

THE NEW JAPANESE TREATY.

PRESIDENT TAFT has sprung another surprise upon the country along his line of pressing to the issue new treaties with our foreign friends without any particular regard to political influence or the traditional policies of the Republican party.

This time it takes the form of a new treaty with Japan!

There is nothing particularly remarkable about this new treaty except for the fact that it recognizes Japan as a modern civilized nation instead of the semi-barbarous power with which the present treaty was negotiated in 1894.

The surprise lies rather in the fact that it was carried to the United States Senate without preliminary warning from the Executive Mansion in these, the closing days of the regular session of Congress, while there is still so much else to be done.

As for the provision in the new treaty—the omission of all reference to limitations of immigration of Japanese into this country—there is no need for alarm on that score even by the people of the Pacific Coast, who are the most vitally interested in this phase of our friendly relationship between Japan and the United States.

No one who knows anything at all of the Japanese character, or the veneer of pride which covers almost every species of the diplomatic relations between two powers of the first order, could expect that Japan would sign any treaty which contained so humiliating a clause as that which would forbid all except a certain class of her citizens from entering the ports of the United States.

Certain it is that the United States would never sign such a treaty even though the alternative be a devastating war.

The situation, so far as Japanese immigration is concerned, will be in no wise changed through the substitution of this new treaty for the old one which was signed in 1894, when Grover Cleveland was President and Walter Q. Gresham Secretary of State.

There is nothing in that treaty which forbids immigration of any character. There are no laws upon the statute books of the United States to forbid this immigration. The fact that it is now being held down to an almost negative quantity is because the Japanese Government itself has undertaken to look after the matter for us and is doing it far better than we could do it with our own immigration service for ourselves.

The Japanese of the undesirable class are not allowed to leave home when their destination is known to be the United States of America.

As far as the other changes in the treaty be concerned—they are only those which the passing of sixteen years and the marvelous changes which have taken place in Japan and in Japan's relations with the rest of the world during that time have made necessary.

We must remember that the treaty now in force between the United States and Japan was signed at a time when Japan had only emerged from an era in which she was considered as a semi-barbarous nation through the defeat of China, and that her treaty with us was signed after she had negotiated similar treaties with all of the other powers of the world.

Japan has made great strides since that time. Not only has she defeated Russia in one of the great wars of history, but she has also made marvelous progress in an industrial and commercial way.

Of all the treaties which she signed after she first sought to assume rank with the civilized nations of the world in the early nineties, ours was the last to be ratified, and is consequently the last to expire.

It has another year of life left, but Japan is desirous of reforming her tariff and financial systems and needs this treaty before she can proceed along these lines at home.

Accordingly, Japan has been urging the United States to hasten this work, and although there is another year of life left in the present treaty, the new one is the result.

We can see no reason why it should not be signed. The Japanese Government has frankly and in a most practical way recognized the fact that a certain class of her citizens are not wanted here and that their attempts to find lodgment here are the cause of unavoidable friction.

Assurances have undoubtedly been given that the Japanese Government will continue to see to it that we are not so annoyed. If not, laws can be enacted that will cover the case.

The treaty has been favorably recommended by the Senate Committee upon Foreign Affairs, following a statement by Secretary of State Knox, and there is no reason why it should not be adopted.