

the public; I have looked at no one man's interests, but I have looked broadly at what I believe will elevate our common country; but if the public sentiment is such as you say it is, the sooner I know it the better. What was the result? These bankers and capitalists brought up their Goliaths, and we met them with the same readiness that I have ever met my public opponents. After several meetings with the ablest men they could bring on the platform what was the result? They say this has been a delegation of lawyers with a doctor to look after them, but when the ablest merchants had an opportunity of confronting these lawyers and doctors, they were silenced in the presence of the largest assemblages that ever met in a public hall in Halifax. Why, my hon. friend (Mr. Tobin) could not get any of these merchants to come on the hustings with himself, and give their time and attention to public affairs, when it was only little Nova Scotia that required their care; but the moment they thought their own interests were in jeopardy they were all up in arms. Then they came out with the politicians who have given all their time and talents to the advancement of the public interests, and after the most deliberate and ample discussion, the hon. member himself in the press admitted that Halifax was against him. The night the discussion was closed—the last night they could be induced to meet us—Temperance Hall rang with enthusiastic cheers in favour of Union. Then I went up into Hants, Kings, Cumberland, Annapoli, and Colchester, and in every place where this question was fully discussed, there was not one of these public meetings at which a single resolution hostile to union could be carried. Under these circumstances, then, am I chargeable with a desire to force this measure upon the people, without learning the public sentiment? I made a mistake last night, it appears, in respect to the number of names in the petitions presented to this House. I have asked the clerk to count them up, and I find, after all the excitement and agitation, and all the public lectures that have been given—after all the misrepresentation that has appeared on this subject, the whole number of names only amounts to 6,267. In a fortnight, on a previous occasion, when the public sentiment was agitated, spontaneously 26,000 electors sent down their petitions here, because they really felt opposed to a measure which the Government had in contemplation. I ask the people of Nova Scotia if, under such circumstances, I had not the right to believe that I was sustained by the public sentiment of the country.

In opposition to this measure may be found a few politicians, some political partizans, who are ready to abase their country and themselves for the support of a few capitalists who could not make me their tool; but I will go into every county and I shall find the best men there at my back, who have been the standard bearers of the Liberal party in Nova Scotia—the men who have given Mr. Howe in the past the more cordial support. But what more do I find? The clergy of this country, from the highest to the lowest—

Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists—of all denominations, and I stake my public character upon the assertion, display the most remarkable unanimity upon this subject. Representing, as these gentlemen do, the education, refinement, and intelligence of a community—influencing, as they do largely, the people among whom they live—can I have any doubts as to the sentiments of the best informed of the people on this question?

The hon. member has complained of the manner in which the subject has been discussed in England. When, a year ago, I ventured to say to the House that the press, the public men, the statesmen, and the Parliament of England were favorable to this question, how were we met? With the sneers and innuendoes that have now been heaped upon the august Parliament of Great Britain? No; we were told that all that was necessary was to explain the whole question in England in order to set the matter right. When that was done, they would obtain all they wished for. Now this measure has been discussed in the Parliament and press, in a manner that few questions were ever discussed before. The ablest men that could be found to oppose the union have done all they could to make their views and opinions known. What is the reason that when this question came to be discussed in Parliament it was treated as it was? This bill was first introduced into the House of Lords because the Earl of Carnarvon wished to have the honour of introducing it. In a very full House, when he introduced the bill, he met with the most astonishing support. Noble lords in opposition rose in rapid succession to support the Government. Lord John Russell gave it his warm approval; and the last man I could be expected to influence, the Marquis of Normanby—a gentleman whom political conflict has made my opponent—in the discharge of his high duties as a peer of the realm, gave that question the most unequivocal and emphatic support; and having had a better opportunity than any man in the British Parliament of understanding the state of affairs in these Colonies, he told the House of Peers that he did not believe that the public sentiment of this country was opposed to the union. Lord Carnarvon explained that there had been no election here on this question—that the constitution did not require such an appeal; and the whole facts having been explained to the House with the greatest accuracy, there was not a single man to oppose the bill. The *Times* of the next morning placed in the hands of every member a clear statement of the position of this Province, and of everything in relation to this matter. When the Peers found that Lord Stratheden had lent himself to statements they could not sustain, they got up, one after the other, and left the House. Mr. Howe heard Mr. Watkins' statement to which reference has been made, and he was in constant communication with Mr. Bright and if any incorrect statement was made, Mr. Howe is responsible for not having corrected it. Therefore I say, if the House of Commons was misled by a single remark—Mr. Watkins having misunderstood the time at which the Union dis-