

superannuation ; and, if a more powerful man sometimes demands a nomination as the price of support at a political crisis, this will not materially mend the matter. Cromwell, as Protector, finding his Parliament difficult to manage, thought to alleviate the difficulty by creating an Upper House of nominees, into which, to give it respectability, he was obliged to transfer his most eminent supporters. The consequence was, that the Lower House became utterly uncontrollable, and the Parliament broke up in a storm.

"The elective constitution of the Upper House," says Mr. Thring, in his recent pamphlet on Colonial Reform, "is a matter of necessity. No other way can be devised of preventing gratings between the two Houses, that may retard, and at last put out of gear, the whole machinery of government. No system of nomination will create a House of Peers, with its traditions, its experience, and its ancient prestige." It is believed that, where nominee councils have been tried in the colonies, the result of the experiment attests the truth of Mr. Thring's position.

The property qualification of the members of the Council, as was said, is to be continuous : on its failure (an incident too common amidst the changes and chances of colonial life) the member is to forfeit his seat and his position. The constitution provides that, if any question arises as to the qualification of a councillor, it shall be determined by the Council ; and it is not very likely that those who sail in the same somewhat fragile bark will be extreme to mark the failure of their colleague's qualification, unless it be in a time of great party excitement. Otherwise it is hard to imagine a severer test of a man's veracity and integrity than a law threatening him with what would be in fact a penal degradation upon his ceasing to make a return of his income above a certain amount. Our own property qualification for the House of Commons was relinquished, it is believed, partly on the ground that the qualifications tendered were sometimes of a merely colourable kind.

There seems good reason to doubt whether Providence, in ordering the course of man's political development, has willed that aristocracy should be extended to the New World, which appears to present on the one hand none of the conditions historically known as essential to the existence of such an institution ; and, on the other hand, none of the political exigencies which, in the progress of a feudal monarchy in Europe towards constitutional liberty, the action of the nobility, as an intermediate power between the king and the people, unquestionably supplied. And, if this institution is really alien to these communities, it will be, when infused into their veins, a political and social poison, which nature may perhaps expel by an effort as violent and terrible as that by which the poison of slavery is now being thrown off. It behoves the legislator, therefore, before he takes any step in this direction, to cast all prejudice and everything that is merely of the hour aside, and deliberately to assure himself that his work will be permanently good.

There lies before us a pile—literally a pile—of documents, embodying the recent constitutions of European notions framed in mistaken and unseasonable imitation of the institutions which political circumstances of a very peculiar kind have established in this country, and the balance of which a national temperament almost equally peculiar enables our people to preserve. Europe is covered with the wreck of these imitations, and, what is still more deplorable, with the wreck of political faith. After ages will moralize on the hallucination under which an exceptional and transitional state of things, marking the last phase in the existence of an old feudal monarchy, has been regarded, and confidently propagated, as the normal and final state of man. The result in each case is that affairs have come or are coming to a dead-lock, through which a way is violently made, according to the relative magnitude of the political forces entangled in it, either by popular revolution or military usurpation. In the case of British North America, if an