

tain a treaty, but it is impossible to get them to state plainly and frankly whether they are in favor of discriminating in favor of the United States and against Great Britain. This the late Mr. Brown refused to sanction. If the *Free Press* or Mr. Ryan would give their views on this essential point it would be easy to meet them in argument. A demand by the Canadian Parliament for discrimination in favor of a foreign nation against Great Britain would be equivalent to a demand for separation, and if made would, we have no doubt, be promptly acceded to. Public opinion in Canada, however, is not in favor of any such policy, if reliance can be placed on the representatives of the people in Parliament.

#### CIGAR DUTIES.

An impression appears to prevail that the recent amendment to the duties on cigars operates to the disadvantage of the manufacturers in this country. The reverse is deemed to be the case. As formerly pointed out, an increase in duty would tend to discourage the importation of the cheaper class of foreign goods, chiefly German and Mexican cigars, although some cheap Havana goods are only in a degree less deceptive. The bulk of the Havana cigars imported are retailed at from "3 for a quarter," to "10 cents straight" and "2 for 25 cents," and an over-anxious importer will select the cheapest brand that he can procure to bring these figures. A careful buyer, on the other hand, will be content with moderate profits, but these buyers are scarce indeed, and consumers are often made aware how difficult it is to procure further supplies of a "leading line" unless they import direct. Few smokers will pay 12½ to 15 cents apiece for cigars, and as importers cannot well procure brands cheaper than those now chiefly imported, the advantage is evidently in favor of the home manufacturer, and of the importers of the better class of goods. Mexican and German importers, of whom there are only three or four in the Dominion, are those chiefly affected by the alterations in the tariff. The cigars brought from these countries are also usually retailed at about 10 cents each, although worth, as a rule, not more than 2½ cents. It is plain that the domestic article, which retails at ten cents—chiefly made from superior imported stock—is to be preferred to the foreign product of the same price wherever made; it weighs nearly twice as much, and, were it not for the popular prejudice in favor of "Havana" goods, would compete with

the highest-priced foreign article quoted above.

It may not be generally known that the exhaustive effects of tobacco cultivation upon soils is fourteen times that of wheat and twelve times that of oats. The plant feeds largely on carbon, and in every one hundred pounds of dried leaves there are about five of this alkali, so that it will pay our farmers better to grow grain even at recent prices than to rob their soils in the effort to get a supply of this doubtful luxury for home consumption.

#### THE BOUNDARY QUESTION.

We had hoped that the decision of the Privy Council had put an end to all controversy between the Dominion and the Province of Ontario, in regard to the long-disputed boundary question. We fear, however, that the new demand put forth by the Dominion will lead to renewed controversy. It seems to be the opinion of the Government of the Dominion that the effect of the Indian treaty of the year 1850 is to confer certain territorial rights on the Dominion as representing the then United Province of Canada. The question is a most unfortunate one, for it has never been determined by any competent authority what are the actual rights of Indians to lands over which they have been in the habit of hunting without occupation. The language of treaties has been generally a conveyance of all their right, title, and interest. Such was the treaty of 1850, the consideration of which was a sum down of \$8000, and an annuity of \$2000 a year in perpetuity. The territory in which the rights were thus extinguished became the property of United Canada, and, as such, was dealt with at the period of confederation.

We confess that we are wholly unable to comprehend the ground on which the Government of the Dominion can pretend to claim any right whatever to the timber or other lands or mines in a territory which belonged to Canada at the period of confederation, and it is clear from the tone of the press in Ontario that the demand will be resisted, and that there will be fresh ground for irritation. It appears, moreover, that the northern boundary has not yet been adjudicated on. Meantime large costs have been incurred, and Manitoba is claiming to be relieved at the cost of the Dominion, the greater proportion of which will fall on Ontario. It is to be borne in mind that the Province of Quebec has an interest in the northern boundary fully as great as Ontario. The question is simply whether

the Height of Land is the northern boundary, according to the construction to be placed on the treaties of Ryswick and Utrecht.

Since the year 1670, the Hudson's Bay Co. acquired no territorial rights in Canada, and the question is, what were the respective rights of that Company and of the French Crown at the period named. Even on the assumption that Great Britain obtained by the treaty of Utrecht a greater territory than she enjoyed under the treaty of Ryswick, the Hudson's Bay Co. had no right to obtain that territory, and the Dominion has no claim whatever, except as assignee of the Hudson's Bay Co. It has been generally believed that the prolonged controversy as to the western boundary was caused by the jealousy of the Province of Quebec, but now that dispute has been settled, Quebec is just as much interested as Ontario in obtaining the territory north of the Height of Land, and it may be added that the other Provinces would be benefited by being relieved of the cost of governing the territories in dispute. It is high time that these unseemly controversies were terminated.

The foregoing remarks were ready for publication when the report of an extraordinary speech delivered by Mr. Rykert, M.P., on the 9th inst., came under our notice. Mr. Rykert's object was to prove that the Ontario Government, and especially Mr. Attorney-General Mowat, was responsible for the delay in settling the boundary dispute, and he gave what he led the House to believe was a true history of the negotiations, but which can only be truly described as a gross misrepresentation of facts. It would be inferred from Mr. Rykert's statement that the Dominion Government had from the first proposed that the settlement of the boundary should be determined by the Privy Council. Now the fact is that the first proposition, which was mutually agreed to by both Governments in 1871, was for each Government to appoint a commissioner "to determine the boundary line." To defray the cost each Government had obtained an adequate vote of money in the previous year. The commissioners were named, and were Mr. Eugene Taché of Quebec, by the Dominion, and the Hon. Wm. M. Dougall, C.B., by the Province of Ontario, whose acceptance of the appointment was in September, 1871.

On 9th March, 1872, Mr. M. Dougall reported that he had twice visited Ottawa, in the hope of meeting his fellow commissioner, and that he had conferred with certain members and officers of the