

to this House and country on the consummation of the Confederation scheme; which he had strenuously supported because it promised, to his mind, the consolidation of British power on this continent, and many substantial benefits to the people of British America, as well as a remedy for many sectional evils and difficulties under which we had laboured for a number of years past. He could not, however, say that he regarded our new constitution as faultless. He regretted that it brought us back to a nominated Upper House. He regretted, also, that it had not been submitted to the people before its adoption. He congratulated the House on the great ability in debate shown by the gentlemen who had not formerly had seats in the Legislature, and who now came as representatives. At the same time he regretted the attitude the Nova Scotia members had assumed with reference to this measure of Confederation. In narrating the wrongs, which, from their point of view had been done to Nova Scotia, he thought that they had rather overdrawn the picture. The people of Ontario had rather been disposed to think that the scheme on the contrary gave undue advantages to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. They had accepted it however in spite of this on account of its manifold advantages to the whole Confederation. It was still undoubtedly an experiment, and he hoped that honourable gentlemen from all sections of the Dominion would have sufficient patriotism to give it a fair and impartial trial. Mr. Bodwell proceeded to contend that Nova Scotia, as a member of the Confederation, would not in any way lose its individuality and local self-government, while at the same time it could not fail to reap many benefits from its connection with the rich and fertile provinces in its rear. He admitted, however, that if the Nova Scotians were determined to fight it out to the bitter end in order to get out of the Union—if they were resolved so long as they were in it, to make the Union a source of weakness instead of strength, he for one would say, let them go in peace. He then proceeded to refer to some of the topics embraced in his Excellency's speech. He said that by assimilating the postal laws Government would reduce the rate of postage on letters, and abolish all postage on newspapers throughout the Dominion. Western territorial extension was a subject deserving of the most earnest attention. It was of great importance that the fertile lands in the West should be rescued from the hands of the grasping monopoly which had long endeavoured to

[Mr. Bodwell (Oxford South)]

conceal their value, and to throw it open to settlement and colonisation. But under present circumstances, and while our future was in some measure unsettled on account of the attitude of Nova Scotia, it was a question in his mind whether Government would be justified in making any great present outlay for opening up that country. As regarded the defences of the country the opposition would heartily join in the adoption of any well considered scheme. He indignantly repudiated the implication which for electioneering purposes had been raised by gentlemen opposite on the loyalty of the opposition by the declaration that Fenians and Annexationists were found in their ranks. He claimed for Her Majesty's opposition in this House that they were just as loyal as the gentlemen who sat on the Treasury Benches, and he claimed for the people of Canada generally of all shades of political opinion that as regarded loyalty they were unsurpassed in feeling by any portion of the British Empire. But while admitting that means should be taken to put the country in a position to defend herself against aggression, he hoped the ministry did not contemplate a measure which would exhaust all the resources of the country in order to maintain a standing army. He hoped Ministers would not forget that we were not yet a great nation—that we were a people of only four millions, and that we had not the resources possessed by great countries for establishing a complete system of defence. He had no fears of American aggression and hoped it would ever be our policy to cultivate friendly relations with the American people. He regretted that so far as appeared from the speech no measures had been taken by Ministers with the view of securing reciprocity of trade with the United States. The abrogation of reciprocity had not produced the injury some had anticipated, but no one could doubt that great advantage would accrue to this country from correct trade relations with the United States. He believed that overtures made to the American Government by the late Minister of Finance never would have received the sanction of the people of Canada or this House. Such a thing as legislative reciprocity was not what we required. What was required was such arrangements as would give stability in the interests of commerce. He then proceeded to advert to some observations which fell from the member for West Toronto last night. When that gentleman said that his party—the party which he declared had swept Ontario—were prepared to give the administration a fair and impar-