

This was late in 1856, when the Secretary of the Colonies informed the Governor-General of Canada that Her Majesty's Government had determined on bringing the whole subject under the investigation of a Committee of the House of Commons; and His Excellency was instructed to consider, with the advice of his Council, the question whether it might be desirable to send witnesses to appear before the Committee, or in any other manner to cause the views of his Government and the interests of Canada to be represented there.

CANADA'S CLAIMS ASSERTED.

In reply to the Colonial Secretary's despatch, a minute of Council was transmitted, stating amongst other things that "the general feeling here is strongly that *the western boundary of Canada extends to the Pacific Ocean*;" that the Committee of Council were most anxious that Canadian interests should be properly represented before the proposed Committee of the House; that situated as Canada was, she necessarily had an immediate interest in every portion of British North America; and that the question of jurisdiction and title claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company was to her of paramount importance. The Canadian Prime Minister of that time, it may be remarked, was Mr. John A. Macdonald.

THE LIMITS NORTH AND WEST.

In the same year (1857) an official paper was prepared by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, claiming that the westerly boundary of the Province extended as far as British territory not otherwise organized would carry it, *which would be to the Pacific*; or, if limited at all, it would be by the first waters of the Mississippi, which a due west line from the Lake of the Woods intersected, which would be the White Earth River. With respect to the northerly boundary, the Commissioner pointed out as the only possible conclusion that Canada was either bounded in that direction by a few isolated posts on the shore of Hudson's Bay, or else that the Company's territory was a myth, and consequently that Canada had no particular limit in that direction.

CANADA'S SPECIAL AGENT TO ENGLAND.

In response to the Colonial Secretary's invitation, the Government sent Hon. Chief Justice Draper as a special agent to represent Canadian interests before the House of Commons Committee. He was examined before the Committee, and gave evidence against the claims of the Company. Afterwards Justice Draper reported to the Canadian Government, and gave as his opinion that Canada had a *clear right*, under the Act of 1774 and the proclamation of 1791, to the whole country *as far west as the line of the Mississippi*, and to a considerable distance north of the water-shed; and he recommended that the opinion of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council should be obtained upon the merits of the dispute.

AN ABORTIVE MOVE.

In August, 1858, a joint address of both Houses was forwarded to the Queen, in which it was stated that, in the opinion of Parliament, Canada had a right to claim, as forming part of her territory, a considerable portion of the country then held by the Hudson's Bay Company, and that a settlement of the boundary line was immediately required. The law officers of the Crown were consulted on the subject by the Colonial Secretary during the previous year, and they expressed the opinion that, while a decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy