

which we occupy now. There was one point clear and distinct which was easily perceptible to anyone who took the trouble to investigate it, and which was clearly understood by the eminent men who took part in the discussion in the Imperial Parliament, when the Act of 1774 was under discussion. That Act was watched, as the hon. member for Bothwell says, very carefully, and with great jealousy, by Mr. Burke and other eminent members of Parliament who were interested in the old English Colonies. They appeared to take little interest in the territory lying west, but they took the extremest interest in the western boundaries of the Colonies which they represented. As members of the House know, some of these older Colonies had Charters which granted them an extension westward to the South Sea, now called the Pacific Ocean, and that at that very time there was a question as to whether Pennsylvania and New York and the British Colonies lying along the sea coast should extend westward beyond the Alleghanies or not; therefore it was that this Act was watched during its passage through Parliament with the greatest jealousy and care. These intelligent men, having maps of the country before them, knew that in 1763 the western boundary of the British possessions extended to the River Mississippi. It was declared by the Treaty of 1763 that the boundaries between the territories of His Britannic Majesty and the King of the French, west, should be the River Mississippi from its source to its mouth. That was the boundary recognised on the maps of the time; and, with this map before them, these eminent statesmen and lawyers, evincing the care and anxiety with which they watched the progress of the Bill, and the intelligence and ability with which they defined the boundary in which their own Colonies were interested, declared that, instead of following the banks of the Mississippi, the line, when it reached the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi, should run northwards to the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company. The only question which appears to me for discussion is, not what the preamble of the Act would indicate, but what the intention of Parliament was, as indicated by the words employed; because it may be said that the

intention of the British Parliament was not to annex this large stretch of territory in the North-West Territory, between the due north line and the banks of the Mississippi, a territory so large as to embrace, at the present day, portions of two or three of the largest and most prosperous States in the United States. I say it might have been the intention of Parliament to establish there another Government for the management and control of the territories in that stretch of country. The Act was deliberately passed by Parliament, not under circumstances which would indicate that they were misled, or that it was hastily done, because the Act was for several days under the closest scrutiny; and by it Parliament declared that the line which should bound the new Province of Quebec, or the territory added to the then Province of Quebec in 1774, should be a line running northward from the point at which the Ohio and Mississippi united. Now what does the word northward mean? What was the construction at that time put upon it? I say frankly that I have not been able to find any judicial decision on that point in England, at about the time the Act was passed. But so early as 1805 or 1806 the Supreme Court of New York, a body recognised as a very able and learned one, held directly and in the strongest terms, that the word northward, without further words to direct the inclination of the course, in charters or grants of the time, meant due north; and the Judges who decided two of these cases, one in 1805 and one in 1806, declared in the strongest language, not only that such was the true construction, but that it was then settled law. In 1818, we find the judicial construction of the Supreme Court in the Province of Quebec, on the first action on which the question arose, declaring that the line running due north from the junction of these two rivers was to be the true dividing line. With reference to the question put by my hon. friend from Algoma so strongly—and I think it is a most pertinent question—whether the Provinces of the Dominion which consented to enter into the Confederation, would have so readily entered had they supposed that the great Province of Ontario, which certainly, at that time, was not supposed