

to facilitate withdrawal by the Colonies from such treaties the Imperial Conference of 1911 resolved "that His Majesty's Government be requested to open negotiations with the several Foreign Governments having commercial treaties which apply to the overseas Dominions, with a view to securing liberty for any of those Dominions which may so desire to withdraw from the operation of the treaty without impairing the treaty in respect of the rest of the Empire."

New Zealand has already withdrawn from a number of commercial agreements between the United Kingdom and foreign Powers which might have bound this country by "inheritance." An instance is the Treaty of Peace and Commerce with Sweden signed at Upsala in 1654, from which New Zealand withdrew by exchange of notes at Stockholm in 1932.

The last instance where the independent negotiation of commercial treaties seems to have been questioned occurred in 1922, when the Canadian Government were negotiating a treaty with the United States concerning the Halibut Fisheries. The Foreign Office, following the practice recognized in 1907 by Sir Edward Grey's despatch, proposed that full powers be issued to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington, together with the Canadian representative. The Canadian Government demurred, however, and maintained that "the treaty, being one of concern solely to Canada and the United States, and not affecting in any particular any Imperial interest, the signature of the Canadian Minister should be sufficient." The United Kingdom agreed, and the treaty bears the signatures only of the Canadian and United States representatives.

The Dominions secured full control over the negotiation of commercial treaties when the Imperial Conference of 1923 approved the principle (already established in practice when the Halibut Fisheries Convention was signed) that bilateral treaties imposing obligations on one part of the Empire only should be signed by a representative of that part, and should not require the sanction of the Imperial Government. In 1928 New Zealand negotiated for the first time independently, an Exchange of Notes establishing a commercial *modus vivendi* between Japan and New Zealand. This Agreement became effective on 9 August 1928; it was denounced by an Exchange of Notes at Wellington on 27 and 28 July 1941. In those countries where the Dominions possessed no accredited representatives, however, United Kingdom plenipotentiaries