

(17.)

VICTORIA CHAMBERS,

17, VICTORIA ST., LONDON, S.W., 8th February, 1893.

Hon. MACKENZIE BOWELL,
Minister of Trade and Commerce,
Ottawa.

DEAR MR. BOWELL,—I left Paris yesterday morning taking with me the French Canadian Treaty and the letters exchanged for the Foreign Office, copies of which and of Lord Dufferin's covering despatch I am mailing to-day to Sir John Thompson.

I transmit in addition herewith copies of these papers for your information.

I have also to confirm my cable of yesterday in reply to your message of the 4th instant:—

"Your telegram received in Paris Sunday is fully answered by my letters 24th and 25th January which should have reached you yesterday".

I trust the points upon which you seem to have been in doubt are now clear to you.

I should mention that, after signing the treaty, I took the opportunity of saying to M. Siegfried that it would greatly strengthen the hands of the Dominion Government in getting Parliament's approval if the arrangements were adopted by the French Chambers at an early date, as this would effectually silence any criticism which the opposition might make, arguing from the delay which had taken place in connection with the passing of the arrangement between France and the United States, that France should be in no hurry to ratify the provisions of the treaty.

I explained also that another cogent reason for early action was to be found in the fact that the present moment was the time of the year when the annual contracts for timber were generally made, and I added that Canadian timber merchants were in the country now for that purpose, who were getting apprehensive as to their missing this season's trade if any delay on the part of France should arise.

M. Siegfried assured me that the matter should receive their best attention; that he hoped to have the *projet de loi* embodying the treaty laid upon the table within the next three or four days, and that he had no doubt it would pass both Chambers by March 1st, next.

I will take care that you are supplied with copies of the Bill submitted and with the report of any discussion that takes place upon the subject.

On my arrival yesterday evening I found Sir John Thompson's telegram of the 6th which reads as follows:—

"No draft received; no step should be taken towards ratification until we cable approval; at present cannot understand what terms proposed either side," and I have received this morning your cable under:—

"Letters of twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth not yet received; letters of eighteenth and twenty-first only and your telegram were before council when Sir John's telegram was sent instructing delay in ratification of treaty; effect of changes in original draft not fully understood."

I thereupon sent the following message to Sir John Thompson:—

"Had left Paris for London before your message arrived; Treaty was signed at five on Monday, in accordance with instructions from your Government; no change in original draft, except in addition to all the other articles enumerated. The proposals in letters exchanged by Plenipotentiaries are not binding but optional."

I am unable to understand the delay in the arrival of the despatches in question, as I took care to have them mailed on the 25th instant, by the White Star mail steamer. I trust, however, that they have reached you now.

I am yours faithfully,

CHARLES TUPPER.