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## PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Before the Union of the Provinces, the Legislature of Lower Canada voted annually considerable sums for the encouragement of elementary schools, to the support of which the people contributed but voluntarily. Since the Union, parliament has devoted to this object an annual grant of 200,000 dollars, at present equally divided between Upper and Lower Canada, and has made provision for imposing a direct tax on the inhabitants for the benefit of public instruction. That a locality may have a right to participate in this grant, it is necessary that a sum equal to that annually granted by government, be levied by a direct tax on the people of that locality.

Among the numerous public functionaries who form the Provincial Cabinet, it is to be regretted that one specially charged with the department of public instruction is not to be found. It is an important hiatus and one that considerably impedes the progress of public instruction. Let us hope, however, that Canada will shortly enjoy the services of a minister of public instruction and of agriculture.

Upper and Lower Canada have each a differently organized system of public instruction. In Upper Canada this system is involved with that of municipal authority; in Lower Canada, it is altogether apart from it. In each section of the Province, there is a principal functionary called a Superintendent of education, acting separately, and independently of each other, in consequence of the difference in the organization of public instruction in each section.

The following are the principal features of the law which governs public instruction in Lower Canada.

1st. The establishment of elementary schools in each locality under the control of commissioners elected by the inhabitants of such locality. The powers and duties of these commissioners are: to take charge and possession of all effects belonging to the schools of their locality. They can acquire moveable and immoveable property to a limited extent. They engage the teachers,

regulate the course of studies, decide all disputes relating to the public schools, and cause a sum equal to that granted to their locality by government to be raised by a tax on the inhabitants. Besides elementary schools, they can establish a model-school, and fix the amount which each household-er shall contribute for every child of age to attend the schools over and above the tax on his immoveable property. Finally, they are charged to sue for such sums as may be necessary for the support of the schools, and to divide their locality into districts.

2nd. Honorary visitors established by law to visit the schools.—This arrangement is a dead letter.

3rd. Nomination of a superintendent for Lower Canada with a yearly salary of \$2,000, besides the expenses of the office. It is the duty of this officer to divide between each locality, according to its population, the sum granted by government, to examine the accounts sent in by the commissioners, and to make an annual report to the Legislature.

4th. In each of the cities of Quebec and Montreal, a Board composed of fourteen persons is charged with examining the qualifications of teachers. Unfortunately, this important provision is rendered a complete nullity, because the teachers are not as yet obliged to undergo an examination.

In Upper Canada, the organization of public instruction is in every respect superior to that of Lower Canada. Its principal provisions are these:—1st. Election of Commissioners to regulate the administration of the Schools: 2nd. forced qualification of teachers: 3rd. nomination of a superintendent of public instruction: 4th. the establishment of model schools by the municipal council of each county which is authorised to levy a tax for that purpose as well as for the support of elementary schools and the formation of county libraries, and to divide the township into scholastic districts; also, to appoint county and township superintendents: 5th. separate schools for Catholics and Protestants: 6th. the establishment of a Board of public instruction in each county, charged with the