

parliamentary practice, force us to go into committee or require us to discuss any one of these resolutions by itself. It was then quite open to me, according to the usage of the House, to make a motion for an Address to Her Majesty for the purpose stated, and it was not as a favor to the Government that the arrangement was made to discuss it as if the House were in Committee of the Whole. On the contrary, it was a concession of the Government to the minority in the House; for I stated, of my own mere motion, that although I had a right to proceed in the ordinary manner with the Speaker in the chair, and to restrict honorable gentlemen to a single speech in accordance with the rules that govern debate—that although this was my undoubted right according to parliamentary practice, yet, for the purpose of allowing the fullest and freest discussion, I suggested that the same rule should obtain as if the House were in Committee of the Whole, when every member could speak twenty times if he felt so disposed, and present his views fully on all the points of the scheme. That was the proposition made by the Government; it was a fair, liberal, even generous one. But how were we met by honorable gentlemen opposite? We were ready to proceed with the discussion at once, and to present the subject to the House without delay. But it was stated that that would be unfair—that the members of the Government should first make a statement, and allow it to go to the House and country, so that neither should be taken by surprise in a matter of so much importance, and that honorable gentlemen might have the fullest information upon which to make up their minds. We did make our statement, and when asked for a week's delay in order that these speeches might be fully considered, we consented to it. Supposing that after this postponement the debate would go on at once, we gave hon. gentlemen opposed to the scheme a whole week to consider our remarks, to prepare themselves for debate, to work out objections to our arguments, and pick out all the flaws they could find in the scheme itself. We did this because we thought it fair, and because we believed hon. gentlemen were sincere in their professed desire to have the fullest information upon the subject. Well, the debate began, it has gone on now for three weeks since that postponement, and

as my hon. colleague the Hon. Provincial Secretary has said, it has dragged on wearily, with no prospect of an early termination. And how have we been met by hon. gentlemen opposite? Has it been in the same spirit that actuated the Government throughout the debate? We asked them to come forward, and honestly and fairly, in the presence of the House and country, to discuss the scheme; but instead of so doing, they have deliberately trifled with the question and wasted the time of the House. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. HOLT—No, no!

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—The hon. gentleman as a man of honor cannot deny it, as a man of candor he cannot deny it; and if he should deny it, his character as a man of honor and candor would sink in the estimation of this House. (Hear, hear.) I say it distinctly that this was the plot of hon. gentlemen opposite, to delay the consideration of this subject. Their policy was to wait, like MICAWBER, for "something to turn up," to see what would happen favorable to them in New Brunswick, to learn what would be done in Nova Scotia, and to embrace every pretext of delay that presented itself. The hon. gentleman was playing, deliberately playing, a trick. He talked about a base trick having been played upon the Opposition, but was it not a base trick in him not to discuss this question, but to put it off upon every possible excuse, to interrupt hon. gentlemen when they discussed it, making innuendoes, suggesting motives for delay, trying to disparage the scheme and ourselves in the estimation of the House and country, and getting others to say what he would not dare to say himself. (Hear, hear.) That was the plan of the hon. gentleman. He complains of not being able to move an amendment, but the Opposition attempted to move none. It was friends of the Government who offered the only amendments yet presented. The policy of the Opposition was just this—they wished to spend the whole of March and the best part of April in the general discussion upon my motion; and then, when they could do nothing more to nauseate the House and disgust the country with the subject, when they had wearied the members and made the reporters sick with their talk—(laughter)—they were to spend the remainder of April, all May and June, and run the debate well into summer, upon the amendments they intended to propose