses.  
3. In its moral lessons. And, in pursuing these meditations, let us proceed throughout in the light of our text: "Who maketh the winds His messengers, and the lightnings His ministering servants."

In assigning to the great event before us its true character, many persons, of course, would rest contented with pronouncing it an achievement of human science, skill, and courage. For such it is simply a work of man, and reflects glory, proportioned to its greatness, upon man's ingenuity and indomitable perseverance. In a very narrow sense this is certainly true. Man's exploits, in every sphere of action, are in a proper form his own. The powers of mind and body, put forth in their accomplishment, are undoubtedly to be exercised in a free and independent way. Neither his head nor his hands are parts of a dumb machine, used without his voluntary co-operation or consciousness, by a superior power, for ends in which man feels no interest. Whatever man achieves, he must perform by adequate personal study and labor. His dependence upon God is by no means such as precludes due personal exertion, or renders it superfluous. Science and civilization
go together, because the inhabitants of civilized countries give themselves to the diligent cultivation of their intellectual powers, and energetically employ the means requisite to carry out their plans. Among uncivilized nations there are no inventions, and may scarcely be said to be any arts or sciences, because the moral and intellectual energies of the people are dormant or palsied.

But it must be remembered, at the same time, that the mind of man, with all its faculties, is as much the creature of God, and the channel, therefore, through which God works, and displays His power, wisdom, and beneficence, as any other creature of His hands. The God who planted the cedar of Lebanon, and put into it its peculiar law of growth and development, also made the human soul, and endowed it with those capacities which belong to it. He formed the spirit which is in man, and His inspiration giveth man understanding (Job xxxii. 8). All the noble achievements of the human mind, therefore, serve to show forth the praises of the great Creator.

No machine, of man's invention, can excel in its contrivance, its intricate parts, or its performances, the thought, the ideal, the skill of the inventor. No flower can be more beautiful or fragrant than the divine thought of which it is an outward, material expression. No animal, in its wonderful instincts
and sagacity, can rise above the purpose and plan of God in its creation. So no human ingenuity can show superiority to the divine wisdom and energy which formed the mind displaying such ingenuity.

If, therefore, the material heavens declare God's glory, and all animated nature shows forth His handiwork, how much more admirably are these exhibited by rational man, whom God has "made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor." And if the brightness of the sun, and the splendor of the stars, the beautiful tints and fragrance of flowers, and the variety and excellence of the fruits of the earth—if the wonderful structure, and still more wonderful instincts of animals, birds, and insects, are all admitted to furnish direct evidence of the infinite wisdom and goodness of Providence, in His continual use of them for the most beneficent ends—why should we not allow the same lesson to be taught by the amazing powers of thought, inventive genius, and skill, displayed by man, seeing that not only as to his body, but still more as to his spirit, man lives and moves, and has his rational being in the Lord?

The highest honor and glory, therefore, of all great inventions and discoveries, as well as of all the most important human exploits, must be attributed to God. Whatever subordinate praise may be justly awarded to particular human agents, their
achievements all point upwards to Him who has wrought through their agency, and given success to their projects. It is the eternal Divine Wisdom, who makes the prudent His abode, and reveals to them the knowledge of witty inventions (Proverbs viii. 12), who uses such means of demonstrating that His energy continually sustains the mind of man in its intellectual activities, as well as prompts all its higher efforts.

Full corroboration of this fact is furnished by the chronological order and historical succession of all the most notable inventions and discoveries of man. There is so obvious a providence in their respective dates and historical relation to each other, that their original suggestion and the immediate impulse which led to their production in their day, must be traced to the special interposition of God. It will only be necessary to instance, in proof, the discovery of the use of the compass, in the thirteenth century, the invention of the art of printing, so speedily followed by the discovery of America in the fifteenth, the mechanical use of steam in the eighteenth, and now, the reduction of electricity and magnetism to practical uses in the nineteenth century.

