

talent involved would never have developed but for private railways, whose past outlawry forced the states to establish the commissions. If the federal government had controlled the railways from the beginning there would have been no call for state railway commissions. How is it that we have no state postal or customs or excise commissions? Because of the simple fact of federal government control. If the Canadian or United States post-offices were now managed by private postal companies, as once they were all over Europe, or if the customs duties were farmed out to private individuals, as they were in the good old Roman days, the United States would undoubtedly have needed an interstate postal service commission and forty-eight postal regulation commissions, for we should have found that one postal company had got control of the Pennsylvania coal fields and was forbidding the mails to a rival postal company in Montana whose patrons wanted cheaper coal: and that an Illinois postal commission was called into being because another company was carrying newspapers from New York to Joliet at lower rates than those at which its own state company was taking Chicago papers to the same city.

Out of the fallacy of state taxation of railways has developed the curious result that for many years the people of Canada have been paying taxes to the various border states to make up the deficits of the Grand Trunk on its United States lines, caused in part by the abnormal assessments made upon that road, notably in the state of Michigan. The Grand Trunk Railway paid last year on its various American lines taxes to the amount of \$909,149, or \$188,076 more than was imposed on all its large mileage in Canada.

It is only a logical consequence that these and many other evils which might be characterized have flown out of the private ownership of railways. It is because of the enormous material interests involved, giving opportunities to the evil-disposed and temptation to the weak in political life, and because a function which affects every soul in the commonwealth and therefore belongs by its nature to the nation is exercised by a few individuals for their personal profit. The state ownership of railways may not immediately realize the ideals of popular government; but it will at least fulfil one idea long fought for, and that is that the people who