

Government in Newfoundland, the only Liberal Government concerned in the nomination of the Upper House being that of New Brunswick, where there is a Liberal Administration, whose fate depends on the result of the elections now taking place in that province. A similar scheme would never have been adopted by the Liberal members from Upper Canada, the people of which section, to the number of 1,400,000, with those in the Lower Province, making in all 2,500,000, have been controlled by the 900,000 people of the Maritime Provinces. Have we not been told in set terms that it was the Lower Provinces which did not want an elective Legislative Council? If, instead of inviting to a Conference the delegates of the Lower Provinces, our Government had done what it engaged to do, namely—had itself prepared a Constitution, it would never have dared to draw up a proposal like this now laid before us; it would never have proposed a Legislative Council nominated for life, with a limited membership, and which has to be named by four Tory Governments. Reckoning 15 to 20 years, as the average of the time each Legislative Councillor will hold his seat, a century would elapse before its composition could be entirely changed! We will have, thus, a Legislative Council lasting for ever—at least as regards this, and the next generation—controlled by the influence which to-day preponderates in our Government and in those of the Maritime Provinces; and are we going to believe, as the present document promises us, that a government like that which we possess now, will employ itself in getting the Opposition represented in the Legislative Council? (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I thank the delegates for their solicitude as regards the Opposition, but I rely but little on their promises. Did we not hear the Honorable Attorney General West say the other day, turning towards his supporters: "If I had the recommending of the nominations, I would advise the choice of the most qualified—but of course, of my own party. (Hear, hear.) It would be done in this way, sir; and, if this precious scheme is put into operation, we shall have a Legislative Council, divided in the following manner: for Upper Canada, we shall probably have Liberals in the proportion of 3 to 9, for I suppose that the honorable member for South Oxford (Honorable Mr. Brown) has made enough sacrifices to deserve at least this concession, and as his friends constitute a fourth of the Executive Council, I suppose we shall have also one-fourth of the Executive Councillors for Upper Canada, Liberals.

Hon. Attorney General MACDONALD—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON—Exactly 25 per cent.

Hon. Mr. DORION—Yes; precisely 25 per cent. Besides, we shall have for Nova Scotia ten Conservatives, from Prince Edward Island four more, and four from Newfoundland. Thus we are to have eighteen Conservatives from the Lower Provinces, who, added to the thirty-six from Canada, will make fifty-four Conservatives, against twenty-two Liberals, supposing that the ten

Legislative Councillors from New Brunswick will all be Liberals. Now, supposing that the average of deaths amounted to three per cent. in a year, it would need a term of thirty years to bring about a change in the character of the majority of the Council, taking it for granted that the additions which might be made to it would be taken from the ranks of the Liberal party. Yet that would be scarcely possible. In some of the Lower Provinces there would be from time to time Conservative Governments, and there might be also a Conservative Government in Canada. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) And the present generation will have passed away before the opinions of the Liberal party will have any influence in the divisions of the Legislative Council.

Mr. MACKENZIE—That makes no difference.

Hon. Mr. DORION—The hon. member for Lambton says that makes no difference! The honorable member is ready to accept everything, but for those who are not so well disposed, the difference would be that we would be bound by this constitution which will permit the Legislative Council to throw obstacles in the way of all measures of reform wished for by the Liberal party. If the hon. member for Lambton thinks that that makes no difference, I will take the liberty of differing from him, and I think that the Liberal party generally will differ from him also. The Government told us that they were obliged to consent to the introduction of certain measures in the project of Confederation which did not altogether please them, so as to come to an understanding with the Lower Province delegates, and that they bound themselves to cause the scheme to be adopted by this House without amendment. Does the hon. gentleman not see a difference now? If the two Canadas were the only interested parties, the majority would act as they pleased, would examine minutely the Constitution, and erase all measures which did not suit them, and a proposition such as that relative to the Legislative Council would have no chance of being adopted—it is too short a time ago since this House voted, by a crushing majority, the substitution of an elective Council for a Council nominated by the Crown. In fact, the Council named by the Crown had so fallen in public estimation—I do not say so on account of the men who composed it, but still such was the fact, that it exercised no influence; it was even difficult to assemble a quorum of members—a change had become absolutely necessary, and up to the present time the elective system has worked well—the elected members are equal in every respect to those nominated by the Crown. Well, it is just as public attention commences to be bestowed upon the proceedings of the Upper House, that we are to change its constitution to give it the place of the same one we so short a time ago condemned. I said same Constitution—I mistake, Mr. SPEAKER, we want to substitute for the present Constitution one much worse than the old one, and one for which it is impossible to find a precedent.