

one of the nations with which Japan has these four special treaties?

Mr. FISHER. No.

Mr. FOSTER. And yet the United States gets the advantage on the specified articles of these specified reductions?

Mr. FISHER. Yes, because she has a general commercial treaty with Japan containing a most favoured nation clause and consequently she gets any advantage which Japan has given to Great Britain, France, Germany or Austro-Hungary and the best advantage which Japan may have given to any one of these countries.

Mr. KEMP. What advantage does the United States give Japan in her markets and which we refuse to Japan?

Mr. FISHER. None.

Mr. KEMP. Then Japan gets from us just as good terms as she gets from the United States?

Mr. FISHER. Yes. In the treaties between Japan and these four countries and also in the general commercial treaties which Japan has made with some 17 countries, Japan has received practically no tariff advantage; indeed I may say she has received absolutely no tariff advantage. In her relations with the outside world at that period Japan does not seem to have insisted on reciprocal treatment. She gave advantage to these nations without getting equivalent tariff reductions. At that time Japan was very eager to secure a recognition from the European countries of her own rights in her own country. Before that time Japan had given certain privileges within her own territory to European nations; there were treaty ports and in these treaty ports the foreign consuls had certain judicial and almost administrative powers. Japan was very anxious to assert her status as a self-governing country without interference from abroad, and the chief thing which she claimed in these treaties was that foreign countries should cease entirely their consular administrative and judicial functions within the boundaries of the Japanese empire.

Mr. KEMP. That did not apply to the United States.

Mr. FISHER. It did. These treaties did away with all these rights of foreign countries and since then Japan has had entire control within her own territory. That was the special point which Japan desired to secure in these treaties. Apparently—I speak under reserve—she did not insist upon reciprocal trade advantages from foreign powers. That is the condition of affairs to-day in connection with Japan's tariff and foreign trade. These four treaties were made, I think, for a period of 16 years, and will not expire for 6 years hence. During the continuance of these treaties the Japanese gov-

Mr. FOSTER.

ernment seems indisposed to open negotiations for further treaties because Japan would be hampered by the most favoured nation clause in these treaties.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Was there a time limit within which the dependencies of the British empire must accede to the treaty?

Mr. FISHER. Yes. The time within which Canada can accede to this treaty expired on the 16th of July, 1896, two years after the signing of the treaty. There are some articles contained in that specified list in which Canada is largely interested; first, of agricultural products, condensed milk and sterilized milk, hops, leather and leather goods, sugar, and in live stock, horses. In these articles the countries included in these treaties have a distinct advantage over Canada. There are the following manufactured goods in which Canada might reasonably expect to enter into trade with Japan: cotton goods, woollen goods, paper, enamelled kitchen goods, rubber goods, wire of all kinds, hats and caps. There is a list of 60 or 70 articles, but these I have mentioned are the chief in which Canada might fairly expect to trade in the Japanese markets if Canada had a favoured nation treaty with Japan. This matter has been before the government especially since my return from Japan, and since I have been able to explain the exact situation to my colleagues we have at various times considered it. In reference to what my hon. friend from Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Sam Hughes) has said in regard to patents, I may say that one clause in these four special treaties entitles the respective countries mentioned to reciprocal advantages in regard to the patent laws. Japanese patentees have the same rights within each of these foreign countries that the natives of these countries have in Japan in regard to the patent law. There are also several clauses in relation to the shipping trade and coast trade; in relation to the privileges and treatment of the subjects of these different countries in Japan and the treatment of Japanese subjects in these treaty countries. These clauses were at one time considered to be objectionable to us in view of the possibility that Canada might wish to discriminate against the Japanese in Canada. I am happy to be able to say that it is to-day the policy of this government—and I think in that we represent the whole people of Canada—that we should not discriminate against Japanese in Canada, or think or consider of any such discrimination. Therefore in regard to that matter I think I may say we are free from any idea of fear that this clause in the treaty might hamper us in that direction. As a result of discussion and consideration, just lately, the following despatch was sent to the Colonial Office in England, to be transmitted to the Foreign Office, with the object of inquiring whether the Japanese government would overlook the fact that the period