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special attention to passenger fares, and have often of late attempted to impose a maximum fare of two cents a mile, instead of the three or four cents usually charged. As in the case of the control of trusts, Federal and State authorities have found the United States Constitution a considerable obstacle to their efforts, but this may change in time, as the Supreme Court, which is charged with the interpretation of the Constitution, is not bound by precedents.

In the final chapter Dr. Underwood discusses the ethics of ownership, and expresses the hope that there may be some redistribution of ownership in the future, so that the poor man can reasonably look forward to possessing a little property, sufficient at least to mitigate the worst evils of poverty, and that at the same time more limits may be imposed upon the power attached to wealth.

At the end of the book there is a long list of the authorities consulted by the author when writing this essay, which testifies to the thoroughness with which the work has been done. The writer has brought together, within a reasonably small space, a lot of interesting material, but the value of the book would have been enhanced had there been a good index, in addition to the analytical table of contents.

DOUGLAS KNOOP

*Railway Corporations as Public Servants.* By H. S. Haines.  
(The Macmillan Co. Pp. 226. Price 6s. 6d. net.)

THE public nature of the services rendered by railways has long been recognised, and supplies the basis for the arguments in favour of railway nationalisation. Mr. Haines, however, is no believer in the alleged benefits of State ownership. On the contrary, he holds that all, and more than all, the benefits derivable from State ownership can be obtained under a system depending on private enterprise combined with efficient State control. The State control of the past comes in for very severe criticism, Mr. Haines summing up his position in the words, "Let us then not legislate against the railroads, but for them." That the railroad legislation of the United States in particular has usually taken the form of attacks on the railroads, there can be no denying. In fact, it has been too frequently "panic" legislation.

Whilst we cannot always agree with Mr. Haines's conclusions, it is due to him to recognise the impartiality with which he has

given instances of the abuse by some of the American railroads of the power vested in them. The remarkable series of transactions conducted by Mr. Harriman in connection with the Union Pacific R.R. are related in some detail. By a series of financial legerdemains Mr. Harriman has made the Union Pacific R.R. Company "either to be dominant or powerfully influential in 54,000 miles of railroad, being one-fourth of our (U.S.A.) total mileage, with 40 per cent. of its capital and 30 per cent. of its earnings." The power wielded by the president of this vast corporation is stated plainly to be greater than that of the President of the United States. The position built up has only been possible owing to misdirected and defective legislation.

It is not difficult to understand that the people of the United States have become alarmed at the vast power concentrated in the hands of a few railway magnates, and that many have reached the conclusion that State ownership is the only efficient remedy. Mr. Haines gives many reasons for considering this impracticable in the case of the United States. The vastness of the proposition, which would make 200,000 miles of railway and the 1,500,000 railway employees a department of the federal government, is in itself appalling! The debt of the United States would be increased by at least \$14,000,000,000, and the effect of this on the national finances is certainly a matter for serious consideration.

Mr. Haines does not, however, rest content with these facts. He considers also whether the conduct of the transportation will continue equally efficient, whether railway employment will continue to attract a like number of the "captains of industry," whether the public will be equally well served. The answers to these questions are certainly matters for argument, and we cannot always accept Mr. Haines's decisive negative. When, however, he considers the past control, and denounces the action of the State, which has consistently forbidden the railways to make peace with one another, and has forced them to fight until the weaker succumbed, we are quite at one with him.

The supporters of railway nationalisation will do well to read this book. From its pages they will be able to call much to support their position, but they will also find in its pages many of the arguments which they will be called upon to meet if they are to convince the country that State ownership is to be preferred to private enterprise.

W. T. STEPHENSON