

ment of that boundary, where there was no immediate necessity for it, would cost the country between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000. There is no doubt whatever that if we had not, as the northern boundary of Ontario, obtained the natural boundary, such as the Albany River, which requires no large expenditure to ascertain its direction—if, instead of that, we had taken a mathematical line and undertaken to establish it by a careful astronomical survey, it would have cost Ontario and the Dominion at least \$500,000. I therefore think that even though the Albany River boundary was not one that could have been upheld by strict and careful examination into the law and facts, it yet would have been in the public interest, both of the Dominion and of Ontario, to accept it as a boundary. In doing so, they will get rid of a large expenditure indeed. I need not say any more on the subject. I have only taken a very cursory view, and have done so merely for the purpose of establishing what I think might be regarded as a *prima facie* case in favor of the view taken by the arbitrators and the claims that are still maintained by the Province of Ontario.

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Halton). I am sure the House, at all events those hon. members of it who have given any attention to this subject, must be gratified with the very clear statement which the hon. gentleman has just made in respect to the reasons that led the arbitrators to select the particular boundary which they did select. It is, of course, inconvenient to engage in a discussion on a technical and historical question of this kind, involving a great many enquiries and details, on a mere motion for papers which, I apprehend, when the return comes down, will be very few; for I have not seen any intimation, in any quarter, of any correspondence having taken place between the Dominion and the Imperial Governments, in respect to the boundaries of Ontario, nor do I see any reason for such correspondence unless it might be enquiries made in some of the Government Departments in London for evidence which might be helpful to the settlement of the question. I understand the hon. member for Bothwell has moved for the correspondence which has probably taken place between the Ontario and the Dominion Governments, and when that correspondence is before us we will be in a better position to engage in a discussion on this subject than we are at present. For my part, having given some attention to it for some years, I am very anxious, as a member of this House and a representative of Ontario, that a solution should be arrived at as soon as possible. Questions of great local difficulty are constantly springing up and are likely to spring up in that country, which is now no man's land, as we do not know to whom it really belongs; and some very serious question, arising out of the administration of criminal law there, may arise at any moment. It is, therefore, on every ground, desirable that the Government should take the matter in hand; they alone can properly deal with it. I trust, before the Session ends, the Government will take steps to have the dispute settled. Ontario, looking at it as a mere political question, feels great interest in its settlement, and the political opponents of the Government will have a very good question to canvas the country with, if by mere delay and indifference occasion is given for discussions of that kind. It seems to me that either the decision arrived at by the arbitrators should be affirmed, or a case should be agreed upon between the Dominion and Ontario Governments for submission to some judicial tribunal. From the statements made by the hon. member for Bothwell, it is pretty evident that on the north no mere judicial tribunal can find a boundary, for no such boundary has ever been described in terms which would enable a court to define it or a surveyor to mark it on the ground. Therefore, whatever decision may be arrived at in reference to the western boundary and the meaning to be attached to the word "northward,"

Mr. MILLS.

it would not solve the question. We are still without a boundary on the north, and that can only be arrived at by agreement. The hon. gentleman has given, I think, the strongest reason for selecting the Albany River, and no doubt it was the reason which induced the arbitrators to come to that conclusion. That reason was, that the Hudson's Bay Company themselves had at one time agreed to accept that as a boundary of their territories on the south; and though it was never formally agreed upon by the then high contracting parties, still the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company at that period made no claim to any country farther south seems to me to be a very reasonable ground to justify our selection of that boundary to-day. Of course the Dominion inherited the title of both parties. We have succeeded to the French title, whatever it was, and have possession of the English title, whatever that was; so there need be no great difficulty in coming to a conclusion, so far as we are concerned. That question is, however, only important as bearing upon the western boundaries of Quebec as settled by the Act of 1774. It is not necessary for us now, for any other purpose than I am aware of, to ascertain where the limits of Rupert's Land or the Hudson's Bay Company's country was to be found. We carefully avoided that question in the purchase of the North-West Territories. It will be seen by consulting the correspondence on that occasion that two distinct territories or purchases, so to speak, were contemplated: one, Rupert's Land, which was the Hudson's Bay Company's property—the country, wherever it could be found, which belonged to them,—and the North-West territories which, it was assumed, were not conveyed to them by the charter; and these two distinct territories were kept in view in the arrangements with the Imperial Government, for the purchase of the Hudson's Bay territory. We purchased the North-West Territories and the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company in Rupert's Land for one price. We did not discriminate between them; there seemed to be no purpose to be served by so doing. We had their rights in both territories, whatever they might be. Well, that question which had agitated the Parliament and Government of Canada for many years was unnecessary to be solved, because we bought the whole country. It became ours and there was no purpose to be served in drawing that line, and I see no purpose now in drawing it because, so far as the question of the Hudson's Bay Company is concerned, it appears they were willing themselves to fix upon the Albany River as the boundary on the south east. However, the question of the boundary of Ontario must be settled, and it is desirable it should be disposed of at the earliest possible moment. It cannot be of any great importance to Ontario to have the jurisdiction and control over the extensive country that is now a wilderness, and that in the opinion of many persons does not contain any great elements of wealth, certainly not as a grazing or a grain growing country. It would probably be a burden to them as it is to the Dominion. If Ontario has not administrative powers and jurisdiction over the country it must fall to the Dominion, and, as it is seen at present, it is of no great advantage to the Dominion to retain control for administrative purposes over such countries. We do not propose, I apprehend, to establish another Province there. That might become necessary, and we know the expense of similar Provinces since the establishment of Confederation. A very disproportionate expense as compared with that of the government of large Provinces, is incurred for the very small; and I am sure that public opinion, so far as I can understand it, does not consider it expedient to establish new Provinces of very limited territorial extent in future. We had better give them a larger extent, for the cost of administration and government will equal that incurred for larger territories. Moreover, I see no room for a second Province, even assuming the law should decide that the word northward in this case means a line due north from