

APPENDIX.

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COPY of LETTER from CYRUS FIELD, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord STANLEY, M.P.

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22, Old Broad Street, London.

17th March 1858.

MY LORD,

DURING the last Session of the Legislature of Nova Scotia, an Act was passed which conferred certain limited protective privileges upon the New York, Newfoundland, and London Telegraph Company (of which I am the Vice-President), for the purpose of securing to Nova Scotia the advantage of being placed on the direct route of the telegraphic system between Europe across the Atlantic to the United States.

This Act was duly approved by the Governor, and remitted to the Imperial Government for ratification; and I have just been informed that on the 18th of January last the Right Honourable Henry Labouchere, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies, in a letter addressed to his Excellency Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, expressed his opinion that it would be inexpedient to confirm the Act, for reasons based on the protective grant, and which I presume will be set forth in the Despatch itself.

If I may venture so far as to solicit the favour of your Lordship, I should indeed esteem it an obligation to be furnished with a copy of the Despatch of your Lordship's immediate predecessor upon this subject, for I have reason to know that a large portion of the merchants and others in Nova Scotia feel strongly as to the advantages they would derive from the intimate connection secured to them by this Act, both with the United States and with Great Britain.

To the Company I represent, the concession granted by the Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature is comparatively unimportant, as the cheapest and most natural route for its wires would be from Newfoundland to Prince Edward's Island, and on across New Brunswick to the state of Maine, in which protection has been accorded for a term of twenty-five years; but in this case Nova Scotia would be entirely left out of the route, and messages to that colony would have to be sent on to the United States, there to be read off and retransmitted, with the certainty of great delay, and the increased risk of mistakes. This, I submit, would indeed be a hardship to the Nova Scotians, as it would be effected in direct opposition to their wishes, and would deprive them of the only means, except a very large money payment, by which they could escape their otherwise certain isolation from Europe.

After a careful review of the Act, I have been unable to perceive anything in the nature of the privileges accorded to the Company I represent that need be regarded with the slightest concern or distrust, or that are not strictly analogous to protections daily, and as a matter of course, extended to much less important objects; for instance, the author's copyright, the inventor's patent, are cases in point; and it cannot, I think, be maintained that the connection of several important colonies with themselves and with Europe upon an original plan, attended with great scientific and commercial advantages, surrounded with difficulties that must be overcome, and all to be accomplished at an enormous outlay, is in any degree less worthy of legislative protection.

So far as the Company that I now represent is concerned, we shall be quite willing to give to Nova Scotia or to the British Government the right to redeem the exclusive privileges at any time they may think proper, upon paying a fair valuation; but I trust that, with respect to the great interests of the colonists of Nova Scotia alone, your Lordship may be induced to take the Act into your favourable consideration, and see fit to recommend it to Her Majesty for being allowed.

If, after the perusal of this communication, your Lordship may be pleased to grant me the honour of a personal interview, I feel confident that I shall be enabled to submit such a statement of facts as I think will be sufficient to satisfy your Lordship that the Act in question does not contain provisions of a nature that can be considered obnoxious to the public interest.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. Lord Stanley, M.P.,
&c. &c. &c.

(Signed) CYRUS W. FIELD.