

be able to "negotiate new treaties unhampered by any unequal engagements." The British government's gratuitous concession in 1818 giving American fishermen freedom to fish in our national coast waters may be cited as one of the many "disturbing examples" of British favouritism to the United States. The following is the announcement by recent cable of the diplomatic policy of the government of Japan:—

"Count Kamura concluded an important speech in Parliament to-day by announcing that the Imperial government had decided to notify the various powers next year of the termination of existing commercial treaties, to be effective one year after such notice was given. He said that it was the intention of the government to negotiate new treaties 'unhampered by any unequal engagements.' The new compacts, he continued, will be based entirely upon the principle of reciprocity with a view to the free development of international commerce."

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#### *THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.*

The following is the address delivered by Hon. Wallace Nesbitt, K.C., on the above subject, at the meeting of the Bar Association of New York State, held at Buffalo, N.Y., on the 20th ult. He spoke as follows:—

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is the court of last resort for all that portion of the British Empire situated outside the United Kingdom. It sits as a committee of advice to the Crown, and its jurisdiction is founded solely on the royal prerogative.

From the beginning of our national existence the King has been accustomed to act with the advice of the magnates or great men of the realm, and at an early period exercised legislative, executive, and judicial authority, especially of an appellate character, from the shire and hundred courts. I have been unable to ascertain when appeals to the Privy Council were first instituted, but there is no doubt that from the earliest times petitions for justice were presented to the King in Council, especially when