

the wealth and greatness of the Empire, and I think the people of this country will require higher authority than that of a disappointed partizan for the assertion that the men who have spent the blood and treasure of the Empire, for their colonial possessions, feel any disregard for their interests and the continuance of the connection. But we have higher authority on this point. The debates in the Houses of Lords and Commons are supposed to convey, in the most conclusive manner, the intelligent public opinion of the country—to disseminate through the world the clearest views and ideas of the public sentiment; and every noble lord who rose to speak on this bill vindicated not only the position taken by the Legislature of Nova Scotia, but the conditions upon which this Union is to be effected, but even went further and gave it as his deliberate opinion that the retention of the colonies was essential to the best interests of the British Empire. Even a nobleman whom the hon. member thought he might fairly count upon—a nobleman from whom he perhaps fairly thought he might expect encouragement—told him frankly he could not sustain him because he believed the measure of Union was essential to the best interests of the country, and the Marquis of Normanby even went further and declared to these people's delegates that his residence in this country enabled him to form a pretty accurate estimate of the value of such petitions as those which the delegates pretended gave them authority to present themselves in England on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia.

Mr. ANNAND—I hope the hon. gentleman has authority for what he is saying.

Mr. MACDONALD—The hon member will not deny that the Marquis of Normanby was the friend of the government of which he was the Financial Secretary. It will be remembered that when the hon member was a member of Lord Mulgrave's Government, some 26,000 petitioners approached that noble lord as the governor of this province, and the hon member took the liberty, as the constitutional adviser of his Excellency, of putting on record the statement that these petitions were not worthy of, or entitled to be shown, credit. Lord Mulgrave took the advice of his government at that time, and now naturally feels disinclined to recede from the position he was advised to take. "Gentlemen," he says now, "I hold the same opinion of these petitions that you did when I was Governor. You appear to have changed your opinions: I have not."

The Parliament of England was in session for five or six weeks before the delegates returned, and yet these anti-Union petitions had never been presented. The hon member must have been afraid to present them, or the House of Commons would not receive them. Let him tell us how this is. If the people of Nova Scotia entrusted him as their delegate with the petitions against Union, and he has failed to present them, then he forfeited the greatest trust that was ever reposed in any man.—If he has done this great wrong to the people who entrusted him with so sacred a duty, he should hide in humiliation and shame from an outraged people. But let me call the attention of the people to a most extraordinary and curious fact. What has become of the petitions which we have been told were entrusted to Messrs. Howe and Annand? Who has seen them? Nobody in this country certainly and as far as we yet know no one in England has had that pleasure.

But I can acquit the hon. member of blame on one ground—he was *not* the delegate of the people of Nova Scotia. The people repudiate the connection which the hon. member wishes to fasten upon them. The people are not only loyal to the Queen, but they are intelligent enough to appreciate the arguments by which they are asked to change their condition. I must protest in their name against the belief that they are ready to tear down the Union Jack and associate themselves with the Republic on their borders. (Applause.) But what is the duty of the people in the present crisis? What will the loyal Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Englishmen of his country do? Are they ready to take the extreme step urged by the hon. member for East Halifax to become rebels and traitors because Mr. Annand is a disappointed partizan? I ask the intelligent people of this country to do this—to act as honorable, sensible men should do on every question—to consider it calmly and on its merits. I do not ask them to take the views of the politicians of Canada, of New Brunswick, or of Nova Scotia; but I ask them, and it is fair to ask them, to take the views of the Parliament and people of England, the body of men who, for centuries, have ruled the destinies of the world—who have worked out the free institutions of England in a manner that attracts the admiration of other nations. I ask the people of this country if with the unanimous opinions of such a body in favour of this Union, they are ready to attach any value to the sentiments of the hon. gentlemen opposite. I do not think that the intelligent people of this country are the men to reject the public opinion of England at the dictation of gentlemen who have themselves entertained views directly adverse to those they entertain now.

Let me advert for one moment to another position taken by the hon. member. The House knows that early in the commencement of this question a gentleman standing high in the estimation of the hon. member—who has occupied a