In this view, this last especially challenges our admiration. It seems to have been the last great scientific conquest remaining to be achieved by human knowledge and skill. Wind and water, in their natural form, have been so long subservient
to the will of man, that voyages around the world—the first of which, made by Magellan but little more than three hundred years ago, filled the minds of the most learned men with utter amazement—are almost annually accomplished. And even the wonders performed by means of water converted into steam, upon land and sea, have become such common events, that, although the first steam-engine was invented scarcely a hundred years ago, and our first railroads were constructed since the middle-aged among us were born, our children look upon these things without surprise, as things that always were. And yet, when, a few years ago, steam navigation was first risked upon the high seas, the shout went up: Distance has been annihilated; nations previously separated by months of perilous and wearisome travel can now be brought together in a few brief days; and long-sundered friends, panting for reunion, can fly over the trackless ocean into each other's arms, in spite of wind and waves.

There seemed, then, to be but one other natural element remaining unsubdued. That element, however, was the most subtle and mysterious of all—so mysterious that science, at a loss to find a really significant name, calls it electricity, amberism! By what means shall this be seized and reduced to obedience to the thought and will of man? To whose heart shall be revealed the effectual solution of the
hard problem proposed to Job out of the whirlwind: "Canst thou send the lightnings that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?" Who shall put this wisdom in the inward parts; or who give this understanding to the heart?

How many a wise man among the ancients, ambitious of renown, would have rejoiced with unutterable delight, had this deep secret been made known to him; and how many even among the modern votaries of science would gladly have paid down their life as the price of winning the reputation of a Whitehouse and a Morse, and of the privilege of rendering to their race the service performed by the inventions and discoveries of these men and their eminent coadjutors!

And why should these discoveries have been delayed so long? The physical means of making them were always at hand. The lightning flashed as vividly above the heads of men of science centuries ago as it does now; its properties and operations lay as open to their scrutiny and their experiments. They might have marked its velocity, its resistless force, and its strong affinities, as well as their modern successors in the great school of nature. But they all failed to make the discovery. As the glare of each lurid flash vanished, it left their minds in darkness dense as that which enveloped nature, in regard to any means of binding the
dreaded element by any machinery which man could invent, and employing it for any purposes which man might devise. Even the mere idea seems never to have been suggested to their minds. What other uses could the lightnings of the thunderstorm serve, beyond purifying the atmosphere, or being employed by the hand of Almighty upon some terrible and mysterious providential mission?

But when the proper time came for the discovery, God chose His agents, inspired the quickening thought, imparted strength to elaborate it, and courage for its execution. And who can now refrain from saying, See what God hath wrought? Assuredly, it is His work. The hand of a special Providence is most distinctly displayed in the history of the great scheme, from its conception to its recent consummation. However active and prominent the secondary agencies may all have been, the Lord has been prompting and guiding their toils from first to last.

And it is a most pleasing fact in connection with this recent achievement, that none have been more ready to acknowledge the Divine interposition in furtherance of the enterprise than the most prominent actors themselves. It will be remembered as an interesting circumstance in the most important of past inventions and discoveries, that the renowned and honored agents in them all cheerfully confessed
their indebtedness to God for their success, and his claims to all the glory of it. The immortal Guttenberg hastened to lay the first production of his metallic press devoutly before the altar of God, in the form of a printed Bible. Columbus, however clogged and fettered his mind and heart may be supposed to have been by what some would call the superstitions of his age, began, prosecuted, and completed his great voyage of discovery in the name of the Holy Trinity, and under the floating banner of the cross. This same devout spirit, we have rejoiced to see, animated the hearts of the worthy leaders in the late Telegraph expedition.

