

French Treaty.

important, in view of the fact that the Act passed last session—a copy of which the government has informally obtained—expressly confines the reduction of duties on imports into Canada, to the articles specified in the schedule, to goods of French origin. At any rate that is the opinion of the law officers of the crown, to whom I understand the matter has been submitted. This will serve to explain to you the anxiety that is felt at the Colonial Office with regard to the extension of the concessions to meet our treaty obligations, and to the giving of the benefit of the reductions to Great Britain and to the colonies, which it has along been stated would be done.

I am afraid that any hesitation to do what I have suggested may tend to prejudice our position when, at any time, we may wish to initiate commercial negotiations with other countries.

I remain yours faithfully,

CHARLES TUPPER.

16th December, 1894.

The Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, Downing Street, S.W.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 3rd instant, with a copy of a further telegram which Lord Ripon has addressed to the Governor General, regarding an enquiry of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador as to the treatment of plums from France in Canada.

As explained in my letter of the 4th instant, in answer to a letter from your department of the 27th ultimo, on the same subject, Sir John Thompson is of the opinion that the Canadian Government would prefer not to make any announcement regarding the general application of the reduced duties until the Franco-Canadian Treaty is duly ratified; but he has no hesitation in saying that at the proper time they will be prepared to respect the international obligations by which they are at present bound.

With reference to the extension of the reduction of duty granted to France to "the rest of the British Dominions," Sir John Thompson authorizes me to state that although in this instance any concessions granted to France will be extended to the rest of the empire, as soon as possible after the formalities connected with the ratification of the Treaty are complied with, it is not intended that the action of the government should in any way be taken as a precedent. The Canadian Government is under no obligation to give to the colonies the benefit of any tariff reductions which it may be found necessary to grant to other colonies or countries, and that general principle, on more than one occasion, has been recognized by Her Majesty's Government. At the same time the Dominion Government has always been desirous of bringing about closer commercial relations of a preferential and reciprocal character with the other parts of the Empire, and also with the United Kingdom, and it will be within the knowledge of the Secretary of State that this subject was one of those discussed at the recent conference held at Ottawa.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

CHARLES TUPPER.

EXTRACT from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency on the 27th March, 1895.

On a report dated 25th March, 1895, from the Minister of Trade and Commerce, submitting that the agreement between Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and the President of the French Republic, executed at Paris on the 6th day of February, 1893, has received the sanction of the Parliament of Canada and of the French Chambers in accordance with article IV of that agreement.