

we have shown them to be a progressive, money-making, educated people, it is to be presumed they know their own business here as in other matters. If they wish to spend their money on useless priests and nuns, they have only that same fault which induces our Protestant brethren to throw away their cash on Mexican missions.

We have heard two recent writers express their deep pity for the taxes levied by the church on the Canadians, as evidenced in the magnificent churches everywhere met with in Canada. These churches are the admiration of strangers, Catholic and Protestant. They are always solid and durable, built of stone, of great size, and often of magnificent Canadian embellishment. It is impossible to find in Quebec a really poor or insignificant structure in a canonical parish, and the beauty and cleanliness of their sanctuaries are a delight to the Catholic heart. Have these churches been really a burden to the Catholics of Quebec? There is one feature of Canadian character which forbids us to say that they have. The close, economical, almost stingy habits of this people justify me in saying that they will not impoverish, nor burden, nor even tire themselves in supporting the church. They are tenacious of the faith, but also of their cash. This is the testimony of my own long experience and of all their authorities. They are impulsive on every point but that which marks the difference between loss and gain. They are ready for financial sacrifices, have made them often, but they have tried every other method first.

These churches have been constructed by many generations. Quebec is in existence two hundred years. When a district desires to erect a new church, the taxable people have first to convene and state their willingness to subscribe to a church of a certain cost. Monseigneur l'Évêque will hear of nothing until substantial aid is not only promised, but actually secured in the shape of cash or notes of hand. Then the *Fabrique* is organized—that is, the board of trustees—which is not, as with us, a formal affair, but a board of real officials, whose duty it is to look after the church revenues, and keep the property in good condition. Certain taxes are imposed for that purpose, and as they fall on all alike, there is no such thing as a burden on any one. When a Catholic owns land or houses, he is taxed by government. If he owns nothing, his tax is two dollars a year for the support of the church. The free-seat idea is carried to an extreme among the churches, and an immense charity and latitude prevail in the collecting of the revenues. This without fear of question can be said of the Canadian priests, that they are the least provided with money of any on the continent. I call it a grievous