And how solemnly impressive the prominence given to their religious acknowledgments! How deeply felt, and how frankly avowed, their dependence upon God, and their indebtedness for success to His helping hand! No one can read that eloquent address of Captain Hudson to the crew of the Niagara, upon the happy termination of their arduous and responsible toils, or that fervent prayer of thanksgiving to Almighty God, in which all seemed so devoutly to join, without the profoundest emotions. That nation is blessed who has such commanders in her navy, and such soldiers ready to lead her armies into battle. The Lord greatly multiply their number among us, and cheer them in the exercise of that moral courage to face the sneers of
scoffers, which is incomparably more admirable than the heartless bravery which thousands may display upon the field of battle.¹

¹ As the address and prayer referred to are well worthy of preservation, we copy them here entire.

"We have," said the captain, "just accomplished a work which has attracted the attention and enlisted the interests of the whole world. That work," he continued, "has been performed, not by ourselves; there has been an Almighty hand over us and aiding us; and without the Divine assistance thus extended to us success was impossible. With this conviction firmly pressed upon our minds, it becomes our duty to acknowledge our indebtedness to that overruling Providence who holds the sea in the hollow of his hand. 'Not unto us, O Lord! not unto us, but to thy name be all the glory.' I hope the day will never come when, in all our works, we shall refuse to acknowledge the overruling hand of a Divine and Almighty Power. It is He who can rebuke the winds and calm the seas. He works in a mysterious way for his people. His path is on the mighty waters. We have seen His power in the tempest; and when we have called upon Him in the time of trouble, He has heard our voices. And yet how ungrateful we are for all His favors, and how soon we forget Him when the trouble passes away like the summer cloud or the morning dew. On a solemn occasion like the present we should feel more particularly our indebtedness to Him, and it is with a feeling of heartfelt gratitude we should acknowledge the many favors which he has bestowed upon us. There are none here, I am sure, whose hearts are not overflowing with feelings of the liveliest gratitude to Him, in view of the great work which has been accomplished through His permission, and who are not willing to join in a prayer of thanksgiving for its successful termination. I will therefore ask you to join me in the following prayer, which is the same, with a few ne-"
That so devout a conclusion of their great work was altogether proper in the circumstances, no one, necessary alterations, that was offered for the laying of the cable:

"O Eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest the raging of the sea, who hast compassed the waters with bounds till day and night come to an end, and whom the winds and the sea obey—look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, upon us, Thy servants, who now approach the throne of grace, and let our prayer ascend before Thee with acceptance. Thou hast commanded and encouraged us in all our ways to acknowledge Thee, and to commit our works to Thee; and Thou hast graciously promised to direct our paths and to prosper our handiwork. We desire now to thank Thee, believing that without Thy help and blessing nothing can prosper or succeed, and we desire humbly to commit all who have been engaged in this undertaking to Thy care, protection, and guidance. It has pleased Thee to enable us to complete what we have been led by Thy providence to undertake, that being begun and carried on in the spirit of prayer and in dependence upon Thee, it may tend to Thy glory, and to the good of all nations, by promoting the increase of unity, peace, and concord.

"May Thy hand of power and mercy be so acknowledged by all that the language of every heart may be 'Not unto us, O Lord! not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory;' that so Thy name may be hallowed and magnified in us and by us. Thou hast controlled the winds and the sea by Thine almighty power, and granted us such favorable weather that we were enabled to lay the cable safely and effectually. Finally, we beseech Thee to implant within us a spirit of humility and childlike dependence upon Thee; and teach us to feel, as well as to say, 'If the Lord will, we shall do this or that.' Hear us, O Lord, and answer us in these our petitions according to Thy previous promise, for Jesus Christ's sake."
assuredly, will for a moment question. Rarely, if ever, has an important scientific enterprise been undertaken which was so obviously and entirely dependent, for all real success, upon a superintending Providence. And, as it were, to make those immediately concerned in its success, feel this the more deeply, serious embarrassments, and discouraging difficulties and failures, balked their first, and most sanguine attempts. Then came that terrible hurricane which had well-nigh engulfed the Agamemnon with all her crew. But he who rules the raging of the sea, heard their cry in their hour of trouble, and brought them out of their distresses. Many voices, however, were now raised against another attempt. Loud were the denunciations of the specific plan of operations, the machinery, the route. Even the incapacity of those who had the management of the expedition was hinted at. Everything was thought of, and suggested as a remedy, by some prophetic editors and scientific skeptics, but that which proved the one thing needful—God's blessing. When that was earnestly sought, and obtained, the enterprise succeeded, the triumph was complete.

