

place on the constitutional debate. I was prevented from replying to the hon. Attorney General (who spoke up to the hour we had decided upon to devide,) and several other members who had dealt very freely with me in the course of that debate. But immediately after the division was taken, and the hon. member from Pictou moved his amendment, I occupied the attention of the house for an hour and a half in answering the arguments of gentlemen supporting the Government, and placing my political views before the country on questions of public policy. To this hour, Sir, not a journal in the city, (the *British Colonist* excepted,) ever alluded to the fact of my having spoken at all. After returning to the Country, and finding that the speech did not appear in its proper place in the Parliamentary reports, I addressed a note to Mr. Nugent, and also a gentleman supposed to conduct the *Halifax Sun*, informing them of that fact, and that Mr. Otto Weeks, junr., had in his hands a correct report of the speech in question, and requesting them to publish it, which received no attention. Now, Sir, in the report of yesterday, the hon. and learned member for Annapolis is made to say:

"Sir, in the action of the Executive there is an exhibition of moral Sampson, slightless and shorn of his strength—supported only by braggadocia."

No such observation was made. He said that the Attorney General was the Delilah who had shorn their moral Sampson of the Maine Law of its locks and left it powerless. The Hon. Mr. Johnston is made to say that the Government exerted their powers so far against the Maine Law that some of their supporters were so disgusted that they would not appear to support the final passing of the bill. He did not say anything of the kind, but charged the Government with having prevented their supporters from counting their support.

Not only is the speech of the hon. Attorney General pruned of the strongest expressions and points which it was thought inconvenient to let go to the country, but as I have before said it is incorrect as to fact. That gentleman is made to say in reply to Mr. Johnston—"The hon. learned gentleman taunts us about not sustaining the Municipal Incorporation Bill," when we all know he said nothing of the kind, as Mr. Johnston had not named the subject at all. I shall not refer to the petition on the talk from the Editor of the *Sun*, complaining that their reports have been withheld from that journal, contrary to the contract, but will deal with what when it comes up. I feel assured that I will be sustained by this house in enforcing the faithful and efficient performance of the contract for reporting, or

the withdrawal of the grant made for that purpose.

I have made these remarks that measures may be taken to ensure the strictest impartiality and accuracy in the reports.

I will now, Sir, address myself to the subject more immediately under consideration, and in the outset beg leave to offer my acknowledgements to the hon. and learned Attorney General for having last session constituted me "leader of the opposition." For that I am to him under the most profound obligations—but still more so that yesterday he should have by a breath relieved me of the onerous duties and responsibilities attached to that leadership. The policy of his course is well understood, he has sought to distract the attention of members of the opposition from the consideration of the proposition before it by this matter of a purely personal character. But, there was one sentiment he expressed to which I heartily assent; in speaking of the opposition that hon. and learned member said—

"But sir, whatever banners they may own as their standard, whoever the leader under whom they may act, the moving principle, the guiding impulse, will still be the same."

Yes, the opposition are ranged under one banner and animated by one guiding impulse. They are seeking to relieve the country from its present embarrassed position; they are aiming at the establishment and perpetuation of principles of far greater moment than any question of a mere personal character. Sir, no man envies the hon. and learned Attorney General,—for myself I would infinitely prefer being the last joint in the tail of the opposition than remain the nominal leader of the government no sufferance,—prostrate before this house, with bended knee, begging from a despotic master leave to continue to exist. (*Laughing and applause.*) Sir, I can well understand the feelings under which the speech of the hon. and learned member from Annapolis was delivered yesterday; for I have studied his character well. He, unlike some other hon. gentlemen, is not nerved and animated by the consciousness of power,—no emotions of swelling pride induce him to trample under foot every kindred feeling—but it is when a principle is to be contended for against fearful odds that he buckles on his armor, and springs to the fight—nerved by the dictates of duty. But when backed by numbers and triumphant in position he exhibits those generous and ennobling emotions which only truly great minds feel, and which great men know how to appreciate.

The hon. and learned Attorney General said that taunts were not used by the Government at the last session. Did he not in the usual bland and gentlemanly tone that