

the impression that the popular voice of the Province was in favor of a measure which had been almost universally condemned. Let these delegates go home, encouraged by all the cheers and plaudits they would receive through the streets of Halifax, but let the mind of these gentlemen and the public mind of England be disabused of the idea that this demonstration was in accordance with the feelings of the great majority of the people of Nova Scotia.—The hon. gentleman concluded by calling upon gentlemen opposed to the scheme to join with him in denouncing the attempt to misrepresent the opinion of the country upon the question.

Mr. LE VESCONTE thought his colleague was perfectly right in bringing this matter to the notice of the house. As it was well known that nine-tenths of the people of the Province were opposed to the question of Union, he thought that this demonstration exhibited very bad taste,—independent altogether of the impropriety of bringing in the Volunteer force, which was organised for the defence of the country, and not to take part in political demonstrations of this kind.

He would conclude by a motion, so as to be in order. The hon. gentleman then read the following:—"Resolved that this House disapproves of the Volunteer organization (as such organization) taking part in any party demonstration."

Mr. TOBIN said he believed this was a free country, where everybody could enjoy his own opinions, and he thought that the citizens of Halifax had a perfect right to get up any demonstration they pleased upon any subject, provided they did not infringe the law. As regards the feelings of the citizens of Halifax, they differed upon this question of Confederation, as the people did everywhere else—there were some warm supporters of it, and some equally warm opponents.

He was happy to be able to say, that the conduct of the citizens of Halifax on all public occasions was temperate and orderly—they insulted nobody; and he did not see how this demonstration could be construed as an insult to this House, or the people of this Province. Sometimes they would show a little ebullition of feeling, when any thing distasteful to their feelings was said, as the hon. gentleman for Richmond had himself experienced on one occasion, and perhaps that was the cause of the temper which he exhibited in introducing this subject.

As regards the question of Confederation, he did not hesitate to say that he was a most enthusiastic supporter of it. He considered it one of the grandest schemes ever offered to a free people; and, to his mind, it was matter of wonder that any one could wish that Nova Scotia should remain in her present position. What was there in this country, he would ask, to satisfy the ambition of her young men,—or what scope did our limited means afford for the exercise of their talents? If honorable gentlemen were satisfied with this state of things, he, for one, was not; and he believed that when the people of this country came properly to understand it, instead of nine-tenths being against it, more than that number would declare in its favor. He did not intend to make a speech on Confederation; but while upon the subject, he would read a letter he had recently received from one of Nova Scotia's ablest sons—one whose career

had reflected honor upon himself and his native country, and whose portrait, he was happy to say, adorned the walls of the Council Chamber of that building. What does he say upon this great subject? The hon. gentleman here read an extract from a letter of General Williams, as follows:

MONTREAL, March 3rd, 1865.

My life has been spent in the service of the Empire, and I have had neither time nor opportunity to mix myself up in your politics; and while I respect every man's opinions in relation to them, I do most sincerely hope that every Nova Scotian will cast away party ties and political aspirations, and embrace the present golden opportunity which passing events, both in Europe and America, now offer for the knitting together of these magnificent colonies into one great and loyal Confederation. We shall then have combined strength, instead of divided counsels and all its consequent evils. The position I hold under the Crown precludes the possibility of my taking an active part in your discussions; but if I were once more in private life, I would zealously preach intercolonial, prompt intercolonial action, throughout the length and breadth of Nova Scotia.

This, he thought, was strong testimony from one who was uninfluenced by the feelings which might affect the judgment of others placed in different circumstances, and therefore was entitled to greater consideration. He hoped that hon. gentlemen would approach the discussion of this question in an enlightened spirit, and would not be influenced by party or local prejudices.

Mr. LOCKE said that the member for Richmond deserved the thanks of the House for bringing this subject forward, and he agreed with him that this demonstration was exasperating and insulting in the extreme to the people of this country. What was the purpose of this meeting to-night? Evidently to mislead the people of England as to the feeling of this country on the subject of Confederation. The steamer that takes these delegates home will also carry the account of this demonstration, and the impression which would naturally be conveyed would be that it reflected the feelings of the whole Province. This he denied most emphatically; and he thought it was the duty of every gentleman opposed to the measure thus publicly to denounce so unfair an attempt to produce a wrong impression. As regards the opinions of Gen. Williams, he would say that they all respected him; but it must be remembered that although a Nova Scotian by birth, he was thoroughly English in all his ideas, and he thought upon this subject as all Englishmen did.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON was surprised at the remarks that had been made, and he could not understand what reference this demonstration had to the Legislature, or how it could be construed into an insult upon the people's representatives. That time last year there was a demonstration of another character, in honor of Shakespeare, and the house adjourned to hear the oration that was then delivered—but this demonstration would not interfere with the public duties of any hon. gentleman. It was to take place at night—those who did not choose to attend could stay away—and he really did not see what right that house had to interfere with the citizens of Halifax in a matter of this kind. He could understand how some hon. gentlemen, who had been hissed down by a Halifax audience, should not entertain very friendly feelings towards the citizens; but he did not think the time of the house should be wasted on such matters.