

corners of which all this mischief lurked, was in other respects one of acknowledged public utility; and if existing rights had been protected, no one could justly have blamed the Dominion Government for declaring upon what conditions it would permit companies or associations of persons "to construct or maintain telegraphic wires or cables, in, upon, under or across any gulf, bay or branch of any sea or tidal water within the jurisdiction of Canada."

But the Bill went far beyond this. If it had been a general measure, no objection could have been urged to the form in which it was drawn up. But being a Bill which gravely affected the interests of a private company, its real nature and intention ought to have appeared on the face of it, whereas its language was so obscure that when I first read it in the autumn of last year I entirely failed—as many others did also—to discover the full significance of its provisions. The only thing in it that was made absolutely clear was that while professing to prohibit all cable monopolies, it made an exception in favour of the exclusive privileges of a Canadian company, a curious example of zeal tempered with discretion. A brief examination of the principal sections of the Bill will show with what justice the representatives of the Anglo-American Company complained of the disingenuous nature of the measure.

The two first sections of the Bill read thus:—

"1. This Act shall apply (1) to every company or