Thus, then, by the fact that the achievements of mind over matter, in all its forms and elements, illustrate the superior wisdom and power of Him who made man a living soul: by the remarkable interpositions of Divine Providence: and by the devout
acknowledgments of those most efficiently concerned in this great work, it presents itself to us as most distinctly impressed with a religious character. As the Lord's doing it is most marvellous in our eyes. Here, through man as His responsible agent, He has demonstrated how He makes the winds His messengers, and the lightning His ministering servant. Oh! that this new power, added to the vast machinery of our world-life, may ever be employed in promoting the best interests of man, and the highest glory of God!

But what can be said, or surmised, of the practical uses of this new means of communication between the Eastern and Western hemispheres?

The replies to this inquiry will, of course, vary in their tenor with the different character and position of the several classes of persons who may raise it. It will be natural for the merchant to indulge large expectations with reference to its important commercial uses; its influence upon the metropolitan markets of the world, and upon speculations in stocks and trade generally. Statesmen and politicians may already foresee and prophecy great political purposes to be subserved by the accelerated means of communication established between the two most influential governments of the world. Now important questions of international policy
may be adjusted before the popular mind has had time to become inflamed with regard to them; and matters of dispute may be settled by lightning flashes instead of the flashes of musketry, and by the gentle taps of the electric battery instead of the murderous force of cannon balls. Men of science, a noble corps when they modestly keep within the proper limits of what is still in the puberty of its development, may rejoice in the prospect of important scientific uses to be subserved by this new auxiliary in the prosecution of their intellectual toils. And people generally may calculate largely upon the advantages of the submarine telegraph, for the purposes of social intercourse.

Of the highest moment for us, however, must be its moral and religious uses. The precise character and extent of these none may foretell, or even surmise. But it requires no extraordinary sagacity to perceive that the mere fact of the existence of such a bond of union, connecting Europe and America as by a most sensitive living nerve, through which the thoughts and feelings of each can be instantaneously communicated to the other, must exert, however silently, a most potent moral influence. The two hemispheres are now joined together, not by insensate and impenetrable submarine rocks, and reefs, and sandbars, but by a ligament through which they are brought into actual contact with each other.
They can speak, if not face to face, yet heart to heart, as brother speaks to brother.

We must remember, also, the peculiar religious character of the nations which have been most actively concerned in establishing this intimate intercommunication. They are, morally at least, the bulwarks of Protestantism. It is significant that the two great Protestant governments of the world should have been led to co-operate in this stupendous enterprise. That Protestantism should lead on the march of advancing civilization in this matter, is indeed nothing strange. She has been guiding its course for three hundred years. But the form of the fact in this particular instance, may certainly be considered somewhat prognostic of the part which the Atlantic telegraph may yet bear in the future moral and religious movements of the world. Archbishop Hughes would doubtless gladly quash all the gorgeous proceedings of last Sunday's corner-stone-laying solemnities, and forego the prospect of that magnificent cathedral completed, if he could secure the monopoly of a telegraphic cable between his residence in New York and the Vatican of Rome.

