

system of electric railways under a combination of municipal and provincial control. Its first essay in railway ownership has been the acquisition from the Pere Marquette Company of a short but unprofitable line running from London to Port Stanley, on Lake Erie, a distance of 23 miles. In the first year's operation (1915-16) the Hydro Electric Commission has renewed the rolling stock, doubled the number of trips per day, reduced the running time of all the trains, and comes out at the end of the year with a surplus of \$15,000.

Of the three different types of publicly owned railways in Canada—federal, provincial, and municipal—it can be confidently said that all have been successful from at least three different standpoints; that is, honesty of administration, lower rates to the people than are given by private companies, and freedom from the legislative corruption that has followed the surrender to private persons of a national prerogative carrying with it the power of public taxation. To charge the Intercolonial with failure because it does not take from the public more than is required to maintain the service is to misinterpret Canadian history. By the simple step of raising the rates to the level of those of the private railways—which would be mere justice—or even by the device of expropriating the express business now monopolized by the private railways, the Intercolonial could be made to yield a large profit this very year, if that were not a violation of the covenant made with the maritime provinces at confederation. Would the advocates of private ownership have the government of Canada remove the reproach of cheap service by repudiating its constitutional pledges, or would they have justice done by reducing the private companies' rates to the level of the government road?

In postal work the ideal of nearly all the nations of the world is the widest service at the cheapest rate, and scarcely any country seeks to make its postal service a means of profit or public revenue. In the growing company of nations that own their highways the ideal toward which they are striving is that of the postal service rather than the notion of raising surplus taxes by railway profits.

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