

the truth were known, it would be found that the total remission of the St. Lawrence improvement debt was deemed a greater sacrifice of revenue than circumstances would admit of. If the grounds on which the remission is claimed are tenable, success is merely a question of time.

As to the canal tolls, we learn from a morning contemporary that Mr. A. Robertson, Chairman of the Harbor Commissioners, has suggested the remission of all tolls on the St. Lawrence canals on traffic that has paid tolls on the Welland Canal, and also the remission of all tolls on the Welland on traffic that has paid tolls on the St. Lawrence. This would be merely extending to merchandize of every description a principle that has been applied to several leading articles already, and there ought to be no difficulty in adopting it.

THE ONTARIO BOUNDARY QUESTION.

We readily comply with the request of Mr. W. McD. Dawson to insert his letter commenting on a recent article of ours in which we adverted to a discussion in the House of Commons on the Manitoba boundary bill. Mr. Dawson complains that his name was "unwarrantably used." His brother, Mr. Simon Dawson, having referred in his speech to the evidence before the Select Committee in 1880, when Mr. McD. Dawson was a principal witness, we own that we fail to see how it would be possible to discuss the boundary question at all without referring to the reports and evidence of the Messrs. Dawson. As for what Mr. Dawson says about political and party purposes, our own opinion is that the boundary question is entirely unconnected with politics. We admit that, with a knowledge of the fact of which Mr. McD. Dawson, we observe, declares himself ignorant, although it is noticed in the sketch of Mr. Simon Dawson in the "Canadian Parliamentary Companion," that his brother was the avowed advocate of the formation into a separate Province of "the great central region known as Algoma, extending from the 81st to the 95th meridian, that is from French River to the Lake of the Woods," we assumed that Mr. McD. Dawson was of the same opinion. The sole ground on which any one would think of forming such a province would be the correctness of the opinion, which is held to the best of our belief by the brothers Dawson alone, of those who have given evidence on the subject, that the Western boundary of Ontario is at the Easterly entrance of Lake Superior. The Act of last session has completely dis-

posed of the Algoma question, but it will be observed that Mr. McD. Dawson persists in his opinion that the boundary of Ontario is at the Easterly entrance of Lake Superior, notwithstanding his own report of 1857, and the fact of the old Province of Canada having during many years exercised jurisdiction over the territory known as Algoma.

Mr. Dawson has referred to the strong language used by Sir John A. Macdonald regarding the management of the case "shamefully and deliberately mismanaged," and states that he would himself use the milder term "mistakenly." What we pointed out was that Sir John Macdonald and Mr. Dawson held a common opinion that the case had been mismanaged by Counsel, and that, inasmuch as the opinions of Sir John and of Mr. Dawson are as wide as the poles asunder as to what are the true boundaries, it was simply impossible that Counsel could manage the case so as to satisfy them both. In 1872 Sir John Macdonald made the claim on the part of the Dominion that the Western boundary of Ontario was what is known as the due North line from the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and the Northern boundary the height of land. Mr. Mills was Minister of the Interior in Mr. Mackenzie's Government, and his well-known opinion is that the Western boundary is far to the West of where it was placed by the award, and much what the brothers Dawson contended for in days gone by, and before they received new light on the subject. We have not the most remote idea what Mr. Mackenzie's opinion may be. What we do know is that Counsel were instructed to defend the claim put forward by Sir John Macdonald in 1872. Now let us enquire what Mr. McD. Dawson's opinion is regarding that claim. As to the Westerly boundary, he said with reference to the ruling of the court at Quebec in 1818 in favor of the due North line, "I hardly think that any surveyor, geographer or delineator of boundaries of any experience or scientific attainments would concur in that decision." Regarding the boundary of the height of land, Mr. Dawson in the same evidence given in 1857 uses the following expression, "the boundary designated for us by the Hudson's Bay Company, viz., the watershed of the St. Lawrence, and for which there is no earthly authority except themselves." In his letter in our present number he states "the Dominion case was based on historical error and fallacious assumption from first to last."

We do not propose at present to add anything to our former remarks as to the

alleged mismanagement of the case in support of the Dominion claim as upheld by Sir John Macdonald and others. We confine our attention to Mr. McD. Dawson. It must be obvious that the Dominion Counsel had to advocate some defined boundary, and when Mr. Dawson charges the Counsel with being "mistaken" in their management of the case, he must mean that they, or the Government which they represented, were wrong in contending for Sir John Macdonald's boundary instead of for that favoured by Mr. McD. Dawson. We are assured by Mr. McD. Dawson that his views and his brother's on the question are "in many of its ramifications diametrically the opposite of each other." This certainly is news to us. The really important point is the Westerly boundary of Ontario. The Messrs. Dawson hold the same opinion that the true boundary is the Easterly entrance into Lake Superior. "Many of its ramifications" is a formidable description of whatever differences may exist between the brothers as to the Northern boundary, and to which we have no clue.

Whatever opinions Mr. Dawson may entertain as to the bearing which the territorial extent of Ontario might have had on the question of Confederation, it is notorious that much more extensive territories than those awarded by the arbitrators were claimed by Sir John Macdonald and Sir George Cartier as legally belonging to Canada on the ground of their having formed part of the old Province of Quebec. Those territories, whatever may have been their limits, were made part of the old Province of Upper Canada by the Act and Proclamation of 1791, and were made part of Ontario by the Act of 1867. It is, under the circumstances, a strange assertion that "Quebec would never have submitted to have had the whole of the early French possessions of the North West part of Ontario." Quebec most assuredly had no claim whatever to any of those territories, and Mr. Dawson must be well aware that what may be called "the disputed territory" constitutes but a small portion of those "early French possessions." On the whole we heartily thank Mr. McD. Dawson for his letter. The important question at issue is the Western boundary of Ontario fixed by the award at the North-Western angle of the Lake of the Woods. Nearly all of the suggested lines, eleven in number, carry the boundary West of that point. The one on which the Dominion has placed reliance Mr. Dawson declares to be "based on historical error and fallacious assumption from first to last." His own and his brother's boundary