Apart, however, from all speculative surmises in regard to this point, we may rest content with the assurance, that as all antecedent achievements of human science, skill, and toil, have been made subservient to the highest interests of man, as associated
with morality and religion, so shall it be with the wonderful system of telegraphic communication, which is so rapidly encircling our entire globe. Let not the skeptic and grovelling materialist, whose views and aspirations never rise above the markets and money, mock at this suggestion as a dream of absurd pietism. Let them not confound the faith of Christians in such exalted results, by unanswerable questions after the ways and forms in which we expect those moral and religious ends to be secured. That we should not at once be able clearly to conceive and propose the precise manner in which all this may be accomplished, is not surprising. We have not yet recovered from bewildering astonishment at the success of the enterprise. This is evident from the tenor of the best editorials and addresses, which the event has called forth. We are still standing before it with the admiration of a man overwhelmed by the first sight of the great American cataract. Even whilst reading in the morning papers the European news of yesterday, our minds are confused, our hearts beat strangely, and we seem to ourselves to be still involved in some impracticable dream of the night. And doubtless there are thousands and tens of thousands among us who now yet suspect that the whole thing is a scientific delusion and a fraud. But what our stunned reason may not demonstrate by argument,
our understanding may be firmly persuaded of by faith. And this faith finds a sure foundation in the doctrine of our text, that God makes the winds His messengers, and the lightnings His ministering servants.

We get, however, upon more practical ground in proceeding to consider a few of the obvious and important lessons taught by our subject.

1. The event furnishes a remarkable illustration of man's intellectual and moral ascendancy over the material world. In this respect it verifies and exemplifies the declarations of the Word of God: “Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under His feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea” (Psalm viii. 6–8). The exercise of this dominion involves chiefly, of course, the putting forth of man's spiritual powers. Its foundation lies in the moral and intellectual nature of man. Physically considered, he is, of all the higher orders of animals, least fitted to assert or maintain control over the beings which surround him. The lion's whelps have greater strength than he, and burrowing conies have more instinctive cun-
ning. Beavers build better homes for themselves than Bushmen, and ants are more provident than human beggars.

Whatever, therefore, man shall accomplish in the pursuit of his exalted destiny, must be effected by intellectual and moral means. And how abundantly has the sufficiency of such means as are placed within his reach, been attested by the achievements of past ages! We can witness no more sublime or solemnly impressive spectacle than to behold this seemingly puny and impotent creature proving himself the crowning work of the creative power, and wisdom, and beneficence of God, by going forth in the name of his Creator, battling successfully with the apparently antagonistic elements of nature, secret and open, conquering them, and bringing them back bound hand and foot, and tamed into ready obedience to the conqueror's will.

True, many of the greatest discoveries and inventions, which have rewarded human study and toil, were slow in being made, and, as trophies of the successful assertion of man's dominion, have been gathered at rather a late day in the world's history. But when we reflect upon their character, and upon the vast scientific obstacles that lay in the way, the wonder is that they have been made or won at all, and that we are permitted to enjoy the benefit of them now. We have merely to remember
how very recently some of our latest achievements were pronounced impossibilities, which only insane enthusiasts would attempt to overcome, to obtain some due conception of the real greatness of the victories gained.

These things have been accomplished, also, by an intellect and a will greatly impaired through sin. The presence of this sad element in the constitution of fallen man has been continually dimming his perceptions and crippling his mental and moral energies. Even though Divine grace has come in to remedy this evil and restore to man his original excellence, and though we everywhere see the close relation subsisting between man's elevation through Christianity and the quickening of his intellectual powers, it is fair to conclude that some of the impeding influences of sin still cling to him. The fall, however truly the occasion of redemption, has not made man a more glorious being than he would have shown himself without it. The religious philosophy which teaches the opposite of this, suggests a doubtful vindication of the Divine wisdom and government, in permitting sin to enter into the world.

Who, then, shall tell us what secrets to be revealed, what powers to be developed, what authority to be exercised, by man, as God's visible vicegerent upon the earth, were originally lodged in human nature, and would speedily have given proof
of their presence, by his rapid advancement from glory to glory, even in this earthly sphere, unsoiled by sin—seeing that, as he now is, he approximates, through the intervention of grace, so nearly to the ideal which the sacred poet lauds in the passage quoted above? And if, amid all the predominance of sin which we have still so often to deplore, individual minds are seen continually rising superior to the intellectual thraldom of the race, and achieving exploits in the field of science which excite the admiration of their fellow-men, what shall the human spirit not accomplish under the more benign influences of the millennial reign of the Redeemer of the race?

