

His Excellency (that is, the Japanese Foreign Minister), produced a written memorandum, the terms of which were to the purpose that the Japanese government were willing to agree that Canada, in signifying her adhesion to the treaty, might do so with a proviso that the stipulations of the treaty shall not in any way affect the laws of either country in regard to the immigration of labourers, and further, that the treaty should cease to be binding six months after notice to terminate it had been given by either side.

So there was a complete agreement by the Japanese government to the demand of the Canadian government, except that at that time they did not consent that the word 'labourers' should be expanded by adding thereto the word 'artisans.'

The British ambassador, on February 10, 1896, following the suggestion of Canada in that regard, made an inquiry of the government of Japan as to whether or not that which had been demanded by Canada and consented to by the Japanese government would also be consented to by the Japanese government in respect to the adhesion of the other self-governing dependencies of the empire to the treaty of 1894. On the 19th of March, 1896, the Japanese government in reply to this demand of the British ambassador expressed its consent to the adhesion of all the other self-governing colonies on the same terms as Canada, but continued to object to the addition of the word artisans.

On the 15th of July, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent a dispatch to the Governor General inquiring whether the government of Canada would adhere to the Japanese treaty. The Conservative government at that date had just gone out of power and my right hon. friend the Prime Minister had assumed the reins of office. On the 29th of July Sir Richard Cartwright then Minister of Trade and Commerce, submitted a report to the Privy Council. I will not read the whole of that report, but I will read a portion of it, because it is rather important as indicating the reasons upon which this government declined to accede to the treaty with Japan. The report of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, in its preamble, refers to the treaty and to various confidential communications which had taken place with regard thereto, and continues as follows:

The minister in reporting thereon has the honour to submit for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor General in Council, that while he fully approves of the general provisions of the treaty as modified, yet considering the interpretation put by Her Majesty's government as well as by those governments interested upon the intent and meaning of the 'most favoured nation clauses,' as they appear in treaties between Great Britain and foreign countries, which interpretation under existing circumstances would be

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held to be binding upon the Dominion of Canada, and in view of the provisions contained in article V. of the said treaty, and of questions arising as to the exact meaning of provisions contained in articles VIII., IX. and XV., and considering that apparently under the provisions of these several articles the Dominion would be further hampered in any effort that might be made in connection with the negotiation of arrangements under which any concession made for special equivalents granted by reason thereof to or with other countries, he does not deem it advisable that the Dominion should become a party to or be bound by the provisions of the treaty in question. He therefore respectfully recommends that if approved, His Excellency the Governor General be moved to communicate by cable to the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies the substance of the minute of council founded hereon, in order that the Japanese government may be advised thereof with as little delay as possible and within the time limit as per article XIX. of the said treaty.

R. J. CARTWRIGHT.

The language of this recommendation is very confused. There seems to be an omission in one part, because one of the sentences is apparently incomplete; but the purport of it is easily to be understood. The government were oppressed by the fear that the adhesion of Canada to that treaty might hamper them in some way in connection with preferential trade, which was then under discussion. For my part, I do not see what possible effect it could have in the direction indicated by this report, because the Japanese treaty did not embody the provisions contained in the German and Belgian treaties. As every one acquainted with the subject knows, these treaties contained an express stipulation that any concession or advantage granted by Canada to the mother country must be granted also to Belgium and Germany. There was no such stipulation in the Japanese treaty, and for that reason it seems to me no such difficulty could have arisen. Indeed, in the following year the Canadian government itself passed an order in council declaring that Japan was entitled to the benefits of the reciprocal or preferential tariff. The Minister of Trade and Commerce in his report did not take into consideration the labour question at all, but did have regard to a consideration which seems to me altogether fallacious, and which should not have interfered in the slightest degree with the adhesion of Canada to this treaty.

On the 18th of September, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain notified Canada that Queensland has refused to accept the treaty unless given freedom of action in respect to the immigration of Japanese artisans. A further order in council was passed on the 15th of October, 1896, refusing to accede to the treaty for the reasons already stated. On the 21st of October, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain communicated to the Governor Gen-