

other half shall go to the Company or individual for the time being owning such Telegraph Line.

Any malicious injury to the line to be a misdemeanor.

VII. If any person shall wilfully and maliciously cut, break, throw down, damage or destroy any of the posts, wires, insulators, piers, abutments, batteries, instruments or other apparatus, already or hereafter to be erected or constructed, or shall wilfully and maliciously obstruct or interrupt the free use of the same, or obstruct, hinder or prevent the carrying on, completing, supporting, maintaining, repairing or working the same, such person shall be guilty of misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be punished by fine or imprisonment or both in the discretion of the Court before whom such conviction shall be had.

Duty of operators in the transmission of messages.

VIII. The operator or person in charge of any station or office upon the Telegraph Line erected or to be erected under the authority of this Act, shall transmit all despatches in the order in which they shall be received under a penalty of not less than *five* pounds, nor more than *twenty-five* pounds, to be recovered with costs of suit by the person to whose injury such despatch is wilfully postponed out of its order, except that any despatch in relation to the administration of justice, the arrest of criminals, the discovery or prevention of crime, and Government despatches, shall always be transmitted in preference to any other despatch, if required by persons connected with the administration of justice or any person thereunto authorized by the Secretary of the Province.

Divulging contents of private despatch to be a misdemeanor.

IX. Any operator or person employed upon the Telegraph Line already constructed or hereafter to be constructed under the authority of this Act, divulging the contents of a private despatch, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction shall be punished by a fine not exceeding *twenty-five* pounds or by imprisonment not exceeding three months or both, in the discretion of the Court before whom such conviction shall be had.

The Government may temporarily assume the Lines.

X. Her Majesty may at any time for reasonable reward, to be ascertained by arbitration, in case of dispute, assume possession of any such Telegraph Line and all things necessary to the sufficient working thereof, for a time, and may for the same time require the exclusive service of the operators and other persons employed in working such Line, and the Company or individual owning such line shall give up possession thereof, and the operators and other persons so employed, shall, during the time of such possession, diligently and faithfully obey such orders and transmit and receive such despatches as they may be required to receive and transmit by any duly authorized officer of the Provincial Government, under a penalty not exceeding *twenty-five* pounds, for any refusal or wilful neglect to comply with the requirements of this section, to be recovered by the Crown for the public uses of the Province, with costs, in any way in which debts of the like nature are recoverable by the Crown.

Public Act

XI. This Act shall be deemed a public Act.