

lative Council, would be sufficiently great to prevent the possibility of a continued antagonism between it and the other branch, if unhappily it should arise. The demise, the resignation and the loss of seat from other causes, would do this, and afford the Government of the day the opportunity of so reconstructing the House as to bring it more in harmony with public sentiment. He did not say it was desirable that at all times the Legislative Council should be a reflection of such opinion, though it was, of course, desirable that it should not continue violently to shock it. He would have that House conservative, calm, considerate and watchful, to prevent the enactment of measures which, in its deliberate judgment, were not calculated to advance the common weal. Any more rapid changes in the composition of the House than those he now indicated, he did not consider wholesome or desirable. From the history of the present Chamber for the last few years, it would be seen that such changes, whether among the life members or the elected members, were much more frequent than might be generally supposed. According to the present elective system twelve members went out and twelve came in every second year. Supposing that a collision had taken place between the two branches of the Legislature, and that it was desirable to bring the Council more in accord with the representatives of the people, under this system, the same members might be returned, not because of the soundness of their political opinions on the topic which had brought about the collision, perhaps without the slightest reference to it, but from their position and their exertions. One might come back because he was a wealthy man and had a social position, which gave him a large influence, another because he was an able canvasser and well versed in election tactics, and others from causes equally removed from the political question upon which the two Houses of Parliament were in antagonism. But suppose the twelve seats were at the disposal of the Government, and that an irreconcilable difference had existed between the two Houses, would they not have the opportunity of redress at once and thoroughly by bringing in twelve members who would harmonise better in opinion with them and the country? Undoubtedly. Well, within eight years the changes among the life-members had been as follows:—When the House was made elective, there were 40 such members in it; two years afterwards, at the call of the House, the number was found reduced to 31; two years after

that again to 26; in two years more, to 24; and to-day to 21, of which 21, one honorable member was now seriously indisposed. In eight years, then, the number had been diminished by half. Then changes nearly as great had occurred among the elected members. There had been 24 removals and changes by death and otherwise among these 48; and it should be remembered, that as the elected members came in by twelves, two years apart, the average time had been only four years. This was sufficient to show the opportunity which, even among younger men than the life-members, the Government would have of keeping the House in accord with the true interests of the country, or of overcoming any unfortunate misunderstanding between the two branches. [The honorable member here went minutely into a statement of the changes effected by death, acceptance of office, and defeat at elections, among this class of members, which, however, we do not deem it necessary to specify.] These changes had certainly altered, to some extent, the complexion of the House, and the future would, no doubt, be like the past in this respect. The Conference had taken all these things into consideration, and wisely concluded, as he believed, that while the chances of collision were much less under the nominative system, the opportunity of restoring harmonious action was infinitely more prompt and effective, and that there was no such danger of collisions between the two branches of the General Legislature, as to make it a bar to the principle of nomination, which principle, in their judgment, offered the compensating advantage he had endeavored, in the earlier part of his observations, to point out. He sincerely hoped the House would concur in the views he had expressed, and would accept the measure now before them, as one which he believed calculated to promote the best interests of this country and the other provinces, and to hand down to posterity a constitution analogous, as nearly as might be, to that of the empire under whose protection we had the happiness to live—a Constitution calculated further, as he was fully convinced, to perpetuate the connection between these colonies and that mighty nation, to the mutual benefit of both. (Hear, hear, and applause.)

HON. MR. VIDAL here inquired from the honorable member why it was that the selection of Legislative Councillors from Lower Canada, in the Confederation scheme, was to be left to the Local Government of that section of the province, while no such provision existed with