

again presented, the Opposition proceeded to amuse themselves at the expense of the veteran leader. The Bill contained a clause directed against prize-fighting, and the legislation was advocated on the ground that such exhibitions were demoralising and brutalising in their effects. An Opposition member suggested that kinetoscope and vitascope pictures of prize fights were hardly less demoralising than actual prize-fighting and urged that the clause be amended to prohibit such exhibitions also. The suggestion was adopted and the Bill was amended accordingly. Then another Opposition member, with a suspicious readiness to help on the legislation, suggested that newspaper reports of prize fights were also demoralising and should be prohibited. With some hesitancy the suggestion was accepted, and the amendment made. Then an ardent patriot contended that it would be an unjust discrimination to prohibit Canadian newspapers from publishing details of prize fights, while United States papers containing such reports were permitted to circulate freely in the country. Suggestions were offered and amendments made until the leader became hopelessly mixed and the Bill itself a laughing-stock. It was finally withdrawn for the session, but while it was under discussion it was a source of amusement for the potent, grave, and reverend seigniors and of anxiety and embarrassment for the Minister of Justice.

The Senate has at times proved to be a useful check on hasty or ill-advised legislation. It may have allowed some measures to pass which in the judgment of a majority of the people should have been defeated. That charge is sometimes made against the Upper House. On the other hand, no one can tell the amount of improper legislation it has prevented by its mere existence. We can judge of what might have been done had there been no Senate by the character of some of the measures it

has rejected. One noteworthy case of the kind was the Marine Electric Telegraphs Bill. During the Mackenzie regime the Government enacted a law to prevent monopoly in cables connecting Canada with Europe. Sir John Macdonald's Government, which followed the Mackenzie Administration, on a plausible proposition made by some powerful cable company, introduced a Bill to repeal the Act. The practical effect of such legislation would have been to give the company a monopoly of the cable business for a long term of years. The Bill passed through the Commons and was introduced in the Senate and promoted by Sir Alexander Campbell. Notwithstanding a good deal of opposition, it was allowed to pass the three readings without a division. After the third reading the Speaker rose and put the usual question, "Shall this Bill pass?" a question which till then had always been regarded as purely formal, and has never since been answered in the negative. Senator Miller, who sat near Senator Scott, turned to him, and in a sarcastic tone asked if he had "no word to say in defence of his own legislation." Stung to the quick, Mr. (now Sir Richard) Scott rose and in an impassioned speech implored the Senate to save the country from the grasp of a threatened monopoly. He wound up his speech by demanding a vote. The members were called in, a vote was taken, and the Bill was rejected. Had it passed, Canada could not have given wireless telegraphy a trial on the Atlantic coast for trans-Atlantic messages. I think nobody will say to-day that the Senate made a mistake on that occasion.

Another important measure which the Senate rejected was the Bill to give Mackenzie and Mann some four million acres in the gold fields of the Yukon for the construction of a railway from Stickeen River to Teslin Lake. There was also the Bill to confirm the first agreement with the