

in the motherland is concerned, the farmers of Canada are to-day supremely indifferent to it. As it has been reported that the farmers of Canada and the people of Canada are practically taking the mother country by the throat and saying to her, if you do not give us a preference in your markets, our loyalty to the empire will be weakened, and your refusal will tend to disrupt the empire, I mean to say that the man who undertakes to say that of the people of Canada, I care not who he is, is casting an insult on the people of Canada and is not worthy of their confidence. The people of Canada are an integral part of the empire, and whatever any other part of the empire may in their wisdom consider to be best for them to do Canada remains to-day in the empire and is willing to remain a part of the empire.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. May I ask the hon. gentleman to whom he is referring when he makes that statement

Mr. FISHER. I am referring to many representations and discussions which have occurred; I do not care to refer to any particular occasion or individual. My hon. friend knows that that impression has been sought to be created in the minds of the English people on the occasion of the recent election, and by men who have not been so careful to abstain from intervention in that election as I have stated I was and as the public men of Canada generally have been.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to discuss this question. As I have said, it is not a question at issue before any people of the empire so far as I know. The hon. gentleman says the question is not settled in England. I cannot say what the future will turn out; but I venture to say that to-day it is settled with no uncertain sound by the common sense electorate of the British Isles.

I had not intended to prolong this debate. I will only say a word or two with regard to what my hon. friend for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) said with reference to the Japanese treaty. My hon. friend, not intentionally, I am sure, slightly mistook the facts with regard to it. A treaty was made between the British empire and the Japanese empire in 1894, a commercial treaty which, as my hon. friend said, it was open to the self-governing colonies to adhere to or not as they saw fit. That treaty was signed in 1894. For nearly two years afterwards the Conservative government was in power in Canada and did not adhere to the treaty. The two years expired in less than a month after we came into office in 1896. Our attention was drawn to the fact that we still had the opportunity to adhere to the treaty. At that time the question of the favoured nation clause in various commercial treaties as applied to Canada was in some doubt, and there was a discussion

going on in regard to it. Therefore when we discussed this matter we felt that as the favoured nation clause was one of the clauses of the British-Japanese treaty, it was inadvisable for us to hamper ourselves and Canada in future discussions on trade matters by adding another country to those in which the favoured-nation clause as applied to Canada was in force. We therefore declined to take action with regard to the matter. The time expired for the adherence of Canada to that treaty, and from that day until quite recently we had no power to adhere to the treaty. My hon. friend seems to think that it was open to us at any time during the nine of ten years that have elapsed since that time, to become parties to the British-Japanese treaty. That is not the case. After the time had once expired we could not adhere to the treaty except by the agreement, and the grace, I might say, of the Japanese.

Mr. FOSTER. Which would have been accorded at any time.

Mr. FISHER. That might be or might not be. The government took the occasion of my visit to Japan to open up the question to the Japanese government. I brought the question before the Foreign Minister of Japan. Quite favourable views were expressed by him as to the desirability of our entering into favourable treaty arrangements. As my hon. friend knows perfectly well, such negotiations have to be carried on through the imperial authorities. With very little delay indeed those negotiations were opened. They were somewhat prolonged owing to the war in Japan and owing to the question as to whether our new arrangement with Japan should be a simple adherence to the British people or a separate treaty on the same lines. Eventually it was decided that it should be the latter. The result has been that quite recently His Majesty the King and the Emperor of Japan have signed a new treaty—a treaty which is entirely independent of the British-Japanese treaty, but which is practically on the same lines. Speaking from memory, I think I am safe in saying there is no difference in provisions between the two treaties.

Mr. FOSTER. They both have the same most favoured nation clause.

Mr. FISHER. Yes.

Mr. BRODEUR. There is no difference in the responsibility Canada assumes.

Mr. FISHER. No, none in the responsibility of Canada or Japan. I give this information so that the House may be in possession of the actual facts. They are a little different from what my hon. friend himself explained a little while ago.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The hon. gentleman has not explained why the govern-