

speech delivered in 1861; and I say that the Constitution which this House, by a majority of three to one, has carried out as far as it is concerned, is, in spirit and letter, that which I then pointed out; and that was not the result of my experience, my thought and my opinion alone, but of the experience, thought and opinion of every man who had studied and taken into consideration the character of the Constitution of the United States. I know that in making that quotation I am committing the error which I have charged upon other hon. members of the House of going back in the debate; but I thought that it was due to myself to read it to the House, because the hon. member for Chateauguay—not in that blunt, plain-spoken style which characterises some hon. gentlemen, but with that soothing, soft language that is so grateful to one's feelings—(laughter)—stated that in proposing a Federal union of these provinces I belied the whole of my political life, and that it was for this reason I made so feeble and ineffectual a speech when I offered these resolutions to the House. As to the feebleness and ineffectiveness of my speech, that, sir, I admit; but as to my sentiments on Confederation, they were the sentiments of my life, my sentiments in Parliament years ago, my sentiments in the Conference, and my sentiments now. (Hear, hear.) Mr. SPEAKER, I submit, with all due deference to your decision, that the motion proposed by the hon. member for Peel is in order; and it is a point, I am free to admit, of such doubt that I ought not to set up my opinion against that impartially given by yourself, for one is very apt to decide in his own favor in a doubtful case. It would have been very convenient for the Government to have it declared out order, and our feelings may therefore have caused us to take a less impartial view than that taken by yourself; and it became our duty to submit to your ruling, unless we believed in our conscience that beyond all doubt you were wrong. Having been declared to be properly before the House, I must say that the motion of the hon. member is altogether inconsistent with his votes upon the question of Confederation. (Hear, hear.) I cannot understand how an hon. member who gave the two votes he did last week upon that question, could make the motion in amendment now under consideration. (Hear, hear.) Indeed I understood him to say that he did not design this as an amendment, but as a separate and independent motion;

and I think it is to be regretted that having made up his mind to support the resolutions I proposed, he did not also support the formal machinery necessary to give them effect; that he did not accept my invitation to propose his views in a separate and distinct motion, instead of in the shape of an amendment to an Address for which he himself voted. (Hear, hear.) When I say that I regret that my hon. friend has taken this course, I must at the same time congratulate him upon the sound doctrine he has laid down in his speech; for if I wanted, if the House wanted, an argument in favor of the measure which the Government has laid before the House, we could not have had it in more eloquent and convincing language than that contained in the speech of my hon. friend. My hon. friend is always eloquent and always convincing, but he could not have been more eloquent or more convincing than when he spoke on this question of Confederation.

HON. J. S. MACDONALD—What a compliment!

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—It may be a compliment, but it is not flattery. A compliment is the statement of an agreeable truth; flattery is the statement of an agreeable untruth. Now, were I to state that the hon. member for Cornwall delivered an eloquent and convincing speech, that would be flattery—(great laughter)—but when I state, in all sincerity, that the speech of the hon. member for Peel was an eloquent and convincing one, I may compliment, but I do not flatter. (Hear, hear.) But what struck me as strange was that while my hon. friend stated to the House that he was not a man to make an unconstitutional motion, or to make a motion committing in any way a breach of constitutional usage, or to propose anything less than a constitutional appeal to the people, he should oppose the motion before the House; for I know that my hon. friend is not the man to commit a fundamental error against constitutional and free institutions. He knew well, and it is much to the credit of my hon. friend as a sound constitutional lawyer, that although he drew his notice of motion hurriedly, it was necessary, when he presented it to the House, to guard against mistake; and he took care that the appeal he proposed to make to the people on this question should be a constitutional appeal by the members of this House going to the polls. (Hear, hear.) But my hon. friend the seconder of