

within which we have the right to adhere to this treaty had expired, and allow Canada now, even at this rather late date to adhere to the British commercial treaty with Japan. The following is the despatch :

At the time of the original treaty of commerce and navigation in 1894 between Great Britain and Japan, it appears that Canada was invited to become a party thereto, but in view of certain conditions and possible complications, it was deemed best at the moment to decline participation. These obstacles have been now removed, and it is understood informally that the Japanese government would not be unwilling to allow Canada to become a party to the above treaty.

The committee advise that His Excellency be moved to ascertain whether the Japanese government would be prepared to admit Canada to a participation in the said treaty.

This obstacle in regard to the most favoured nation clause in connection with our preference within the empire is removed, because it is thoroughly understood now all over the empire, and also among foreign countries, that Canada's preference to the mother country or within the empire, does not apply to her dealings with foreign countries. As to the other matter, the treatment of the Japanese in this country, the present awakening of the Japanese to civilization and their great enlightenment, I think, have removed all feeling in favour of discriminating against them from the mind of the people of Canada—certainly from the mind of the government. I do not know that there is any other point to be explained, but if any hon. gentleman has questions to ask I shall be glad to deal further with the matter.

Mr. FOSTER. As I understand it, Canada might have adhered to the treaty and might have given no commercial advantages whatever to Japan? She could have kept exactly the scale of duties of her present tariff?

Mr. FISHER. So I understand it.

Mr. FOSTER. The real reason that the arrangement was not made was the fear of complications on account of nationality?

Mr. FISHER. And also a doubt in regard to the favoured nation cause. At that time, I think the situation in regard to the details of the tariff was not thoroughly understood.

Mr. KEMP. What is the date of the letter addressed to the Colonial Office?

Mr. FISHER. It was dated June 7th, inst.

Mr. OSLER. I gather from what the minister says that it is likely these negotiations going on now will eventually result in Canada having equal trading privileges with Japan with those now enjoyed by the United States?

Mr. FISHER. I think so. That is our object in taking this step; and I have confi-

dence, from what I know of the feeling of the Japanese government, that they will meet us.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. As I understand, the period within which any colony of the empire might assent to this treaty was extended for a year. I have read that in the sessional papers of 1897.

Mr. FISHER. That had escaped my observation.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. In order to have a complete record, I will read from the sessional papers of 1897 to which I have referred :

A treaty of commerce and navigation between Great Britain and Japan was signed at London, July 16th, 1894, the ratifications whereof were exchanged at Tokio, August 25th, 1894. A supplementary convention between the two countries was signed at Tokio on the 16th July, 1895, and ratifications were exchanged at the same place November 21st, 1895. Article 19 of the treaty provides that the Dominion of Canada might come within the operations thereof, providing that notice to that effect shall have been given to the Japanese government by Her Majesty's representative at Tokio within two years from the date of the exchange of ratifications. Subsequently notes were exchanged between the two governments extending the time for one year from that date.

Upon reports of a committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General, bearing date the 13th of October, 1896, the 22nd of December, 1896, and the 23rd of January, 1897, the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies was advised that it was not considered expedient that Canada should take advantage of the provisions of article 19, or become a party to the treaty in question.

That, as I understand from the minister, was owing to the fact that the details of the tariff were not well understood at that time. Perhaps it would be of advantage, if these communications are not already before the House, to bring them down at some convenient time. I am not sure whether I gathered correctly from the minister (Mr. Fisher) that so far as Canada is concerned we would be exactly in the same position as the United States—that is we could take advantage of this treaty without offering any special tariff concessions in return. I was absent for a moment or two while the minister was speaking and am not sure that I followed exactly what he said concerning the opportunities which might be given to Canada to take advantage of the treaty now. Will the hon. gentleman state that again?

Mr. FISHER. First, in regard to the treaty: My hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) has mentioned the United States. Of course, if we adhere to the British treaty, we shall be bound entirely by the British treaty, and that does not involve any change except in regard to the tariff of Japan herself; and therefore there will be no change in our tariff as respects Japanese goods. In regard to the opportunity for adhering now