

certain that is not the case, nor has the Government been impelled by any such consideration. If I recollect aright, when the hon. the leader of the Opposition assumed the reins of Government, there was a proposition by the Government of Ontario, a fair and reasonable and proper proposition, to determine, to use the words of the Minute of Council on which this Arbitration was appointed, the boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Province of Ontario. It was not to make a boundary, it was not to authorise two or three persons to ramble over that immense extent of territory, and fix the boundary wherever in their judgment the boundary should be, but it was to determine, from a fixed, known point of departure, what the line was which should determine the respective territories of the Dominion on the east and Ontario on the west. Now that, for the reason that the Province claimed a larger and undefined extent of territory, was objected to by Ontario. The Government of Ontario put it on the ground that they claimed a territory further to the west than the line defined by the correspondence on that occasion would give them, that is the line running due north from the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, and they declined to appoint a Commission. They went further, and, if I recollect rightly, they instructed the Commissioners who had been appointed not to proceed with the investigation. I think that was the position of matters when a reply was received from the Government of Ontario that, as they claimed a line further to the westward than could evidently be given to them by the line running north from the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, they declined to proceed or to instruct their Commissioners to proceed. Now, it does appear to me that the hon. gentleman has no reason to complain that we object to the proceedings thereafter, not that the Government were not influenced by the very best motives, but that, after the Government of Ontario had made a claim for territory which the Government of the Dominion at that time expressed their belief they were not entitled to, the Government ought to have had the authority of Parliament before authorizing any Commission or any body of men to determine as to the rights and

territories of the Dominion of Canada. These gentlemen were authorised to determine, not the line starting from any particular point which was to be fixed as the boundary between the two countries, but they were to determine whether, Ontario should own three or four hundred thousand square miles of territory, that the Dominion of Canada, through its Government, had claimed that Ontario did not own. Now, I think that on that ground it is perfectly right and just that this House, either through a Committee, or by some other mode of enquiry, should have the opportunity of determining whether they will adopt the conclusions at which that tribunal arrived, conclusions taking from the Dominion of Canada an immense extent of valuable territory. There is another reason why I think the Committee ought to be granted, and that is that many of us think that the conclusion at which that Commission arrived was not justifiable by the evidence. I say this with the greatest possible diffidence, but I am bound to express the opinion which I entertain, and entertain very strongly, though I do so with diffidence as indeed every lawyer would, who felt himself obliged to differ from the opinion of so eminent an authority as Chief Justice Harrison. But, without further discussing the merits of the question, I am quite sure that some of the eminent lawyers on the other side of the House would come to the same conclusion, if they were to consider the meaning of the Act of 1774. If that Act of Parliament was passed to-day in the light of the judicial decisions and the construction which those words have already received in the Courts, I do not think there could be any doubt or difficulty. Nor do I conceive that, in view of the judicial decision which took place some time after the passage of that Act, we could doubt what the intention of the Act was. There is no doubt whatever, as everybody must know, that, at that early date, in England particularly and among English people, there was not a very profound knowledge of localities in Western America. I do not know that we would slander our English fellow-subjects if we stated that even at this date, when they can travel by steam to the extreme west, they could not make a plan that could be relied upon as to the boundaries of the territory