

An American apologist has lately asserted that "no strenuous protest" was made by Canada; and he attempts to excuse the United States trespass on British-Canadian territory by suggesting that the United States may reply: "For some twenty-five years out of the thirty which have elapsed since our purchase of Alaska, it was not worth your while to make any serious effort towards a permanent boundary settlement." The history of the urgent and persistent appeals of the British and Canadian Governments to induce the Government of the United States to settle the boundary, will prove the falsity of the suggested excuse, and may recall a previously cited Presidential commentary on diplomatic policy.

The Treaty ceding Alaska to the United States was signed on the 30th March, 1867; possession was obtained on the 18th October of the same year, and the necessary legislation to give effect to the Treaty was enacted by Congress on the 27th July, 1868. Canada became territorially a party to the boundary dispute on the 20th July, 1871.

(1) On the 12th March, 1872, attention was called by Canada "to the necessity of some action being taken at an early date to have the boundary line properly defined." To this Mr. Secretary Fish replied on the 14th November, 1872, "that he was perfectly satisfied of the expediency of such a measure, but he feared that Congress might not be willing to grant the necessary funds."

(2) On the 27th January, 1873, Canada agreed to pay one-half of the British expenditure in marking the boundary.

(3) On the 12th February, 1873, in response to another appeal, Mr. Secretary Fish "doubted whether Congress would ever be induced to vote the amount necessary to lay down the boundary completely, and hardly the amount required to determine the suggested points."

(4) On the 23rd May, 1873, the United States officials in Alaska forbade to British subjects the free navigation of the Stikene and Yukon rivers, guaranteed to them by the Russian Treaty of 1825, and the Washington Treaty of 1871; and gave notice that "no foreign bottom should be allowed to carry freight through American territory on the Stikene river." The Canadian Government protested, and requested that Treaty rights should be observed.

(5) On the 16th January, 1874, the Canadian authorities represented the urgency of having the boundary established, as it seriously affected vital questions bearing upon navigation and commerce, and that "an alleged conflict of authority had arisen."