

awarded to the Province of Ontario, that had been previously claimed as part of the North-West, as Dominion property; still no allusion has been made to that in the Speech from the Throne. The confirmation by the Privy Council of that long disputed boundary award that has been so frequently discussed in Parliament, and about which so much has been written, was surely a matter worthy of notice.

Another question that might have been adverted to with propriety, is the placing on a proper basis provincial rights. In the contest that has been going on between the Dominion and the important province of Ontario in regard to many questions of right claimed on behalf of the Province, the view of the Dominion has been overruled—notably in the appeals known as the “Streams Bill,” and the “Dominion License Act.” I think if this Confederation is to be preserved that the federal power, which is a strong one, ought to be exceedingly cautious before it encroaches upon the provincial authority. I entirely approve of the minute which was put on record by the present head of the Government in 1868 or 1869, when this question of disallowing provincial acts first came before him. He then, with the full knowledge of what had been obtained in the confederation of the provinces, and recognizing how delicate a subject it was, fully appreciated the importance of giving to the provinces their full and absolute right, by declining to veto any local Bill unless it was manifestly in excess of the provincial authority. I say it would have been a wise and a proper thing for this Dominion if the principles that then actuated the leader of the Government had continued to be his guide in the consideration of the subjects which have in recent years come under his attention as the head of this Government. He has not recently shown that broad statesmanship that formerly characterized him, but rather a tendency to cripple an important province that seemingly, politically, has not been favorably disposed to his own views. In all the contests that have arisen on those constitutional questions it is a matter of notoriety that the Dominion has been worsted. It is a matter of regret that those contests should arise. There ought to be some degree of elasticity allowed in provincial legislation, and unless the province

is encroaching manifestly beyond its proper limit, it ought not to be interfered with, and the question ought to be discussed on a broader and more friendly basis. The Province of Ontario may feel that it was a fortunate thing for this country that there was a tribunal on the other side of the Atlantic made up of the law Lords of the Privy Council who took a more just view of the situation, wholly unbiased by any political feeling. I trust that the experience that has been gained in the past year may be a warning to future governments that they are not to encroach upon the rights of the provinces. Our Dominion will be all the stronger; the people will be more contented if they feel that the constitution that was given to them, the written constitution, is one which is not to be encroached upon; that it has to be interpreted at least as fairly for the weaker power as if it were of equal strength to the parent power, because things of that kind naturally give rise to unpleasantness and irritation. They reflect upon the federal Government, because they lead one to the conclusion that it was a matter of feeling rather than of principle that was the guide in considering the important question of whether the province had gone beyond its power in the legislation that is sought to be vetoed.

MON. MR. GIRARD.—I have been long enough a member of this House to feel assured that there will be no doubt in the mind of any one as to the position I occupy. I have come this year, as in the past, quite disposed to help the Government in all measures in the interests of the country. I do not see in the Speech from the Throne anything which I could not sustain; but I rise in case some prejudice may be created in the minds of hon. gentlemen, by the remarks made by the hon. gentleman who has just spoken in reference to matters which have been submitted lately by the Government of Manitoba to the federal authorities, to make some observations on certain matters affecting the interests of my province. It should be borne in mind that we are surrounded in that country by peculiar circumstances. When we came into the Dominion I do not think we received the fair treatment that we deserved. We did not receive an equivalent for what we gave,