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and devoid of meaning. Real property no longer discharges any duties to the State which are not discharged equally by personal property; and the holder of a sum in railway stock, or (still more palpably) the holder of a sum in the public funds, has just as great a stake in the welfare of the country, and offers as sufficient a guarantee in every way for his integrity and patriotism, as the holder of an equal sum in land. Even in England this fact has been perceived, and not only have we accepted chattel interests in land as property qualifications, but the recent projects of parliamentary reform have contemplated the admission of stock and deposits likewise. And assuredly it is not on the ground of special certainty or stability that, in a colony like Canada, political distinctions in favour of real property ought to be drawn: for there are few places, we apprehend, where the value of land and houses is more uncertain and variable. The value of real property in Toronto, for example, has fluctuated enormously within the last twenty years. Any kind of stock or funds would, in truth, have been a far more solid possession. But there seems to be a notion that because land itself is stable, property in it, though it may be the wildest of all possible speculations, is stable also: a mere illusion, as we need scarcely observe.

The object, however, of this peculiar provision is no doubt to be explained simply by the desire of imitating the British constitution. It is an attempt on the part of the framers to create a territorial aristocracy, so far as their circumstances will permit. Perhaps they are scarcely aware how adverse those circumstances are, or how truly their instinct guided them when they refrained from styling their Legislative Council a House of Lords. In England we have a social and proprietary order of men really eminent for wealth as the holders of large, entailed, and in many cases ancestral, estates. Out of this number the bulk of our peers are chosen; and they have a real qualification as members of a great plutocracy (for that is the true designation of the

body), independent of their mere nomination by a Minister of the Crown. In a colony such as Canada, no such proprietary or social order exists; no set of men there are really eminent for wealth; no property is ancestral or entailed; and the riches even of the wealthiest are but the creation of the day, which in the strange vicissitudes of colonial trade may again vanish on the morrow. The highest property qualification which the framers of the Constitution venture to name is for their purpose almost a nullity. Twenty thousand a year strictly entailed is wealth if it is not merit. Four thousand dollars a year is neither wealth nor merit. The qualification of persons who have no higher territorial position than this will rest upon the minister's nomination, and upon that alone.

It is constantly said by the advocates of the House of Lords that it is a representative institution; and this statement is true in a very important, though not in the most popular sense. The members of the House of Lords do represent, and most effectually represent, the interests of the great class of landlords, upon the support of which, as well as on their personal wealth and position, their authority is based. In a colony there is no such class, and therefore the strength derived by the House of Lords from its virtually representative character would be entirely wanting to the Legislative Council.

It will perhaps be said that in the case of a House not hereditary, but consisting entirely of members nominated for life, there will at all events be no "tenth-transmitters of a foolish force;" and that personal merit will supply the place of territorial and social distinction. But, unless a complete change comes over the political spirit of these communities, the chief seat of power, and the scene of the great party struggles, will always be in the popular branch of the Legislature, and a minister will not be able to afford the removal of his most effective supporters into the Upper House. The most he will be able to afford to that calm repository will probably be respectable mediocrity and