

Macdonald, then Minister of Justice, by Col. Dennis, who is at present Deputy Head of the Department of the Interior. In that report Col. Dennis argued in favor of what is known as the due north line as the western boundary, and the height of land as the northern boundary of Ontario. It is not unworthy of notice that in this report, which was submitted to the Select Committee in 1880, Col. Dennis reported to Sir John Macdonald that the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company described their grant as "*extending over and including all lands and territories drained by the waters emptying into Hudson's Bay.*" In his evidence before the same Committee Mr. McD. Dawson stated as follows:—"To show how strong impressions sometimes get hold of men's minds that cannot easily be got rid of, I notice that my esteemed friend, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, has given evidence before this Committee, in which he gives as a quotation from the Hudson's Bay Company's charter the following words: 'Extending over,' &c. (as already quoted above), whereas there are no such words in it, nor any thing that, as I would translate that very absurd document, could possibly bear such a construction." Mr. McD. Dawson should have gone further, and pointed out that the erroneous quotation by Col. Dennis was not in his oral testimony, but in a report made in 1871 to Sir John Macdonald, and which doubtless caused the "strong impressions" that got hold of his (Sir John's) mind on the subject. It would be interesting to learn whether Sir John ever compared Col. Dennis' report with the text of the charter, but it is at least singular that after the expiration of nearly ten years his own chief departmental officer should submit a report to the Committee on Boundaries containing such an important misquotation. To return to Sir John's imputation on the counsel, it is to be observed that the boundaries which they contended for were those which Sir John himself claimed in 1872, and which the present Mr. Justice Ramsay contended for in an elaborate report which formed part of the documentary evidence in the case before the arbitrators. Now if Sir John A. Macdonald could point out a single cogent argument in favor of the Dominion pretensions, which the learned counsel for the Dominion, Messrs. McMahon and Monk, failed to urge, he might be excusable for using such language as he did, but most assuredly not otherwise. He surely would not think of censuring them because they did not adopt Col. Dennis' report to himself, and argue before the

Commissioners that the Hudson's Bay Company's charter gave all the lands and territories "drained by the waters emptying into Hudson's Bay." The assertion just noticed is not the only extraordinary one made by Sir John Macdonald during the discussion. He said that the boundary fixed by the arbitrators was "admittedly only a conventional one." Where, we should like to ask, is his proof of the admission? Sir Alexander Campbell made a similar assertion in the Senate. It has always been contended on behalf of the award that both the south-western and north-eastern boundaries are *strictly in accordance* with Imperial statutes and treaties. Sir John Macdonald and Sir Alexander Campbell have perhaps naturally unbounded faith in the capacity of lawyers to adjudicate on such questions, but it is at least important that lawyers should take the trouble to read the documents, and to understand them, and if Sir John had taken this trouble he would not have been for the last ten years the victim of Col. Dennis' misquotation.

#### INTERCOLONIAL TARIFFS.

A meeting was held in London at the Westminster Palace Hotel on the 24th February, at the request of the Dominion Board of Trade of Canada, to consider the best mode of promoting the commercial interests of the Empire. The dependencies of the Empire seem to have appointed delegates very generally, but a great many were absent. Canada was represented by Colonel Gzowski, Mr. R. Gillespie, Mr. Dobell, Mr. R. Moffatt and Mr. J. S. Ross. Sir Alexander Galt was present, but does not appear to have taken part in the discussion. The first resolution was moved by Mr. R. Gillespie, and seconded by Mr. C. Churchill of London, and was to the following effect: "That in the opinion of this meeting it is a matter of the utmost importance for the promotion of the commercial interests of the British Empire, and preservation of its unity and integrity to draw closer the trade relations between its various component territories." Mr. Mowat, delegate from Bombay, seconded by Mr. Ralli of Calcutta, moved an adjournment of the meeting, pending the production of resolutions for the consideration of the delegates. The amendment was negatived, and the original resolution carried, after which Mr. Frederick Young, Secretary of the Colonial Institute, proposed, seconded by Mr. Dobell, that a committee be appointed to take into consideration how best to secure the objects of the conference as expressed in the resolutions al-

ready passed, and to report to an adjourned meeting of the conference to be held at some future time, and that the Executive Committee's report be circulated among the delegates summoned to such an adjourned meeting prior to its being held. The resolution was adopted, and a committee was named, consisting of four members from London, and two each from Canada, Australasia, India, the West Indies and the Cape. The meeting was adjourned to a future day to be named by the Executive Council. Sanguine expectations have been formed, that this new League, if it may so be designated, will be the means of effecting some important change in the relations between the Colonies. The object of the promoters of the new movement seems to be substantially the same as that of the late Mr. Hamilton Merritt in 1854, when he proposed to unite the Colonies in a confederation for establishing trade relations with each other on a footing of reciprocity. At that time the Imperial Government quietly put its veto on the whole scheme, and it ended in smoke. Several years later a commission was sent to the West Indies, and to some foreign States with substantially the same object, but again the Imperial Government interfered, and refused its sanction to any scheme of differential duties. It is of course premature to discuss a resolution so general in its character as the one, which we have quoted above as having been adopted by the meeting, and we must wait the report of the Committee, which we presume will not be long delayed. At the same time we may warn those who anticipate any satisfactory result from the present movement, that nothing is more improbable than that the Parliament of Great Britain will ever consent to re-impose duties on the food of the people. As a rule the Colonies are producers of raw materials, including food, and their object is to get a preference in the British markets. They may as well make up their minds to the inevitable; they will not get Great Britain to place obstructions on the importation of raw materials of any kind. The delegates to the Convention in London, represent a certain commercial interest, and it is doubtful whether they could even carry that interest with them in any policy on which they might agree. Outside the commercial classes there is no reason to suppose that they would have any influence whatever, and several of the Colonies represented are Crown Colonies, in which the policy of the Imperial Government is dominant. We shall watch with interest the future proceedings of the Convention.