

culties in the way of any attempt at investigation. Even men of science seemed to share this idea, for they gave little heed to the apparently well-authenticated instances of animals, comparatively high in the scale of life, having been brought up on sounding lines from great depths, and welcomed any suggestion of the animals having got entangled when swimming on the surface, or of carelessness on the part of the observers. And this was strange, for every other question in Physical Geography had been investigated by scientific men with consummate patience and energy. Every gap in the noble little army of martyrs striving to extend the boundaries of knowledge in the wilds of Australia, on the Zambesi, or towards the North or South Pole, was struggled for by earnest volunteers, and still the great ocean slumbering beneath the moon covered a region apparently as inaccessible to man as the 'mare serenitatis.'

A few years ago the bottom of the sea was required for the purpose of telegraphic communication, and practical men mapped out the bed of the North Atlantic, and devised ingenious methods of ascertaining the nature of the material covering the bottom. They laid a telegraphic cable across it, and the cable got broken and they went back to the spot and fished up the end of it easily, from a depth of nearly two miles.

It had long been a question with naturalists whether it might not be possible to dredge the bottom of the sea in the ordinary way, and to send down water-bottles and registering instruments to settle finally the question of a 'zero of animal life,' and to deter-