

part, and we need never fear that England will withdraw her protecting aegis from the new nationality until it has become firm and powerful enough to maintain its own foothold upon this continent. But honourable gentlemen, to attain that Union among ourselves, which is really strength, it is of the first importance that the utmost freedom should be accorded to all who are seeking to be confederated together, to discuss and arrange the mode in which the principle should be applied, and therefore, it is that we are invited to express our satisfaction at the assurance given by His Excellency that in the discussion which preceded the introduction of this measure in the Imperial Parliament between Her Majesty's Government and the Provincial delegates, that the fullest freedom was allowed in arranging and settling all the details of this important measure. In the same spirit of respect for our privileges are we called upon now to accept the duties which are imposed upon us by the system of Government called into existence by the Act of Union, and I may be permitted on behalf of other honourable gentlemen from the Maritime Provinces, who like myself, are more at home here to express the feelings of unmixed and hearty gratification with which we hail the presence, and anticipate the valuable cooperation of those honourable gentlemen from the Maritime Provinces, whom we have the honour of having for our colleagues in this Senate. To us then, honourable gentlemen, in common with the other branch of the Legislature, will be committed the important task of considering measures for the amendment and assimilation of the laws now existing in the several Provinces relating to currency, customs, excise, and revenue generally, for the adoption of a uniform postal system, and many other important measures which will require our most earnest and careful attention. Many of these subjects would have required legislation, even had Confederation not taken place, but under the new order of things the revision and assimilation of the criminal law, and the law relating to bankruptcy and insolvency, has become absolutely necessary. Another, and perhaps one of the most important subjects alluded to in His Excellency's speech is the Intercolonial railway. Without an Intercolonial railway the Union would be not half complete. With it we shall be brought into such close and intimate connection with each other as to become practically, as well as theoretically, *one people*. Already a great and important trade has sprung up between us of

the inland Provinces and our friends on the sea board, but necessarily confined to the season of navigation. With the Intercolonial railway once established, commercial intercourse, instead of being limited to a few short months in summer will be continued throughout the year, contributing to the growth and prosperity of the whole Dominion, and uniting us socially and commercially as one people. Among the subjects of congratulation referred to by His Excellency, none will be felt to be more truly so to every inhabitant of the Dominion than the fact of the great improvement which has taken place within the last year in the general organization and efficiency of the volunteers and militia. When the Provincial Parliament last met in this place, our volunteers had just been called out to repel the invasion of our soil by bands of miscreants who threatened the peace and safety of the Province at the same time both in its eastern and western sections. The manner in which the force turned out, and the spirit then displayed within Upper and Lower Canada was most gratifying to every Canadian, and plainly showed the misguided wretches who had dared to invade our soil, as well as those who supported and abetted them, that anything like permanent success in their mad undertaking was utterly hopeless. Since these events occurred, the efficiency of our volunteer force has been greatly increased. The short experience of actual service in the field was of immense benefit to them, and it is not saying too much to assert that Canada possesses now, so far as it goes, a volunteer force which for intelligence and discipline, any country might be proud of. Added to this, and as we are reminded by His Excellency, thanks to the Commons of the Mother country, we have now the gratification of knowing that our volunteers have that, without which, bravery and intelligence would avail but little in modern warfare—a thorough and efficient weapon—the whole volunteer force of Ontario and Quebec being now armed by the Imperial Government with a breech loading rifle. But whilst we congratulate ourselves on the present state of the volunteer force, there is no doubt that the circumstances under which we are now placed call for the adoption, as stated in His Excellency's speech, of a more general scheme of militia organization and defence. Well considered, I trust it will be, for I know of no subject of more vital importance which can engage the attention of Parliament, or which will require more careful and earnest thought. That the defences of the country cannot be placed upon a satisfactory footing