

pay, in Belgium, at least one thousand florins of direct imposts, patents included.

Is not this last provision of the Belgian Constitution a hundred times more conservative than all the provisions of this scheme, which the honorable member condemns? What! no one can be a senator in Belgium without paying \$500 direct taxes, over and above indirect taxes, municipal and local impositions of all sorts. And the honorable member for Hochelaga calls that a popular House! Who but men powerful and rich in titles and fortune can enter it? (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. DORION—What is the qualification of the electors of the Belgian House of Representatives? Is it not much higher than elsewhere?

HON. MR. CAUCHON—It is the same for both Houses. And this is an argument against the honorable member; for if, in a country like Belgium, in which every fourth person you meet is a beggar, it has been found requisite to make the elective franchise and the electoral qualification of the senators so high, it is a proof that he has made a bad selection of examples; it is a proof that the tendencies of Belgium are conservative. Why, then, should we adopt another course in Canada, where there is not one beggar in a thousand inhabitants?

HON. MR. EVANTUREL—Will the honorable member for Montmorency allow me to interrupt him in his argument in relation to the qualifications and appointment of the legislative councillors. Like him, I am quite of opinion that the conservative element ought, of necessity, to be the basis of the Legislative Council, to counterbalance the popular element. This principle governed the constitution of the House of Lords in England, that of the Legislative Council in Belgium, and that of every well-organized representative government. It is that element of conservatism which I desire to see introduced into the Constitution of the Confederation now before us; but the honorable member for Montmorency will allow me to remark that the whole of his argument applies only to the antagonism which might arise between the two branches of the legislature, in a monarchical government like that of Belgium, which is not based on a Federative system like that now submitted to us by the Government. But we have not only to avoid the differences which might arise between the conservative and the popular elements;

we have also to protect the rights of the several provinces which are to form part of the proposed Confederation. That is the all important question we have to consider. We have accorded the principle of representation based upon population in the House of Commons of the Federal Government, and that is without doubt a great sacrifice; but we ought only to make so important a concession on the condition that we shall have equality of representation in the Legislative Council, and the right reserved to ourselves to appoint our twenty-four legislative councillors, in order that they may be responsible to the public opinion of the province and independent of the Federal Government.—Without this essential guarantee I affirm that the rights of Lower Canada are in danger. For my part I am ready, on behalf of Lower Canada, to give up her right to elect directly her twenty-four legislative councillors, although the retention of the elective principle might perhaps be the surest means of preserving our institutions; but I am anxious that the new Constitution now proposed should give us adequate guarantees that the legislative councillors to be appointed for life should, at all events, be selected by the Local Government of Lower Canada, which would be responsible to the people. These not ill-grounded sources of anxiety I should like to see removed. I would bespeak the earnest attention of the honorable member for Montmorency to this point, which is of the very highest importance to us Lower Canadians; and I hope that he will pardon me for having interrupted him, and that he will be in a position to give me such an answer as will dissipate the anxiety which I am aware has been evinced on this subject.

HON. MR. CAUCHON—The honorable gentleman has not understood me; my object has not been to attack the representative system of Belgium as being too conservative; on the contrary I use it as an argument in my favor, because the qualification there is so high, that hardly one in six thousand can be found who can aspire to the post of senator. Parties having been unable to come to any understanding at the time of the revolution of 1830, and neither the hereditary peerage or the life peerage having been able to prevail, the most conservative principle next to these was adopted, viz., that of a large property qualification. All those who have drawn up constitutions, either theoretical or for practical purposes, have never omitted to provide counterpoises to prevent, on the one hand, too