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on board for passage to Api—Survey Ngola Bay—The scenery—Tattooing—Meke Meke—Leave Fiji for the New Hebrides—Off Api—The natives land—The landing, and what was seen—Sounding and dredging—On our way again—In the Coral Sea—Off the Louisiade Archipelago—Raine Island—The Barrier Reefs—Anchor off Bird Island—Arrive at Somerset, Cape York, Queensland.

THE special object of our visit was to ascertain the oceanic section between Sydney and Wellington. The information obtained removes the last elements of uncertainty in the matter of submarine telegraphy between Australia and New Zealand, for during some time past the governments of the respective colonies have been negotiating on this subject. The soundings show that the depths increase gradually after leaving Sydney, but that the extreme deepness does not vary much for some hundreds of miles in mid-ocean, the water again decreasing as the coast of New Zealand is approached. For the greater part of the way across, the bottom was found to be very favourable for the repose of a light cable, it being composed of mud and sand. It is only when the shores of this coast are nearly reached that the bottom becomes of a somewhat doubtful character; a stronger cable will therefore be required for the shore end. In all probability, now that these correct data have been ascertained, we shall find very shortly that New Zealand, like the Australian colonies, will be in instantaneous communication with Europe and America.

Wellington, which since 1864 has been the capital