

is a gentleman who was one of the most promising of English statesmen, but has been under a shadow for many years, but his energy and capacity are none the less. He has wealth, youth and everything to enable him to make extensive voyages of discovery. He has a facile pen and still more facile tongue, and that gentleman has given his experience of what he has called, very appropriately, Greater Britain, in two separate works. In the more recent one he reviews his former experience and shows how far his expectations have been confirmed by facts, and shows in some cases how they have not turned out as he expected. In the Australian colonies, where so very large a burden of debt has been imposed upon the people owing to their borrowing largely for railway purposes, the lines of railway are almost entirely owned by the Government, and Sir Charles Dilke tells his readers that so completely have the public and even the politicians themselves been disgusted by the jobbery and evil influence that arose from Government construction, all parties came to this conclusion at last, that the management of the railways had better be taken entirely out of the hands of the politicians and placed in the hands of commissioners—men of influence and character, not subject to be removed in consequence of changes of Government, which in those countries have been far more frequent than in Canada. Although the railways of Canada are, to a great extent, companies' lines, I believe that the Government have a decided influence in them, inasmuch as they have either given land or money or public property of some kind or other which gives them a tangible right to interfere with the management of those roads. If you take analogy from the United States, you find that wherever the public money or public lands have been given to a railway, in that case the Federal Government exercise supervision and have, on more occasions than one, to which I have referred in this House, brought the railway companies into court, and when they had been challenged with the remark: "We are a free company; you have no power over us," they have used the fact that where public lands or moneys have been given to a railway company, *pro tanto* that railway company is amenable to the power of the Government and the laws of the country. In that way a great benefit

has accrued in consequence of that power. It may be said that here in Canada the railways are almost all owned by corporations. It is very true the business of this Parliament, or a very large part of it, for several Sessions, has been the passing of railway Bills, but I suppose there are very few of those companies that have not at some time or other received assistance from the Government, and therefore I think it is not a very large stretch of imagination to see that the day may come, and may not be so very far distant, when the Government, following in the steps of the United States, may say to the companies: "If you manage your affairs so indifferently as to make it necessary for you to be coming to the Treasury for assistance for your own branches, we will have to take you before the court." In Australia these railway commissions have been established and have been found—I speak on the authority of Sir Charles Dilke—to give the greatest satisfaction. Even the politicians themselves are bound to confess that the new system of railway management there is better than the old one. Of course, we know that we cannot draw much analogy between the railways of America and the railways of Europe. Here we make a railway into the wilderness and we expect settlement to follow it. That is a very good policy; but still there ought to be precaution taken in the expenditure of the public money to see, when those railways are built, that they answer the purposes intended. If they do not, the consequence is this: at first they stimulate a kind of fictitious prosperity. You see in a comparatively poor and barren country a large amount of money in circulation, high wages paid and a sort of *quasi* prosperity existing, and men are told that that is the result of the Government policy. It is pointed out to them that it has been the policy of this Government to do so-and-so, and they point triumphantly to the result and say, "There they are." Now, if that railway leading through a new country is settled on both sides with prosperous settlers, and those men till the soil and bring to market the produce of their lands, and forests and mines, so that the new road becomes productive, then I say the Government have done well; but if they carry their lines into a new country at the dictation of members of Parliament,