But if this superiority of man, as a moral and an intelligent being, be clearly a fact, then this fact likewise demonstrates man’s duty to exercise his vicegerency in the fear and according to the revealed design of God. Above all, it proves his duty to maintain his relative superiority, to keep inferior things in their proper place, to use them as a means, not to idolize them as an end, and not to suffer himself to become the vassal of his subject, or the bondsman of his slave.

2. Our subject also offers an overwhelming refutation of one of the most common and specious cavils of skepticism and infidelity against the credibility of
the Gospel, and the divine origin of our Holy Reli-
gion. Take it, for instance, in the form given to it by the false argument of Hume, that the miracles of the Bible must be rejected as incredible myths, because they conflict with all human experience and probability. Judged by this test, the recent achievement must be set down as a sheer delusion, as an absurdity in the premises. Never was anything like it seen or dreamed of before. Ten times ten thousand intelligent and credible witnesses might have been found ten years ago, all agreeing in regard to this. So extraordinary and so utterly improbable, nay, impracticable, does the entire event, contemplated from the position then occupied by those witnesses, seem to be, that it would have been deemed an indication of mental derangement to have entertained the thought. The few who, fifteen or twenty years ago, did venture to suggest the possibility of such an enterprise, soon subsided into silence before the derision of men assumed to be more wise and prudent than themselves.

And yet the impracticable thing has been actually performed, and the impossibility has become a fact! What a rebuke to the objections of human reason against the miracles recorded in the Holy Scriptures! The recent achievement is, of course, far from being a miracle in its kind; but as it resembles one in its outward form, it fairly serves the argument for which
we are now using it. Assuredly, when skeptics and unbelievers see men like themselves, performing such exploits, openly and before the eyes of the world; performing them in conformity with the known, though imperfectly appreciated laws of the elements and means employed, they might learn to exercise more modesty and caution in their assaults upon the historical basis of Christianity, and more meekness and teachableness, in regard to the outward proofs by which it is commended to our hearty acceptance.

3. The history of this achievement exemplifies the propriety and beauty of laying the richest trophies of science before the altar of God, and of consecrating its best services to the interests of His cause. If what has been said in the preceding part of this discourse, concerning the Divine interposition in the present case, be correct, this inference must follow. And yet how prone men are continually to forget the truth and the obligation which this inference involves. One hears of railroads and steam navigation, and telegraphs, only in connection with the material, temporal interests of life. If they can be made to satisfy the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, their best and highest uses are supposed to be attained. How well it is for us then to be taught, that there is a nobler altar at which man may worship than that of mammon; that
there is something higher than this vain carnal life to be served by our thoughts and toils; and that there is a Being more exalted even than man, whose honor is concerned in human achievements.

4. Finally, let us learn from what has been so unexpectedly and yet so nobly accomplished, to be encouraged, as Christians, in the zealous prosecution of our great work. We see in this case how richly untiring and confident perseverance in a great enterprise, beset with perils and untried difficulties, has been rewarded. Why then should we be dishheartened by the obstacles which may meet us in our way? Our calling is a high and holy calling. Our commission contemplates a most desirable and glorious issue. Vast communities still remain to be evangelized. Whole nations are yet to be made acquainted with the plan of redemption. Much as has been accomplished, much is still to be done. Which fact shall prove the more potent motive for us? The latter to discourage us, or the former to incite us forward? Let us answer this as Christian men.

Certainly, with the sure word of prophecy in our hands, we may look forward to the hour, as near, when the triumphs of the cross shall be complete. The work shall not always progress by such slow degrees. Thus far the measures employed, and suc-
cesses gained, may be considered as the mere necess-
sary preparatives. But the time will come when
nations must be born in a day.

