

Mr. KILLAM supposed that the object of the demonstration was to produce the same impression upon the minds of the British people as had been produced upon Mr. Cardwell, viz.: that the feeling of this country was in favor of Confederation. As that was at variance with the facts, it was right that the matter should be brought before the house, so that any erroneous impression might be removed.

Mr. LEVESCONTE said that when some years ago a volunteer company took part in a demonstration in honor of the election of Lord Palmerston, attention was called to the fact in the House of Commons. The only excuse that was given on that occasion was that the affair had occurred through inadvertence. He contended that the volunteers, which were supported by the people's money, had no right to take part in any political demonstration whatever. Particularly careful should they be to give their countenance to a scheme to which seven-eighths of the people were unfavorable.

Mr. TOLIN called attention to the programme, and justified the action of the citizens. He thought if the hon. member was going to load his gun with patriotic powder he should try and aim at something more tangible than the present matter.

Hon. PRO. SEC. said that he rose for the purpose of moving that the house pass to the order of the day. He would not feel disposed to interfere with any desire of the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Miller) to favor the house with those rhetorical outbursts of indignation with reference to the very contemptible character and position that Halifax occupied in the Province of Nova Scotia. That hon. member had rendered himself famous for such exhibitions, and it would be a pity to interfere in the slightest degree with any anxiety that he might have to place the city in antagonism to the country. It was not the most laudable ambition in the world for any one to endeavor on every possible occasion to excite unpleasant feelings between different sections of the country. The hon. member's talents and exertions might be directed to a far worthier object. It might not be worth while, perhaps, noticing the hon. member's attempts to show the people that he had taken them under his patriotic care, and in fact to relieve their apprehensions of being trampled down by Halifax influence; but when a resolution was moved which, if passed, would place the house in a false position, it was time that he (Dr. T.) should briefly call attention to the real circumstances of the case. He would state, at the commencement, that the first time he had seen the programme was at eleven or twelve o'clock when he happened to take up one of the morning papers. It was well known that there existed in this city an organization called the Union League. It was not of a secret character; its meetings were called by public notice in the newspapers, and every man favorable to the cause of union was invited to attend them. Most of the leading and influential and respectable citizens of Halifax were engaged in that organization for the purpose, as they believed, of promoting the best interests of the Province of British North America and of Nova Scotia especially. No one could deny that even if the sentiments they held were favorably entertained by only one-tenth of the people, yet they had a perfect right to use all legitimate means of inculcating their opinions without hindrance on the part of any one.

He would confess that he had read with some little surprise the fact that the Volunteer Companies were to take part in this demonstration. The question at issue, it was true, was one that perhaps more than any other, would warrant the Volunteers giving it their countenance. It was known that a delegation was on its way from Canada to England for the purpose of discussing with the Imperial Government the question of defence, the Reciprocity Treaty, and Confederation. Gentlemen who had the Union cause at heart, felt that they would be wanting in their duty if they did not show this delegation, on its arrival that night, that there was in the City of Halifax a large and influential body of citizens who were favorable to the Confederation of British North America. If it was possible that there could be an occasion when the Volunteer organisation would be entitled to turn out, it was when gentlemen were touching our shores on their way to the Imperial Government to provide for the defence and security of British North America. Divided, however, as public sentiment was in this country on this great question, he did not think it advisable that the Militia, or Volunteer, or Artillery organization, should turn out in their uniforms. Since this debate had commenced, without any communication on his own part, he had received an intimation from Captain Chearnley, who commanded the organization, that any members of that organization might attend the demonstration as citizens, but not as Volunteers.

It might be attempted to array the country against Halifax, but no one could prevent the fact being made known that in the political and commercial metropolis of the Province there was a deeply rooted public sentiment pervading the minds of the most leading and influential men of all classes, that the future prosperity of Nova Scotia, as well as of all the Provinces of British North America, depended on the success of the scheme of Confederation. When you read the programme for that evening's celebration, you saw that not only the most highly educated and intelligent members of the mercantile community, but the bone and sinew of the city, the artisans and the working men, proposed to lend their aid in paying due honor to those who were laboring to promote the best interests of British North America at this critical period of the world's history. He could not understand why the feelings of some gentlemen were so excited on this subject.—Was there a man who would deny that an overwhelming body of the citizens of Halifax was in favor of Union. When the meetings in respect to that question were held in the city, Temperance Hall was densely packed, night after night. So strong was the current of public sympathy in favor of Union, that, at times, it was almost impossible for the friends of Confederation to proceed, so enthusiastic were the plaudits that met them. When it was attempted to make the House believe that nine-tenths of the people of this country were against Union, a liberty was taken with the true facts that was unworthy of any public man. Although great exertions had been made, and large amounts of money expended all over the face of the country, only fifteen or sixteen thousand persons had been persuaded to sign the same, or get some one else to sign them—for very many are signed by a cross—to petitions