

duce them. And yet the Minister of the Interior tells us that these documents, if produced, would relieve the Government of all responsibility, and exculpate them. If the Government had any documents that would relieve them of their responsibility and of the consequences of their actions, neither the people of Canada nor the members of this House are so green as not to know that they would be submitted to Parliament. What are the Government afraid of? We have moved for these documents and we are anxious to see them. If they will exculpate the Government, bring them down. But we know that that is not the case. The fact of the matter is, this Government is treating this House as they treated Louis Riel. They decided to hang him before they had a report of the medical commission, and now they want to get at the hands of Parliament a snap verdict of acquittal without producing the evidence, because the evidence will incriminate themselves. The people of the country, when called on to pronounce on the question—and I do not care how soon, in the light of the prevarication of the Government, in the light of their concealment of documents, in the light of the fact that they have mutilated documents and eliminated from the report material portions of the report itself, in the light of the fact that by their own organs and some of their leading men they have been accused of being the authors of, and having provoked, the rebellion—how soon the Government will appeal to the country; and I venture this opinion, that among those who will not come back will be the hon. member for Montreal by way of Cardwell.

Mr. DESJARDINS. Before being called on to record my vote on the amendment proposed by the hon. Minister of Public Works, I must explain why I shall oppose it. I am ready to pronounce judgment on the main question. I have enough information to form a sound judgment upon it, but political friends in our Province, who are here, refused, when called on to give their opinion by their electors, to give it, for the reason that they wanted to give fair play to the Government, and to give the Government every occasion of giving to the House all the documents and information they had in reference to this question. They said: We do not want to condemn the Government hastily. Moreover, at the beginning of the session the Government organs asked us not to press any motion bearing on this question, but to give fair play to the Government and to afford hon. members who had not formed any opinion—because they pretended they had not sufficient information—an opportunity to obtain information. Also upon the very legitimate demand of the leader of the Opposition, asking us not to press any motion in amendment to the Address, because he wanted the documents which the Government had promised to bring down, before being called upon to judge the question. I thought it was only fair that we should allow those hon. gentlemen an opportunity of forming their opinions, and it was in accordance with the desire expressed by them that we took the stand we take. The hon. Minister of the Interior (Mr. White) said, speaking against the motion brought by the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Amyot): Why bring those petitions asked for by this motion; they have no bearing in any way; they have had no influence on the question? Well, this is the first time that I hear it stated that petitions sent by the people to the Government or to the House of Commons are to be treated in this way. My impression was that petitions were one of the forms of constitutional means to bring to the Government and the House of Commons a knowledge of public opinion, and I thought they should be better received than the Minister of the Interior seems disposed to receive them. I do not wonder now that the petitions sent to the Government from the North-West for so many years received so little attention. The Minister of the Interior, pointing to the French-speak-

ing members, referred to the meetings that took place in the different parts of Quebec, and spoke of the burning of effigies as disgraceful to the cities where those burnings took place. Well, he who resides in Montreal ought to be better versed as to the burning of effigies on the Champ de Mars. I condemned myself the burning of effigies which took place after the 16th November; but these were not the first burning of effigies that took place in Montreal. The hon. gentleman ought to have remembered that in 1849 effigies were burned in Montreal, and something more than effigies; and if those burnings took place, I can say that they were not the work of French Canadians, but of the Tories of that time.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). Whom you have supported ever since.

Mr. DESJARDINS. No, Sir.

Mr. BOWELL. And they are now the Grits.

Mr. DESJARDINS. The population of Montreal had that example in view probably when the burning of effigies took place. As for us, we are satisfied with constitutional meetings—regular, quiet and loyal meetings—to give expression to our opinions, and we thought it our duty to do so. I think it but fair that when such motions as my hon. friend from Bellechasse (Mr. Amyot), and other motions of that kind are made, they should receive at the hands of the Government the credit and attention they are entitled to.

Mr. AMYOT. When we had the pleasure and honor of hearing the Minister of Public Works speech, he told us, after having stated that the place for discussion was not the hustings, thereby exhibiting the scandalous spectacle of a Ministry divided among themselves—he said the proper place for the discussion was in Parliament, and then he added:

“But to-day, here before the representatives of the people, before our peers and judges, that are to give their verdict either for or against us, we can be heard, and we intend to be heard, and we intend to explain the position of the Government, what we have done, why we did it, and also the reasons why we should be sustained by this House.”

Since many days we have heard of petitions sent in to the Executive against the commutation of Riel's sentence and in favor of his execution. We want to know if there were any such petitions. The blue book does not give even a list of those petitions or the names of the petitioners, and it is certainly a mistake on the part of the hon. member to say that the blue book contains them. The blue book does not say there were any petitions calling for blood, and my motion asks for the production of those petitions. What is the reason that is given for withholding this information? The Government says it is against the public interest. Does the Government believe that in order to understand exactly what is in the public interest, we must hold a portfolio? Does the hon. gentleman think that, when we are members, selected by counties to represent them in Parliament, we are not judges of that also? And when the Government have said they would give all the information to the House, does the hon. gentleman think that he can withdraw that statement to-day? In the name of my friends from the Province of Quebec, I beg of the Minister of Public Works to use his great influence and his position as leader of the House, in the absence of the Premier, to obtain that information. I ask it on behalf of the members from the Province of Quebec, who form part of the majority of peaceful men in this Dominion; I ask him to give us the information as to those who love peace and harmony in this Confederation, and those who will only be satisfied when their thirst for blood is satisfied. We want to know who are in sympathy with the finding of the jury, and who are those who will have blood in any case, notwithstanding the finding of the jury. We want now, for later it will be