

tributions under the proposed scheme for that important object.

ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD said the Government would cheerfully give an answer to Hon. Mr. HOLTON's questions. As to the local constitutions of Upper and Lower Canada, when subordinate provinces of the Confederation, Government proposed to submit to the House a scheme or schemes to be considered by members of Upper and Lower Canada, respecting the constitutions of their respective governments. But the action with regard to them must be the action of Parliament. That action would only be asked after the Confederation scheme was adopted, for until it was settled that there was to be Confederation, it was idle to discuss what should be the constitutions of the several provinces. As to the school question, it had been announced by Hon. Mr. GALT, at Sherbrooke, that before Confederation took place, this Parliament would be asked to consider a measure which he hoped would be satisfactory to all classes of the community. There was a good deal of apprehension in Lower Canada on the part of the minority there as to the possible effect of Confederation on their rights on the subject of education, and it was the intention of the Government, if Parliament approved the scheme of Confederation, to lay before the House this session, certain amendments to the school law, to operate as a sort of guarantee against any infringement by the majority of the rights of the minority in this matter.

HON. A. A. DORION—Will it apply to both Upper and Lower Canada?

ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD said he believed, as regarded Upper Canada, the matter would remain in *statu quo*, as the present law there was quite satisfactory to the minority. As regarded the Intercolonial Railroad, the resolutions shewed precisely what was the intention of the Government in that matter. The railroad was not, as stated by Hon. Mr. HOLTON, a portion of the Constitution, but was one of the conditions on which the Lower Provinces agreed to enter into the constitutional agreement with us. The North-West question he would leave in the hands of the President of the Council, who understood it thoroughly, and could, no doubt, give Hon. Mr. HOLTON a satisfactory answer. With respect to the defences of the province, they were now the subject of negotiations with the Imperial Government, and the fullest information would be given to the House on that subject. He might mention that the Maritime Provinces, recognizing the peculiar position of Canada geogra-

phically, and its danger in case of hostilities, had most cordially agreed that any sum this Parliament might vote for the defence of Canada, they would undertake their share of.

MR. WALLBRIDGE asked if he was to understand that a guarantee was to be given in the Constitution of the Federal Government to Roman Catholic separate schools?

ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—I only said this, that before Confederation is adopted, the Government would bring down a measure to amend the school law of Lower Canada, protecting the rights of the minority, and which, at the same time, I believe, would be satisfactory to the majority, who have always hitherto shown respect for the rights of the minority, and, no doubt, will continue to do so.

HON. MR. BROWN said Hon. Mr. HOLTON had done no injustice to him in supposing he held now precisely the same sentiments on the North-West question he formerly did. He believed it of vast importance that that region should be brought within the limits of civilization, and vigorous measures had been taken to ascertain what could be done with that view. It was not long since he returned from England, where the matter was very fully discussed, and he had not as yet had an opportunity of submitting the thing so fully to the Council that a decision could be had upon it, but he had no doubt that in a very short time they would be able to communicate to the House ample information as to their intentions.

The discussion was then made regular by Atty. Gen. MACDONALD formally proposing that an Address be presented to Her Majesty.

HON. MR. HOLTON said that the universal law of Parliament with respect either to bills or addresses looking to the disposal of public property or funds, or additions to the burdens of the country, was that the measure must originate in Committee of the Whole. This Confederation scheme disposed of the whole assets of the country, and established burdens which were to be applied to the purposes of the provinces of New Brunswick and Newfoundland, besides paying eighty cents per head of population to all the various provinces. This appropriation of property indeed ran throughout the scheme. Not only so, but the usage on all similar occasions was to introduce the measure in Committee of the Whole. The act of union between England and Ireland was originated in this way, and so was our own act of union in the legislature of Upper Canada under the management of Mr. POULET THOMPSON, who was well known to be an able English parliamentarian. The