

A change of Government took place in 1878, and in the following session (1879) a Bill was introduced in the Commons repealing the Act. An active and influential lobby was behind the measure, headed by a member of the British Aristocracy who was staying at Government House. Any opposition to it seemed hopeless, and it went through the Commons and passed its three readings in the Senate without any division. On the final motion put by the Speaker, which is usually regarded as a mere form: "That the Bill do now pass and the title be as in "the motion paper," Senator Miller in a chaffing manner got up and said, "Has not my hon. friend (Mr. Scott) one parting word to say?" When thus appealed to, the writer immediately rose and challenged the propriety of restoring to the Anglo-American Company a monopoly of the cable service, urging many reasons against the passage of the Bill, pointing out that after the Direct Cable Company had been organized in conformity with the Act of 1874, the Anglo was financially so powerful that it readily captured the stock of its competitor, and that one effect of the passage of the Bill would be to boom the stock on the London and New York markets. After debate the yeas and nays were taken down: yeas 30, nays 32. The noble Lord who had been so active in the lobby was below the bar, and so confident of success that the cable message to the London Board was on the eve of transmission, when the final count showed that the Bill had been defeated. The result was a surprise and disappointment to the many friends of the Company, and also to the Government. The then Leader in the Senate, Sir Alexander Campbell, made a personal request to the writer to withdraw his motion or agree to its cancellation; but though earnestly pressed to do so, the writer stood firm against all appeals. Then precedents in parliamentary practice were looked up, in the hope of finding a way to rescind the vote, but all efforts to cancel the decision failed. The Act of 1874 is still on the Statute Book.