

them; and, speaking for my own section of the country, it is a still greater pleasure to know that, though there was no one part of Canada which sent a greater number of volunteers to South Africa than did that portion of Ontario in which I live, every one of them with the exception of one or two who were slightly wounded, returned to their homes as healthy as when they left. It is also a matter of regret that many of the Canadian contingent lost their lives either through sickness or through wounds received in battle. I congratulate our late Speaker on the valour displayed by his son when under fire. I sympathize deeply with the Minister of Militia in the loss of a son whom everybody, so far as I know, respected. He was represented to be a fine soldier, unequalled by any of those by whom he was surrounded, and I sympathize with the Minister of Militia in the loss he sustained of his only son. Others came home wounded, and it will be a long time before we forget the valour of our Canadian boys. They showed the same spirit which actuated our people in wars gone by, when this country was attacked by a foreign foe, that they were ready to lay down their lives in defence of Queen and country. My hon. friend referred to the commonwealth of Australia, the advance which has been made in what I might term the consolidation of the empire. It was my good fortune some years ago to visit Australia when this question of confederation was uppermost in the minds of all Australian statesmen. At that time, whenever it fell to my lot to address a public meeting, or a board of trade, or a chamber of commerce, the first intimation I would receive would be from the present premier of that country, Mr. Barton, to be sure and say something about confederation. 'You in Canada have experienced its benefits,' he would say, 'you know what it is to have the whole of the different provinces joined together, tell us something about it.' In a very humble way I attempted to do so. I pointed out to them the difficulties which presented themselves to Canadian statesmen at the time when they were considering the question of confederating the different colonies, difficulties which did not exist in Australia. They had no race difficulty in that country. They were not separated as we are in Canada. While we have a vast extent of country lying be-

tween the maritime provinces and Quebec and Ontario, and five or six hundred miles to the west of us which rendered it impossible to reach the eastern sections of the country during the winter seasons; they, with their five colonies laid close together, with nothing but imaginary lines dividing them except in the case of Tasmania, which required but a couple of days' sail on the sea to reach it. As the hon. gentleman (Mr. Jones) has pointed out, strange as it may seem to us, there were five different tariffs in force in Australia. Until lately New South Wales was a free trade country under Premier Reid. Victoria had a high protective tariff; Western Australia had another tariff; South Australia another; Queensland another, and Tasmania another. What was more singular was to find that the railways in Queensland were of a narrow gauge. In New South Wales, the railways were of the standard gauge. Passing on to Victoria they had the old wide gauge, so that in travelling from one colony to another, one had to change three or four times both freight and passengers. I have no doubt they will adopt in a very short time the policy which we adopted when we came into confederation when we changed the gauge of the Grand Trunk, and adopted the standard gauge of the continent. Singular as it may appear, the constitution given to the Australian colonies prevented any province from giving a tariff concession to another, without giving it to the whole world. In other words, Victoria could not put an article upon the free list from any of the colonies without doing the same for the whole world. That I admit has been changed, but when I was there discussing this question with them, I found the constitution provided that any concession made to Canada in the way of reciprocal trade, had to be given to the United States and to the whole world. I pointed out that we wanted reciprocal trade with them, on the question of fish and of lumber in particular, but if we gave them reciprocal advantages in Canada, or if we admitted the fruits and other products of their colonies into Canada in consideration of free entry of fish and lumber by them, we would have to compete with the United States, because the Australians were obliged to give the same terms to all other countries. Our neighbours, who have the same varieties