

pay the taxes shall control the proceeds of those taxes. The history of the administration of the customs, the post-office, and other departments of public service is a chronicle of improving efficiency, and if in the first years of the coming era of the state control of railways in Canada and the United States the septic poison of irresponsible private ownership is not entirely eliminated from the public organism, the fact of the lingering virus will not be a reason why we should abandon efforts for good government, but rather the strongest reason why we should improve our methods and controlling machinery and purify the whole civil service.

The influence brought to bear upon the municipalities by the railways for private profit was yet more degrading to the public life of Canada; for where the railway promoter could not succeed by bribery or a plausible appeal to the spirit of progress he gained his end only too often by threats and blackmail—a method he dare not openly use to a parliament. A city or town would be plainly told that if it did not give a bonus the new road would leave it off the map. Everywhere the impression was left that the benefits of a railway would be local and that only those municipalities that gave the bonus would get the blessing. Thus the clever railway lawyers and paid advocates would go up and down the country soliciting bonuses for railways over whose rates and policy the municipalities never did, and never could, exercise the slightest control. Indeed, the effect of building a new line, as we know by many experiences in America, was sometimes to cripple local industries and bring decay in addition to municipal debt. Typical cases of this class were those of Port Hope and Cobourg. These two towns on the north shore of Lake Ontario had each a population of about 7,000 and carried on a large lake traffic as well as a lumber trade with the inland districts. The railway boomster appeared, with the result that Port Hope borrowed \$680,000 and Cobourg \$500,000 and handed these sums over to the Grand Trunk. When the railway got under way the lumber trade and much of the local traffic was carried past these towns, and the shipping trade was taken away by the railway, leaving the population of both towns less by several hundreds each at the census of 1891 than they had been before the bonus was given thirty years before. In all these