

could have some practical remedy to apply, but, as we have none, I can only say that my object in calling attention to the subject is to express my very great regret that my hon. friend from Ottawa, who had charge of the Bill, and who knows the course which should be pursued in conducting the public business, did not take the opportunity, when the Bill was returned from the House of Commons, with amendments, to explain the scope and effect of them. That is a matter of great regret. It has brought us into this position, that unless the Bill is suspended for the present it must lead to legislation to amend it, because it is impossible that such an Act as that can remain on the statute book without amendment.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT — I confess as my hon. friend proceeded I was somewhat startled at the extraordinary statement he thought proper to make to the Senate, and his insinuation that the Bill for the incorporation of the European, Canadian, American and Asiatic Cable Company had been in any way improperly brought before the Senate in coming up from the other House. I certainly was amazed at it. I am in a position to know that it was the intention of the promoters of this Bill, when it was first introduced, and while they were in entire ignorance of Mr. Fleming's project to lay not only a cable across the Atlantic, but one across the Pacific, and also to lay cables to Bermuda and elsewhere. So far as the question of marine cables is concerned, all that this Parliament can do is to incorporate a company to lay cables from any part of our shores. Sable Island was originally selected as a point on the Atlantic coast; but the Company also took powers to lay cables to any other part of our coast, and I state here, and state advisedly, that it was originally contemplated to make this Bill much fuller. I did not consider it was necessary to say whether cables were going to Bermuda, Brazil, Japan, China, or anywhere else. The first project was to lay an Atlantic cable, but it was well known that the Company had, through their association in England, been preparing a prospectus with a view of laying a cable across the Pacific Ocean also.

*Hon. Mr. Dickey.*

In the first draft of the Bill, the words are "and for the purpose of establishing branches from Sable Island to Bermuda, West Indies and South America." Now, in order to cover additional coasts, the amendments were introduced to make the language fuller; and there was no doubt in my mind that it would have enabled them to lay cables in any direction. At the time I had not the smallest intimation that Mr. Fleming had been paying any attention to the Pacific scheme. I knew he had written some years ago, as others had written, on the subject of laying a cable from our Pacific coast to Asia, but so had Cyrus Field, and a number of other gentlemen, and I do not know that Mr. Fleming had secured any right to a monopoly of a charter from this Parliament, or done anything to specially entitle him to the exclusive right of laying a cable across the Pacific. Mr. Fleming is my personal friend, and I do not desire to make the comments I otherwise would make in consequence of the extraordinary remarks of the hon. Senator from Amherst. All I can tell the hon. gentleman is, that the money was subscribed in England, and the prospectus was prepared in that country, which included the laying of a cable across the Pacific as well as across the Atlantic.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY — The hon. gentleman did not bring it under the notice of the Committee.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT — I had not considered it necessary to do so. I said that they had ample money to prosecute the work, and I stated it was their intention, if they saw their way clear to do so, to lay a cable across the Pacific, and they desired that authority should be taken in this Bill to do so. I think the policy of this Parliament has been with respect to those cable bills to pass them without bestowing much attention upon their details. What hon. gentleman took the smallest interest in granting the charter to the French Company to lay a cable? The first I knew of it was seeing it in the statute book; it entirely escaped any discussion. There are on our statute book many other charters granted to cable companies, and this Parliament has never hesitated to pass such bills, because they never recognized that there was any exclusive control over