

HISTORY IN BOUNDARY LINES—ILLUSTRATED BY NEW BRUNSWICK.

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When I was a boy at school, I used to wonder why the boundary lines of New Brunswick run so strangely as they do, in such seemingly lawless courses. I have since found out that there is a reason for every feature of every line, that the peculiar province boundaries have had a long and devious history, and that the county lines are arranged upon an orderly and admirable system. I shall trace briefly the evolution of these lines for New Brunswick, though no doubt those of some of the other provinces are not inferior in interest.

The boundaries of New Brunswick are partly natural and partly artificial, and include the *International or Maine* boundary, the *Quebec* boundary and the *Nova Scotia* boundary. All three of these have been much in dispute, referred to commissions for decision, and settled finally by compromise. Most important in all respects, however, is the *International* boundary. But so long and complicated is its history that a mere outline of all of its vicissitudes would require many times the space the editor allows for this article, and a collection of the many books and reports that have been published about it would form a considerable library, despite which, however, its true and impartial history has not yet been written. But the actual forward steps in its evolution may be briefly traced.

In 1621 King James the First granted to Sir William Alexander a great territory, to be called Nova Scotia (including the present New Brunswick), whose western boundary was to be formed by the river St. Croix to its westernmost source, and thence by a north line to the St. Lawrence. This was the real origin of the present boundary, and the question arises, why was the St. Croix chosen? It was no doubt because the St. Croix was the only considerable river known by name (or otherwise) in that vicinity to King James and his advisers, and it was known to them only through its prominence on the maps and in the narratives of Champlain, whose ill-fated attempt with DeMonts to found a settlement there in 1604 was well-known to them.

The first boundary then of Nova Scotia followed the St. Croix and a north line from its westernmost source to the River St. Lawrence. So it remained for nearly one hundred and fifty years, and thus it is