

those colonies and possessions the produce of the states of the Zollverein shall not be subject to any higher, or other, import duties than the produce of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or of any other country of the like kind, nor shall the exportation from those colonies or possessions to the Zollverein be subject to any higher, or other, duties than the exportation from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

What is the result of that, Sir? Why, Sir, the moment that treaty is violated, where are the exports of Canada to Germany or to Belgium or to any one of the numerous countries that have the most-favoured-nation treatment? They are shut out, as a matter of course. They are in a position to say "You have violated the treaty." They will call on the Imperial Government to make good all the damage, all the derangement, to their trade, that has arisen in connection with that violation. These treaties with Belgium and Germany operate with equal force while they last, with reference to all the countries with which Great Britain has the most-favoured-nation treatment. What does the hon. gentleman think is to be the result of all this? As if to make assurance doubly sure, this question was asked from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Parliament—I am now reading from the "Hansard" of the House of Commons of England:

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT. I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the commercial treaties with Belgium and Germany prevent, or not, differential fiscal treatment by Great Britain in favour of its colonies, by the colonies in favour of Great Britain, or by the colonies in favour of each other?

I may say that this matter was brought to the notice of the Foreign Office, and they stated that they had obtained the opinion of the law officers of the Crown before giving their reply; and, having taken that opinion, the reply was:

(1) They do not prevent differential treatment by the United Kingdom in favour of the British colonies.

England could to-morrow tax the products of the United States of America going into England and entering into competition with ours, giving us differential treatment without violating those treaties. But the British Foreign Office replies further:

(2) They do prevent differential treatment by British colonies in favour of the United Kingdom. Well, Sir, the Montreal "Witness" says it believes that the law officers of the Crown in England agree with Sir Charles Tupper on this question, but it is greatly relieved to hear that the Prime Minister expressed unhesitatingly his opinion that there is no question at all about the Government having the right to pass this provision.

Mr. WOOD (Hamilton). I suppose Sir Charles Tupper took quite a different view in July, 1892, at the meeting of the Chambers of Commerce in London.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The hon. gentleman, I think, had better reserve any statements he has until I sit down, because I do not propose to have a grave argument of this kind interrupted by any irrelevant statements. I am inclined to think that the hon. gentleman's memory, on this as on many other occasions, has failed him. I am not saying what Sir Charles Tupper ever thought or said. I am saying what the Crown officers of England have stated; and when I say that the present Lord Russell of Killowen, one of the most brilliant lawyers that ever adorned the English bar, and who is now exhibiting equal ability as Lord Chief Justice in Great Britain, was the Attorney General of England at the time, and that he is the man who is responsible for that statement, I have probably satisfied my hon. friend that it is of very little consequence what opinion I may have ever held in view of such a high authority as I have quoted. This matter is one perfectly familiar to this House, one that has been exhaustively discussed, and concerning which there is no possible reason for doubt. The hon. gentleman must know that the Senate and the House of Commons adopted unanimously an address to Her Majesty the Queen, praying that these treaties should be modified so as to take away the obstruction which prevented Canada or any other British colony from treating the products of Great Britain more favourably than those of other countries, and the hon. gentleman cannot fail to know that Lord Ripon, who was then Colonial Minister, replied:

In regard to the third proposition, it seems clear that, under the terms of Article 15 of the Belgian Treaty and Article 7 of the treaty with the Zollverein, the British colonies cannot grant to the products of the United Kingdom any preferential treatment as to customs duties, without such treatment being extended to Belgium and Germany and other countries which have the most-favoured-nation clause with Great Britain.

The reason that that applies to all other countries is obvious. In the most-favoured-nation clause, it is provided that the most-favoured-nation shall enjoy the advantages that any other nation enjoys, and therefore, although the treaties with Belgium and Germany are the only two specific treaties that deal with this question, every other nation is in a position to say to England: What you have granted to Belgium and Germany under the most-favoured-nation clause, applies to us also. If that clause which prevents the colonies from giving a preference to the products of the United Kingdom were removed, it would also disappear from all the other treaties. That is not all. The hon. gentleman knows that I had the honour of negotiating a treaty with France, as a plenipotentiary of Her Majesty, under which Canada obtained certain concessions from France, and in return was to give France certain concessions here. The hon. Minister of Trade