AMERICAN LEGATION,
SANTIAGO, CHILE.

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No. 451. February 17, 1914.

Secretary of State
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The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

Referring to the Legation's No. 447 of February 3, 1914, and preceding despatches on the same subject, I have the honor to report that in a conversation had at the Foreign Office on the 7th instant the Minister read to me a long telegram he had received from the Chilean Minister in Washington, relating the substance of an interview which he had had with yourself on the subject of a treaty with Chile embodying the President's peace proposals, and asking for the instructions of the Chilean Government in the premises. The Minister again expressed unwillingness to proceed to the discussion of details and the signature of a treaty of this sort until the Peruvian difficulty is settled, and reiterated the arguments with which the Department is already familiar.

familiar. I told Mr. Villegas that you had given me special instructions in regard to this matter at my last interview before leaving Washington and fully acquainted him with your views and desire to proceed to the conclusion of a treaty. I pointed out to him that in reality the Peruvian difficulty had no bearing whatever upon the matter; that you were disposed to accommodate the Chilean Government in all matters of detail and that the treaty could be so framed as to avoid any retroactive effect and relate to "controversies or disputes arising in the future." Referring to his unwillingness to sign a treaty with the United States or any other strong power, containing stipulations for arbitration of past or present controversies, when Chile has steadfastly refused and will refuse to arbitrate the Tacna-Arica question with Peru, I argued that Chile should not allow this long drawn out controversy with Peru to interfere unnecessarily with its general foreign policy and to keep this country behind the march of the times. In general, I advanced all the arguments I could think of to induce him to authorize Mr. Suarez to proceed with the negotiation of a treaty. He promised to reconsider the matter very carefully and to take it up with the President and the Cabinet. He left the following day for the sea-shore. The President and other members of the Government are also absent for the summer vacation, so that little can be done at present to advance matters, but I expect to see the Minister either here or at Viña del Mar in the course of a few days and will urge him forward.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Henry P. Fletcher

File No. 710.

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