

No one who has watched the trend of affairs both in Canada and in our own province can be ignorant of the fact that in recent years the ideas of public ownership and public and provincial control, as expressed in legislation, have modified our conception of vested rights and created many difficult situations. We have seen in this province two distinct views enunciated with regard to competition by the public with private enterprise. The *Connée Act* illustrates one phase of the subject in which municipal enterprise was prevented from operating until it had bought out its private rival. The Hydro-Electric legislation exemplifies the contrary idea, that governmental, or municipal competition assisted by the Government, should freely enter into the domain of private monopoly without making compensation for loss of profit or being obliged to expropriate. Competition is the soul of trade, and it is universally accepted as the legitimate right of private individuals. But public rivalry has not yet settled down into a practice which is welcomed by everyone.

It must be evident that capital in its relations to the working classes; in its relation to a municipality and in its relation to a government is either recognizing or having forced upon it the realization that the old-fashioned immunity from direct obligations and from competition has passed away. This is to be seen in the progressive steps under which the Workmen's Compensation for Injuries Act has finally in England put the employer in the position of an insurer of his workmen. That situation has not arrived yet in this province, but it has been recommended by the Commission appointed by the New York Legislature and also by the Commission designated by the Government of Manitoba, and it is likely to be dealt with by the Commission to be nominated by the Ontario Government. The two Commissions which have reported have endeavoured to do away with the question of contributory negligence and to provide for direct liability in case of death and temporary disablement.

Opinions have differed as to the advisability of competition by a municipality or government with an existing industry or franchise, and many have advocated regulation instead of opposi-