

his amendment in his hand, and can, as he usually does, make as able a speech as if there were half-a-dozen amendments proposed to it. The whole scheme, in fact, is as much in the hands of the House, and as fully before it and open to discussion, as it was on the day I moved its adoption. All this motion will do is to prevent honorable gentlemen opposite playing the trick which I have spoken of—drawing the discussion away from the main question before the House, getting up debates upon the powers of the General Government and of the local governments, upon an elective or an appointed Legislative Council, and upon all sorts of side issues upon which the changes would be rung night after night and week after week, through the spring and summer, till the House became weary with the surfeit of talk, and the country disgusted. (Hear, hear.) That, sir, is the aim and object of honorable gentlemen opposite, but I hope this House will not be so foolish as to fall into the trap they have laid, and I know honorable members are fully aware of the designs of these honorable gentlemen. They cannot complain that they have not had an opportunity of moving amendments. They have had three weeks to do it, and they have not yet moved one or given notice of one. Then, sir, what will be the consequences, on the other hand, if the previous question is not carried? If it is rejected, and the main question is not put, Confederation is defeated. And I will at once inform the House that to vote that the main question be not put, will throw Confederation over forever, and forever destroy the last hopes of a friendly junction between the colonies of British North America. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. HOLTON—Why the last hopes?

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—Because if we reject now the agreement come to by all the governments of all the provinces, we can never expect to get them to meet again to make another.

HON. MR. HOLTON—But one of these Governments has ceased to exist.

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that the governments of all the provinces are pledged to the scheme, but that the legislatures have not yet expressed themselves upon it. If any of them appear now to be hostile to it, that feeling may disappear when it is fully explained to them. Even the Hon. Attorney General PALMER, of Prince Edward Island, may himself become convinced of its desirability,

and vote for it. We cannot say how those legislatures will vote, but what we propose to do is to lay our action before the Imperial Government, and ask it to exercise its influence with the other colonies in securing the passage of the scheme. And I have no doubt that if the Mother Country gives friendly advice to the sister colonies in that kindly spirit in which she always gives it, if she points out that in her view this scheme is calculated to serve, not only our interests, but the general interests, welfare and prosperity of the Empire, I am quite satisfied that the people of those colonies, whatever may be their local feelings, will listen at all events with respect, and perhaps with conviction, to the advice so given by the Imperial Government. I have no doubt, indeed I am satisfied, that if the Imperial Government gives that advice, it will be in the spirit of kindness and maternal love and forbearance, and that if England points out what is due to ourselves as well as to the Empire, and shows what she, in her experience and wisdom, believes to be best for the future interests of British North America, her advice will be accepted in the spirit in which it is offered, and sooner or later with conviction. (Cheers.) For all these reasons I think the members of the Government would be wanting in their duty in this great strait, this great emergency in our affairs, if they did not press for the decision of this House as quickly as possible. (Hear, hear.) Why, there is the question of defence, which the honorable member for Cornwall admits to be of the most pressing importance, that requires immediate attention and demands that further delay in dealing with this scheme should not be allowed.

HON. MR. HOLTON—What has defence to do with this scheme of Confederation? The honorable gentleman has stated, over and over again, that it has nothing to do with it. (Hear, hear.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—The honorable gentleman is mistaken. The two questions are intimately connected.

HON. MR. HOLTON—Why, when we asked for information the other day as to what it is proposed to do in the matter of defence, the honorable gentleman said that that was a different subject from this altogether. (Hear, hear.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—The honorable member for Hochelaga certainly did move a series of resolutions asking for information upon this subject, which we refused, because they were offered for the purpose of