

none of them are personally interested in this Company. With the consent of the House, I will add the words, "Also all correspondence with reference to the extension of the Direct Cable Company's line over the Dominion."

Hon. Mr. MILLER—I may state that the Anglo-American Company have issued a pamphlet on the subject.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—There is no objection to the Address, and I beg to assure my hon. friend from Lunenburg that no member of the Government has any interest, directly or indirectly, in the line. They favoured the construction of the line, with the view of cheapening telegraphic messages over the Atlantic. The moment the cable of the Direct Cable Company was able to remit messages the rates of ocean telegraphy were brought down, and the very day the Company's cable was broken, in December last, the rates shot up at once. Twice since then the cable has been broken near Newfoundland, and I saw a proclamation, offering a considerable reward for the discovery of the perpetrator of the break, for it was broken twice near the same point, in nearly eighty fathoms of water. Evidence was found in both instances that the cable was broken by an anchor dragged across it. I think if the hon. gentleman will consult the commercial papers for the last few months, he will find that on both occasions when the cable was broken, the Anglo-American Company raised their rates. The Direct Cable Company lost £100,000 sterling in repairing the breaks, and, from what I have read, they suspect foul play. I do not think that there is any amalgamation between the two companies; the terms of their charter prevent it.

Hon. Mr. KAULBACH—Do I understand my hon. friend to say that there has been no arrangement of rates between the two companies?

Hon. Mr. MILLER—The hon. gentleman who has just spoken has stated that an amalgamation has taken place between the old company and the new one. I presume he has not made that statement without some authority. If anything of the kind has been done, I do not know what to say about it; if there has been any such amalgamation, and I can find any language to use against the new company stronger than I expressed against the old one, I will employ it. This House did not know the company when they were passing the Bill last session. We had a Bill before us involving

a very important public benefit, and a very large majority of us supported it on that ground. It is very well known that in this House the Government have not a political majority at their back, and the Government was supported in this measure by a large number of hon. gentlemen who differ from them on general questions. I was disappointed, I must confess, to hear that some arrangement was made between the two companies as to their tariff, and if it has been done, it leads to amalgamation, and to all intents and purposes, the Direct Cable Company, in view of their professions a year ago, have been guilty of a fraud on the country. Hon. gentlemen who supported the measure believed that the policy involved in it was a sound one, and beneficial to the people, in cheapening telegraphic communication between the two continents—a step in the civilization of the day. It does not follow from that we are responsible for what has taken place, or for any breach of faith with the country by the Direct Cable Company, if any has been committed or was contemplated. I know that some gentlemen say we did wrong in not fixing a maximum rate for messages. The reasons why I did not agree to it were these:—In the first place, we were assured by these gentlemen that competition would eventually bring down the rates for messages to 25 cents per word, and if we fixed the maximum rate at 50 cents per word, it would be an inducement for the company to keep it at that. Another reason was, we were told we were interfering with the vested rights of the Anglo-American Company, and an agreement was entered into, that if any vested or legal right was invaded by the Government, the company would have the right to petition against it for compensation at that rate. Independently of that, I think the true principle is competition, and it did for a time reduce the rate to 25 cents, but to suppose that anything more than a miscarriage has taken place with regard to the operation of the Bill, is as far as I am prepared to go.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY—I was not in my place when the discussion arose, and I should not have arisen at all, as I thought it well to leave the question in the hands of the gentleman from Nova Scotia, had it not been for an observation of my hon. friend who has just sat down. I am not surprised at the indignation he has shown at the imputation that there has been an amalgamation of the two companies, as I