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A DEGRADING SUPERSTITION.—By direct taxation, and that in the form of a single tax upon ground rent, the Government of Canada or any other country could secure ample revenue for all public purposes, without touching a solitary cent of any citizen's earnings, whether that citizen worked with hand or head. This system of taxation would be fair, equal and economical. It would be simply taking for the use of the community the rental value of land which is created by the community and not by the individual. Instead of going to this natural source for revenue, the Government of Canada prefers to rob labor of a part of its earnings, allowing the fund created by the community to go into the private pockets of

landlords. The citizen is now taxed for Dominion purposes upon everything he eats and wears, and nearly everything he needs to use in any way; while for municipal purposes he is fined for building or improving a house, and has a portion of his income—the immediate fruits of his toil—fished from him. In order that the victim may quietly submit to this outrage, he is first educated to believe that there is something very shocking about direct taxation. This teaching has been only too successful; the average citizen trembles at the very thought of the literal tax-gatherer, though why it should be so much more dangerous to know what you are paying than to “go it blind,” he cannot explain. Next, in order that he may not only submit, but actually exult in his own fleecing, the monstrous superstition of “Protection” has been invented and imposed upon his credulity. He has swallowed this also. To-day, in this intelligent community, there are thousands of farmers and other workmen who believe in the fetich of the N.P. as absolutely—and just as reasonably—as the pagans of India believe in

their “gods.” And amongst all the wooden images of the East there is not a more hollow, lying fraud than this Canadian idol. What is the whole sum and substance of the worship? That the consumer shall pay his taxes indirectly (so that he may not be able to keep track of the amount), and that he shall thus pay a great deal more than his fair share. This is the “blessing” the idol confers upon the consumer. To the protected monopolist it is more beneficent, for of the aggregate sum laid upon the altar a good proportion goes into his private coffer, the balance going to the Government. Is the consumer a fool? Oh, no; he says he is looking after his own interests. He wants to see the monopolists made prosperous because then they can afford to pay high wages. Well, do they do so? Are wages in Canada any higher in proportion to living expenses than they were before 1878? No. And why? Because competition in the labor market regulates wages, and there is free entry at all our ports for all the labor that wishes to come. The whole thing is a swindle, but such a clumsy and transparent swindle that we marvel how it could so long have deceived the majority of our people. If the consumers of Canada are not fools they will throw off this unworthy and degrading superstition, and smash this empty idol to pieces on the next opportunity. They will repel with indignation the impudent attempt of the swindlers to bandage their eyes with the “old flag”—to continue the robbery in the name of “loyalty.” What the people want is a leader who is not afraid or ashamed to appeal to common sense against this idiotic system. May he come to the front soon!

QUESTION!—In a recent issue we called upon Premier Mowat to explain to the people of Ontario his reasons for proposing to sell out the Asylum land on Queen street, while determining to retain the ownership of the Upper Canada College grounds for the Province and dispose of them only on leasehold. As yet no reply has been forthcoming, but in the meantime it is announced that the sale of a large portion of the Queen street land has been consummated. We trust the leader of the Opposition will see that Mr. Mowat is given an opportunity to defend this action in the approaching session of the Legislature. It will require all his ability, we should suppose, to put forth any reasonable excuse. He certainly cannot plead that the Government received no warning; nor can he say that the Provincial treasury was in immediate need of money. By reserving the ownership of the College lands, the Government have made it clear that they are alive to the benefits of future rental values, and it will be a job for casuistry to show why this policy would not apply to the Queen street property with even greater force. Perhaps—we only throw it out as a suggestion, of course—if Mr. Meredith read out to the country the names of the individuals who have come into possession of this land by the very accommodating action of the Government, a little light might be thrown on a dark subject.

THE editor of the *Christian Guardian* demolishes the single tax theory once more with a wave of his goose-quill. “We have no disposition to deny,” says he, “that the land belongs naturally and originally to the whole people of a nation or country.” “The claim that the ‘unearned increment’ of land values, as Mill calls it (ground rent, in other words), should be given to the people is plausible, and may be admitted to have claims to careful consideration,” but—etc., etc. Well, why doesn’t the able gentleman examine that claim carefully? If, as he admits, the land really belongs to the whole people, and its rental value is given to it solely by the fact of population, it is surely more than “plausible” to conclude that the whole people are entitled to the rental value. Who else has any right to it?

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JUST here is where the editor goes astray. He says the Government of a country represents and acts for the people, and if a Government sees fit to sell a portion of the common heritage to an individual, such a course is “not inconsistent with the original common right of the people to the land.”

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BUT what about the unborn generation? What Government is authorized to barter away *their* heritage? The land, like the air and the water, is for the living