

the Belgian and German treaties, and also with particular reference to the views on preferential trade which are sometimes expressed by hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House. In order to show the views which the Government entertained last year on that subject, I had taken the liberty of quoting a passage from my own speech. It had been represented occasionally—and my right hon. friend the Prime Minister had been particularly attacked on that score—that the Government of Canada, in return for concessions granted to Great Britain, could and should have obtained certain preferential advantages in the British market. I had quoted from my remarks of last session to show that the view which the Government entertained of that question was that, owing to the strong opinion known to prevail in the mother country on the question of protective duties generally, but particularly on the question of protective duties affecting articles of food, there was no reasonable ground for believing that any such preferential terms could have been obtained in the British market.

What was it that moved the British public as the British public had never been moved before by a colonial legislative enactment? It was that the Government and Parliament of Canada, not demanding impossible conditions, not asking things which they knew or should know the British public were not prepared to grant, not raising any demand of an unreasonable character, not trying to have any huckstering or bargaining in the transaction, but in a free and generous spirit, in recognition of the liberal manner in which England has always treated her colonies, had not been content to talk preferential trade, but had acted preferential trade. It was because Canada had thrown open the door, and had declared that at every custom-house, from ocean to ocean, the goods of the mother country should be admitted on terms of preferential trade. It was when that step was taken that the great heart of the English people was moved on this subject; and so, when the moment arrived when the Imperial authorities were obliged by the terms of the German and Belgian treaties to declare that they were not at liberty to accept the conditions of preferential trade which we offered—when the English people found that Canada had opened the door of her custom-houses in the manner I have described, and that by the conditions of those treaties the Imperial Government were obliged to close the door and refuse the offer—then the British people understood, as they had never understood before, the true character of those treaties, and thus there was secured the public opinion which enabled Her Majesty's Government to take the step from which in former years they had been obliged to shrink. I pointed out, Sir, that if we had simply failed to sustain our ground with respect to the application

of the Belgian and German treaties, that the reciprocal character of our tariff entitled us to claim that the treaties did not apply, and that had been the whole story, there would have been some ground for the claim of hon. gentlemen opposite that our tariff policy in that respect had not been a success. But when we were able to show, as a direct and immediate result of the step which Canada had taken, that the denunciation of those treaties, which had been sought by the colonies for so long a time without success, was brought about, then I say the Government of Canada had a splendid vindication of the policy they had pursued on that question. We all know, Sir, with what joy the view taken by the Government of Canada was received by the English people. We know that while the Government of Canada was backed up, and promptly backed up, by the action of the sister colonies, it was backed up still more strongly by British public opinion; and but for that public opinion, which I claim was the direct outcome of the Canadian policy itself, those Belgian and German treaties would not have been denounced down to the present moment.

I have spoken of the effect of the Belgian and German treaties on our movement for preferential trade; and now I must say something with regard to another class of treaties, those commonly called favoured-nation treaties. Great Britain has treaties with many nations, containing what is called the favoured-nation clause, by the terms of which it is declared that if at any time Great Britain should grant to any third power any commercial advantages, she shall be obliged to grant those advantages likewise to the contracting power. When, therefore, by the action of Her Majesty's Government, it was determined that the Belgian and German treaties must apply to Canada, and that we must admit Belgian and German goods on terms as favourable as the goods of England, then it followed that by the terms of the favoured-nation treaties, we were obliged to concede like advantages to every one of the nations which had a treaty of that kind with the mother country. I have here a statement showing the several countries which have been brought under the operation of the Canadian preferential tariff:

Countries admitted by the reciprocal character of their tariff: New South Wales, British India, Netherlands, Japan.

Countries admitted under the Belgian and German treaties: Belgium and Germany.

Countries admitted under the favoured-nation treaties: France, Algeria and the French Colonies; Argentina, Austria, Hungary, Bolivia, Columbia, Denmark, Persia, Russia, Sweden and Norway, Tunis, Venezuela, Switzerland, Liberia, Morocco, Salvador, South African Republic, Tonga, Spain.

The case of France, Algeria and the French colonies was governed by our own Franco-Canadian Treaty, which had, of course,