

subject of the defences of the country. I admit to the full the importance of that subject, but I maintain that as yet we are not in a position to give the proper weight to the arguments of my honorable friend and of other honorable gentlemen on that question, that in fact we are hardly in a position to consider the subject at all; and I do maintain that it is hardly fair to introduce it as an element into this discussion, so long as the Government withhold from us the official information which may be assumed to be in their possession on that subject. I have risen, therefore, to express the hope that the honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches will see the propriety of submitting to this House the fullest possible information on that subject. (Hear, hear.) I am sure my honorable friend who has just taken his seat will himself admit the force of what I am now urging, and that we cannot give the consideration he asks to that branch of the general subject of Confederation without having the amplest information that the Government can give us with regard to it. I would, therefore, express the desire—which I am sure is shared by a large number of the honorable members who sit around me—that at once, before we proceed further in this debate, this important information should be submitted to the House in a distinct form. (Hear, hear.)

HON. J. S. MACDONALD—My honorable friend from Chateauguay (Hon. Mr. HOLTON) has very properly called the attention of the Government to the necessity of having laid before this House information as to the amount we shall have to appropriate for the defences of the country. It is well known that Imperial officers were sent out some time ago to make a survey, and report on the defensive condition of this country, and the best points at which to build fortifications—the *points d'appui*, where in cases of disaster we should be obliged to take shelter, if the enemy drove us into our garrisons. The report of those officers was made before I left office, more than a year ago. Surely during that time, with such a loyal administration as that composed of the honorable gentlemen now on the Treasury benches, the secret of the amount of the appropriation that will be required at our hands has not been kept from them. (Hear, hear.) It appears to me that this is a branch of the question to which we must address ourselves, before we are in a condition to deal satisfactorily with the general subject. It is a principle of the British Constitution that the appropriation of any

moneys from the taxes paid by the people, shall be at the disposal of Parliament. We have a right therefore to know, at the earliest possible period, before we go blindly into this scheme of Confederation, what we are called upon to appropriate in connection with this matter. (Hear, hear.) And there is another point on which, as yet, we have had no information, beyond what was given to-night when the hon. member for South Oxford answered me in his curt way. The Government may as well at an early date—I mean the portion of the Government who will have to speak for Upper Canada, and who are especially responsible for the acts of the Administration with reference to that section of the province—give their attention to the question how far the Catholics of Upper Canada are to be placed in the position of maintaining their schools and claiming their portion of the public funds, and enjoying generally the same privileges which are to be enjoyed, according to the declaration of the Honorable Attorney General East, by the Protestants of Lower Canada. I express no opinion at this time as to the propriety of the demands made by the Protestants of Lower Canada, or as to what I shall be prepared to do when that question comes up. Nor do I express now any opinion as to the propriety of giving the Catholics of Upper Canada more rights than they have got. But I say the Government ought to address themselves at once to the question, whether they are to make the same provision for the Catholics of Upper Canada, as for the Protestants of Lower Canada. This is a matter which comes home to the feelings of the Catholics of Upper Canada, and they have here at this moment delegates to express their opinions. No doubt, to enforce what they conceive to be their own rights, they will use as a lever the proposition to extend to the Protestants of Lower Canada the privileges which they claim as their due. And depend upon it, that when the time comes for the Protestants of Lower Canada to ask what they assert to be their rights, they will be expected to stand up also for the Catholics of Upper Canada, and to deal out to them the same justice which they expect the Catholics of Lower Canada to extend to them.

HON. MR. BROWN—My honorable friend from Cornwall does not of course agree himself with the views he is now urging. I think he ought to wait till the parties he speaks for ask him to express their views, or allow them to get as their advocate one who does share their views. He surely does not want to urge