

This right of separate adherence, or "contracting in," was shortly to be followed by the complementary right of separate withdrawal, or "contracting out." This was found to be necessary when what must have been the unforeseen consequences of Article 15 of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Great Britain and Belgium of 1862 and Article 7 of the Treaty of Commerce between Great Britain and Germany of 1865 later became apparent. These Articles provided that in the Colonies and foreign possessions of Her Britannic Majesty the produce of foreign States should not be subject to any higher or other import duties than the produce of the United Kingdom, nor should exports from those Colonies or possessions be subject to any higher or other duties than exports to the United Kingdom. The Colonies found that they were unable to grant to the United Kingdom any tariff concessions without those same concessions being available to Germany and Belgium and then to other countries by virtue of most-favoured-nation clauses in other treaties. It was not possible, therefore, to build up any scheme of Empire preference or establish an Empire tariff union as had been proposed by certain delegates at the Colonial Conference in 1887. The matter was again discussed at the Colonial Conference of 1897, and a resolution recommending the denunciation of these Agreements with Belgium and Germany was adopted. Formal notice of their desire to terminate the Agreements was then given by the United Kingdom to Belgium and Germany; the Agreements expired in 1898. The provision for separate withdrawal first appears in the Commercial Convention with Uruguay of 1899, which includes a clause permitting separate denunciation to be entered by the self-governing Colonies. (It will be seen that the rights of separate adherence and separate withdrawal in effect converted what had been bilateral treaties between the United Kingdom and another country into multilateral treaties. Many of the treaties listed in the bilateral section of this publication are of such a kind.)

Nevertheless, the self-governing Colonies were bound by many treaties of long standing to which they had never consented and which were concluded at a time when it was not customary to make provision for their withdrawal. In this category is the Treaty of Commerce with the Argentine Republic signed at Buenos Aires in 1825, which is still in force and is considered to apply to New Zealand. In order