

and into treaties with European powers other than Britain. The treaty with Great Britain provided that the self-governing colonies belonging to Great Britain might become parties to the treaty if they wished. In 1895 the Home Government asked the Canadian Government, which was at that time a Conservative Government, if Canada wished to accede to this treaty. The answer given by the Ottawa Government in 1895 was that we in Canada would become a party to that treaty, if, and only if, Canada were allowed to retain the right to exclude Japanese laborers and artisans. That was in 1895. In 1896, on the 22nd day of June, there came the day when the people of Canada saw fit to put the Conservative party out of power.

A voice: "Hear, hear."

Mr. Cowan: "That one voice is a good index of what the 26th of October is going to bring us." (Laughter. "On the 22nd of June, 1896, Sir Wilfrid Laurier went into power. On October 8th, 1896, Japan agreed that Canada might become a party to the treaty, and retain to herself the right to exclude Japanese laborers and artisans. We all remember that in 1897 the Japanese began to come in in great numbers, and the B. C. Government memorialised Ottawa to pass some law restricting the immigration to this country of Japanese laborers. In the year 1900 it became worse and worse, and in the first four months of that year 4,669 Japanese landed on our shores. Two thousand residents of British Columbia petitioned the Ottawa Government to take some measures to restrict it, or to prohibit it altogether. In 1903 Ottawa was reminded by Consul-General Nosse that Japan was willing that Canada should become a party to that treaty and retain to herself the right to keep out artisans and laborers. But another important event occurred at that time. The Liberal party, till then, had done nothing to implement its pre-election pledges. Every pledge made to the people in 1896 has since been fully, and completely and entirely broken. Realising that it would have to do something to retain the confidence of the Canadian people, the Laurier Government, in 1904, said they would build the Grand Trunk Pacific. On that cry they went to the country, and on that cry alone. In order to advance the interests of this creature of theirs they found it would be necessary to have not only money from the Old Country, but cheap labor. Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Ottawa Govern-

ment got busy, and in June, 1905, they cabled the Home Government: 'We want to become a party to the treaty with Japan.' On the 14th day of July, 1905, the Colonial Minister, Mr. Lyttelton—and I will have something later to say about the attitude of the Colonial Office to Canada in this matter—cabled back: 'What about the stipulation the Conservative Government made in 1895, that Canada should retain the right to keep out Japanese laborers and artisans?' The remainder of that month passed without reply from Ottawa to London. August passed, and on the 5th of September the Governor-General of Canada wired London: 'Our premier is pressing that Canada should be admitted to the treaty with Japan.' Next day Mr. Lyttelton, the Colonial Minister, cabled back: 'What about my cable of 14th July? Do you want to retain for Canada the right to keep out of Canada Japanese laborers and artisans?' That was on 6th September.

On 6th September, when Mr. Lyttelton cabled to Ottawa asking if they wanted to retain to Canada the right to keep out Japanese artisans and laborers, what should have been Canada's reply? Should it not have been 'Yes, we want to keep them out?' Answer me that. (Yes, yes.) Tell me if I am not right in saying that that should have been the answer. We should have said, 'Yes, we want to keep them out,' but the 25th day of September was a black letter day for Canada, just as the 26th day of the present month will be a black letter day for the Ottawa Government. (Applause.) The reply came from Ottawa: 'No, we don't want to retain the right to keep out the Japanese laborers and artisans.' (Shame.) Honest men, and I believe the majority of men are honest, will say that was a fatal mistake, that it was a mistake that will tell against the citizenship of Canada, not only in this generation, but in many generations to come. That mistake has made the Japanese question a momentous question in Canada, a question that will outlive every man and woman in this room, a question that will live long after we have passed from this mortal scene. (Applause.)

We have heard time and again that the Home Government was not looking after the interests of Canada in the matter of her treaties, but here was a case where the Home Government begged Canada to be dignified and reserve that right to protect her laboring citizens which any dignified nation should reserve for herself. But what happen-