

get a little more than we now have of what is called a feature of the British Constitution, in the composition of the Legislative Council. It has been spoken of as an impropriety, almost treasonable, to hint at it as a bait thrown out to gentlemen who have been elected to the Legislative Council for a fixed period, that by voting^a for this scheme they may get themselves made legislative councillors for life. If in this scheme provision had been made, in regard to the members of this branch of the Legislature, that they should hold their seats, not for life, but say, for a mere period of five years, I rather think there would be few found here very mealy-mouthed on the subject; and when it is offered to men who, like ourselves, will have to go before their constituents within a few months, or years, at most, that they are to be made legislative councillors for life, the bait, I think, is not a very small one. (Hear, hear.) We are told, too, on the face of this scheme, that the choice is to be made by the present governments of the several provinces; but of course with perfect fairness to the Opposition in each province! Most satisfactory! Each Opposition is to be treated with perfect fairness—"it is so nominated in the bond." We hear of a minister of the Crown in one place, addressing his neighbors, and telling them they may depend on it, that when Her Majesty comes to make the selection, the utmost respect will be paid to the rights and privileges of the elected members, so that their elected member will have the fairest chance of becoming a life member of the Confederate Legislative Council. In another place, on the other hand, we hear from another minister of the Crown that those gentlemen who hold patents of appointment for life may feel quite as safe, for certainly their claim to be retained in their present position is sure to have full weight. Further, in Lower Canada, each locality is told that it may rest satisfied it will not be overlooked, for each is to be represented in the Legislative Council by a gentleman residing or holding property in it; and both origins and both creeds alike are thus to have representation and full protection. Another point upon which there has been a like pleasant sort of ambiguity kept up, is as to who are to make the future nominations to this Legislative Council. Viewing this part of the scheme as a matter of principle, one would have thought that these future nominations must be made on the

Federal principle. It was not expressly so stated; it is not (as we are at last here told) it is not so meant; but till we were so told, everybody who thought one way said that the resolutions meant it to be that way, and all who thought the other way conveniently found the resolutions to justify their way of thinking. Well, turning then to matters which affect this House, the same sort of thing is still observable. Representation by population is given to meet the grand demand of Upper Canada; but the people of Lower Canada are assured, in the same breath, that it will not hurt them; that their institutions and privileges are made perfectly safe; that they will even have as many members in the Lower House as before, and that they will, in a variety of ways, be really better off than ever. A delightful ambiguity is found, too, upon the point as to who will make the future apportionments of the constituencies. The leader of the Government, in explaining the scheme the other night, admitted that the decennial revisions of our representation districts are really not to be left to the local legislatures, but are to be dealt with altogether by the Federal Legislature. Till then most people, I believe, had held the contrary; but all had admitted the text of the resolutions to be equivocal, and each party had of course interpreted them as it wished. The postponement of the local constitutions is of the same character. Everyone is given to understand that the thing will be made to work to the satisfaction of all; each is promised that he shall have it as he wants. Those who hold to the principle of responsible government, as commonly understood, in the local administrations are, of course, told to expect a lieutenant-governor, with a cabinet, and, presumably, two branches of a local legislature. Those who would have two legislative bodies, without a responsible ministry, are told that very well it may be so. Whoever prefers one legislative body, hears that it is beyond a doubt there very well may only be one; and those again who, even with one House, do not wish to see responsible government in the provinces, are assured that the machinery is likely to be very simple; that each province will probably have a lieutenant-governor, with a few heads of needed departments, and one House, and that so, no doubt, the affairs of each province can be managed most economically and