The great family of man, so long estranged from
each other, because estranged collectively from their
common Father and Redeemer, so long divided by
bitter feuds and hateful jealousies, because at en-
mity with God, their common centre, and so long
arrayed against each other in unrelenting hostilities,
because all, promiscuously, were in rebellion against
their common King, shall be reconciled into a har-
monious and holy unity. All shall be one in Christ.
Broad seas may still roll their deep waters between
them; lofty mountains may still locally divide them.
But they will all be joined together by a bond more
strong, more expansive, and unspeakably better fit-
ted for the transmission of thrills of universal re-
joicing, through the myriad hearts of redeemed
humanity, than any world-encircling electric cable—
the heaven-wrought bond of Christian love. And
this bond shall be exposed to no perils of a rupture,
in the progress of time. No huge monsters of the
deep shall ever burst it. No violence of winds or
waves shall ever rend it. No corroding acids shall
ever cut it asunder. Buried in the hallowed depths
of souls reposing securely in common faith and hope,
upon a common Lord and Saviour, it will endure
until the fellowship of militant saints on earth shall
be exchanged for the communion of jubilant saints in heaven.

And then this strange and mysterious bearer of news from distant lands, the first message of which so significantly proclaimed—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men," may flash from nation to nation, and from the east to the west, its last most joyful tidings, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." Amen.
POSTSCRIPT.

Since reading the proofs of the foregoing discourse, the following devout and stirring effusion, from the pen of Duganne, has appeared in "The (daily) Press." As it chimes in so fully with the sentiments we have endeavored to set forth, and may serve by its poetic beauty to compensate for our own defects in this respect, we are glad to do an acceptable service to our friends, by allotting to it a vacant page.

THE AUTHOR.

HYMN FOR THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH.

O Jehovah! O Elohim! be the glory all thine own!
For the stars in wondrous courses are but voices from Thy throne!
And the zones of mortal dwelling, and the oceans, as they roll,
All obey Thee—all adore Thee—Master of the Immortal soul!

Thine the chart the Chaldean pondered 'midst his orient skies unfurled—
Thee the tortured Galileo poised above his "moving world!"
Thee Copernicus, enraptured, magnified with dying praise;
And the adoring Newton saw Thee—Ancient of Creation's Days!
Thine the name, O Lord of Wisdom!—Thine the word of Life divine,
First in mystic joy and trembling, matrix'd by the German Trine;
While the souls of moulder'd Ages, in their old imperial dress,
Walked, in grand transfiguration, through the portals of the Press!

Lo! the Sunbeam limns our features; Fire and Air we yoke to toil:
Yea, the Lightnings from Thy footstool we have chained in hurtless coil!
Thou, O God! o'er Franklin bending, gave to him the electric flame;
And, with "cloven tongues" exultant, Morse declared Thy Holy Name!

Scrollled beneath the sundered ocean; scored by Lightning's awful pen—
"Glory unto God, the Highest! Peace on Earth! Good Will to Men!"
Land to land, in mingling currents, sways and thrills with loving ear:
"Where art thou?" the Old World whispers; and the New World murmurs, "Here!"

Here the electric Heart of Nations—here the eternal core of Right:
Radiant from their burning centre, flash the veins of Freedom's light!
Girt with all the world's great waters—circled far by all the lands—
Marked by sacred Line and Plummet—God our destiny commands!
Father! God! we faint—we falter! Lord of elemental powers!
Grant us that, with godlike wisdom, childlike humbleness be ours!
Thou hast made Mankind vicegerent—o'er the realms of Mind supreme:
Be our hearts Thine earthly altars—be Thy wondrous Love our theme!
1852 A sermon on the occasion of the death of New Shona, Popo, former Mayor of New Shona city.

1866—20 on occasion of New Shona's death, this occasion being some time in the account of alterations to the 2nd century in the 2nd century.

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Ref. Ch. Monthly
1868-1877
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M. W. E.