

opening the volume of history, the honorable gentleman has depicted to us all the republics of ancient and modern times gradually succumbing under the pressure of the discord, civil wars and revolutions to which that form of government had given birth. The argument was specious. It is only to be regretted, as regards the honorable gentleman, that the honorable members of the Quebec Conference, convinced that, to make sure of the future, it was advisable to consult and to study the past, adopted monarchical principles as the basis of the new Confederation, instead of founding it on those democratic doctrines which proved so fatal to all the confederacies referred to by the honorable gentleman. Confederation is the obliteration of Lower Canada, the honorable member for Lotbinière has further told us. I am far from being of that opinion. Lower Canada has since the union beheld, for a period of twenty-four years, her institutions at the mercy of a majority different in origin, in religion, and in language. Under Confederation, on the other hand, Lower Canada will have the administration of all she holds most dear—her nationality, and I am rejoiced to find in the speech of the honorable member for Hochelaga some few words which abundantly prove my proposition. "It will be impossible," says that honorable gentleman, "for the Federal Government ever to interfere in any legislation relating to the institutions or laws of Lower Canada. If they attempted, the fifty or sixty members of French origin, uniting as one man, would very soon put a stop to any legislation, thus compelling the majority to afford them justice." (Hear, hear.) Lower Canada, it is true, will be in a minority in the Central Legislature, but we must not lose sight of the fact that the interests of the Lower Provinces are less identical with the interests of Upper Canada than they are with those of Lower Canada; and, moreover, our position in the centre of the state also adds to our influence. On the other hand, responsible government is essentially a government of parties; the national French-Canadian representation will have all that influence which fifty or sixty votes given to one side of the House or the other can exercise; the one party or the other will count upon the votes of the French-Canadian section, just as in England the Protestant majority in Parliament is not made up without the votes of the Catholic minority. Thus the position of Lower Canada will be a strong one, and much to be preferred to that which it holds under the existing union. Other

honorable members have assigned as reasons of their opposition "the increased expenditure entailed by the proposed union." To this objection I have only, Mr. SPEAKER, to make the same reply which I have already given on another occasion. Will not Confederation, whilst remedying our sectional difficulties, contribute to the progress and advancement of these colonies? Will it not increase our means of defence, securing at the same time to Lower Canada the exclusive control of its institutions, its laws and its nationality? If to this proposition we are compelled, after careful consideration, to reply in the negative, then, undoubtedly, we ought to reject the scheme; but if, on the contrary, our answer is in the affirmative, we ought to accept it, even although our expenditure should be increased, for it becomes the means of safety—*Salus populi suprema lex*. Certain other members object "that the Legislative Council is to be subject to the nomination of the Crown." For my part, I see no ground of objection in this; on the contrary, I look upon it as an argument in favor of the scheme. I have always been opposed to the elective system in that branch of our Legislature. We have but one class in our society, we have no aristocracy. Why, then, should we have two popular chambers? In my opinion, it would have been wiser to abolish the Council than to make it elective. In the spirit of the English Constitution, the Legislative Council is a tribunal for purifying the legislation of the Commons, for weighing in the balance of experience the probable consequences of their legislation. Those advantages, Mr. SPEAKER, will soon disappear under the elective system, which will cause the members of that body to lose that perfect independence requisite for the proper fulfilment of the high mission entrusted to them by the Constitution. In addition to this, the trouble of elections, the expenses which they entail, and the other difficulties inseparable from those great struggles, will very often prevent the entrance into that honorable body of the most competent men, whom the disgust inspired by all the difficulties I have just referred to, will induce to avoid public life and to remain in private life. For these reasons and in the public interest, I rejoice to see the return to the nominative principle. (Hear, hear.) I should have liked to have replied to some of the other arguments urged by honorable members of the Opposition, but I perceive, Mr. SPEAKER, that I have already taken up a good deal of time, and I consider that in view of the lateness of the