

tleman is entirely mistaken. He is thinking of the time when I privately urged upon him, as Prime Minister, the necessity of taking steps, and prompt steps, for ascertaining what was the mind of the Washington Government, and whether or not a new treaty could be negotiated. He explained to me the obstacle that stood in his way; and, though I considered the difficulties in his way ought to have been overcome, yet the circumstances were such that I never blamed him.

HON. J. S. MACDONALD—We did all we could in the way of making representations to the Imperial Government. And what have honorable gentlemen opposite done since?

HON. MR. BROWN—We have been acting in the same direction ever since, and I think it would have been well for the interests of this country if we had not been fettered as we have been.

HON. J. S. MACDONALD—Well, I say that this explanation of the Honorable Attorney General is more explicit and much more elaborate than the explanation we had from him in the first instance. In commenting upon that first explanation, I hope I did not make use of unparliamentary language. But I am entitled surely to draw deductions from the announcements made to us from the Treasury benches, and I am not bound to mince matters if I feel alarmed at the consequences which may result from the giving of this dreadful blow to the Constitution we have so long lived under. It is surely not unseemly that I should feel keenly on this subject, and that, before the Constitution to which I am sincerely attached is swept away, I should express that indignation which I may have expressed somewhat warmly this afternoon. (Hear, hear.) Much stronger language has been expressed on the floor of this House, when the motives of the honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches have been questioned by honorable gentlemen whose intellect perhaps as far transcends mine as day outshines night. (Laughter.) But I think the country and the House will yet thank me for stating, even in the earnest manner I did, my alarm in connection with this matter. At all events, I have a sincere belief in the truth of what I stated. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. DORION—The explanations given to-day by the Honorable Attorney General West are fuller than those at first given; yet I am afraid that there is still some misunderstanding. The Honorable Attorney General West stated that the scheme for the

constitution of the local governments would be submitted to the House next session. Is it the intention of the Government, or the delegation when in England, to press the scheme upon the Imperial Government without the concurrence of the Lower Provinces? If the Lower Provinces do not come in, will the Government press the adoption of the scheme so as to apply it to the two provinces of Canada? For, if I understood the Honorable Attorney General West, he said that next session they will bring in the constitutions of the local legislatures. Now, if they are not to press the scheme at all, there would be no necessity for local legislatures. (Hear, hear.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—I desire simply to state, as I have said before, that after these resolutions are carried, those who go to confer with the Imperial Government will doubtless adopt such steps as they think are best suited to us. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

MR. RANKIN—I feel obliged to the honorable member for Cornwall if he elicited the explanations just given, though I cannot approve of what he said otherwise. To me the intelligence is most acceptable. (Hear, hear.) I learn that it is the intention of the Government to go on without regard to the action of the Lower Provinces, and to press this measure through without being influenced by the action of New Brunswick. I hold that it is common sense for us to remember that we are considering the interests of the people at large, and this scheme, if acceptable to the people of Canada, is acceptable to four-fifths of the people of British North America.—(Hear, hear.) It must be evident to the meanest capacity—to make use of the words of the Honorable Attorney General West a few minutes ago—that one of two destinies awaits us: either we must extend and strengthen British influence and British power on this continent, or these provinces must, one by one, be absorbed by the neighboring republic. (Hear, hear.) That has been my opinion for years, and it is my opinion still. However, Mr. SPEAKER, I simply rose for the purpose of soliciting more distinct information upon one point on which I have heard nothing said, although the explanations may have been given before I came into the House. I wish to know what is the intention of the Government with reference to the volunteers now on the frontier,—whether they have provided the means to maintain this force, if required, beyond the 1st of May next?