

but authorizes them to adopt voluntary subscription, if they prefer it, and then enables them to collect the amount of each voluntary subscription as promptly and in the same manner as if it had been imposed by Rate-bill. **D**

An objection has been made from another quarter, that the Act does not give to the Clergy sufficient power as School Visitors. I know not what greater power could be given to the Clergy without destroying the School system; and I believe any Clergyman who diligently and judiciously exercises the power given him by the Act, will find himself able to do much good. If any Clergyman will not avail himself of the facilities which the Act affords him of encouraging and influencing the education of Canadian youth, because it does not give him a positive control in the Schools, which cannot be severed from their Trustees and Provincial management, it is to be hoped that few will imitate his example, but that all will take into consideration the social condition and circumstances of the country, and contribute their pious and appropriate exertions to advance its general welfare.

Such are the *principal* objections which I have heard urged against the present Common School Act. Some of them, it will be seen, arise from opposition to any public School System whatever; others are founded upon misapprehensions produced by misrepresentations; others again relate to clauses which, it is to be hoped, will soon be amended; while others proceed from foreign predilections, and not from any thing unusual in the provisions of the Act. With some provisions for the better establishment and maintenance of Common Schools in Cities and Towns, and the amendment of certain clauses of the Statute, I think action, rather than legislation, is required to promote the instruction of the rising generation; that the law should not be changed without a trial; that improvements, as occasion may require, rather than revolutions, should be made in the School System; that experience is a safer guide than speculation in this most important department of legislation and government. I think the foundation laid ought not to be subverted or shaken; the erection and completion of the superstructure must be the work of time as well as of persevering industry.