

THE OPPONENTS OF UNION.

If, then, there are such prospects before us, why, it may be asked, is it that so many men of large means, and of high intelligence, look upon the approach of Confederation with undisguised apprehension? The question is easily answered. These men are now in possession of the field; they are masters of the situation, and do not care to run the risk of being pushed from their stools. The path has been smooth and easy for them; and although there has been but restricted progress, and more restricted openings for native industry and enterprise, they have been sufficiently large to afford profitable employment to their capital, and give them considerable wealth. But Union will bring competition even to capital: it will introduce an activity, a life and energy, which will likely enough disturb rudely the old ways by enlarging and liberalizing them. But even they will reap the benefit, if they choose to adapt themselves, as I have little doubt they will, to the new state of things. Our banking institutions ought not to be a practical monopoly; and if it should happen that the merchant will have to be satisfied with a smaller percentage of profit, he will more than recover himself by the increased scale of his sales, while his customers will enjoy the benefit. The mercantile policy in Nova Scotia has hitherto been large profits and small sales—an excellent one for the few, but an insuperable obstacle to all enterprise and general progress. It is a system under which no country, as a country, has ever yet prospered.

I have now, I think, shown that Union is in itself a principle of strength, and that wherever it has proved a weakness, or can prove a weakness, it must have arisen—must arise—from a wrong or improper adjustment of the parts. I have proved by facts and figures that, in our case, at any rate, the bargain in its commercial aspect has been as fair as it could well be made; and thus, all other things being equal, I am justified in concluding that the blessings and the benefits that have under the same circumstances flowed to others, will also accrue to us.