

As far as it goes, however, the present study is a useful addition to secondary sources on New Brunswick history. It definitely should be a part of any reading list on the history of the province, for earlier works on New Brunswick history merely treat the subject in a few paragraphs. W.S. MacNutt's *New Brunswick, A History*, for example, has two references to Negroes and deals with their history in a total of about two pages. However, this treatment is a result of the relative insignificance of the numbers of blacks in New Brunswick rather than of any prejudice on Prof. MacNutt's part. The only other study specifically on the subject is a magazine article by a local historian, W.O. Raymond, written at the turn of the century. There is therefore a definite need for information on the subject.

*The Blacks in New Brunswick* was published almost simultaneously with Robin Winks' *The Blacks in Canada*. The books are complementary because the shared general accounts of the history of the blacks is, in the case of Dr. Spray's work, illustrated by specifically New Brunswick material. Both books are part of an increased interest in black studies in this country. Prof. James Walker of the University of Waterloo is presently editing a collection of papers illustrative of the life and experiences of Black Loyalists. I expect that other studies on the blacks are likewise in preparation. The blacks, from a position of obscurity, may be on their way to enjoying one of the better-documented areas of Canadian history.

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H. V. NELLES. — *The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines, Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario 1849-1941*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1974.

The revolution in technology at the turn of the century opened the way for the growth of huge enterprises in the mining, pulp and paper and hydro-electricity of Ontario. *The Politics of Development* by H.V. Nelles traces the story of the government's policy towards these resource giants through the first four decades of the twentieth century. The government's double and sometimes contradictory interests complicated this policy; Ontario premiers aided large companies to create more jobs but sometimes sought to protect the public interest from these same companies. At all times their policies had to be acceptable to a large section of the Ontario electorate. The book's general argument and its rich documentation make it convincing. Nelles seems really to know what went on between big resource entrepreneurs and government. Yet this is not a muck-raking book nor an attack on the Canadian robber barons. Although the author passes certain moral judgements, he is not concerned with corruption as such. He aims to write the history of a relationship between big government and big business, the function of which was to produce a high profit resource industry in Ontario.

At least since 1900 the Ontario government began to regard the assisting of such resource industries as one of its main tasks. Premiers Arthur Hardy and George Ross acted vigorously to compel the "manufacturing" of crown forest products, such as pine timber and spruce cordwood, into sawn lumber and pulp within the province itself. In this Nelles sees government as a "political extension" (p. 103) of some business groups. Ross also built the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario railway to service mining enterprises and bailed out Consolidated Lake Superior company, a giant near collapse. The tax which another premier, James Whitney, imposed on the lumber companies depended on their own estimate of how much timber they had cut. Still another premier Howard Ferguson connived

with big lumber in a number of illegal transactions. In 1928 faced with sharply plummeting paper prices he supported a price-fixing cartel. In the late 1930s Premier Mitchel Hepburn did the same. Only a year or so earlier he had called for a reduction of federal taxes on his beloved gold mining companies. Such facts as these have led Professor Nelles to conclude that the "state was reduced to a client of the business community" (p. xi).

Yet to protect the public interest Ontario governments obtained some important controls over these resource industries of lumbering, hydro power and mining. In lumbering the Crown never allowed the ownership of forest lands to slip from its grasp; companies only leased the right to cut timber for a certain number of years. This enabled Whitney to make timber concessions to lumber companies only after public suction and the full disclosure of the terms of the lease of timber stands. Without doubt this same factor enabled Whitney to shift the cost of fire protection to the companies in 1910. A more spectacular example of the strength of the government position was to be found in the handling of hydro power. After 1898 no water power was alienated to private hands; and in the next decade, in response to the demand of Ontario businessmen, the government took over Ontario hydro. Although the government gave up full ownership rights to the mining companies. Whitney had no difficulty in raising the mining royalties on the popular grounds that a portion of the "bounty of nature" belonged to the public.

Still the government used its power only very cautiously to constrain the big resource companies. Once again it is difficult to quarrel with Nelles' conclusion that the state was reduced to a "client of the business community." As he stated at the outset: "Yet I do not believe this was inevitable. The failure to bring the business and technical functions of the state into the framework of democratic accountability was the failure of men with choices to make to pursue the logic of responsible government into the industrial age (p. ix)." Yet surely the author is not allowing for premiers like Whitney and Ferguson who honestly believed that it was essential to a thriving economy that big companies make high profits? Such a liberal ideology was then all-prevading, despite Nelles' unsupported suggestion that the "organic view of society" (p. 41) was stronger in Ontario than it was in the United States. Even if such a view existed, it was certainly not strong enough to counter the ideology of economic progress and materialism which determined the outlook of Ontario premiers. The author complains of the failure to bring business activity into a framework of democratic accountability. But this is not quite accurate. The companies were certainly not accountable in the sense of submitting a full review of their activities to any public body, but government support for these resource companies rested on a democratic political base; the passive approval of the majority in Ontario.

Apart from the material it presents, the book offers a judicious balance between economics and politics. The author realizes that if the question of resources dominated Ontario politics, for its part politics determined the way the resource industry developed; hence his title the *Politics of Development*. The book usefully counters the assumption of many of our economic historians that the "economic factor is the fundamental factor on which the others" are dependent. Harold Innis' classical sphorism that "the present dominion emerged not in spite of geography but because of it" expresses the conviction of economic determinists who believe that the logic of economic development makes inevitable certain major political decisions. Yet Nelles clearly demonstrates that, while both provincial and federal politicians accepted the framework of capitalism, they often spoke for conflicting interests and quarreled violently over what political decisions should be made. Moreover he makes it clear that there was nothing inevitable

about such a major political step as the public ownership of Hydro. The nature, quality and direction of the government intervention in this case as in all others was decided by political struggle. To the contending historic figures, striving to gain their ends, there was nothing sure or inevitable about the outcome.

Again the book demonstrates the enormous importance of politicians to the economic process itself. The impact of a premier like George Ross on Ontario economic development was much greater than even a spectacular entrepreneur like François Clergue, who put together such a dazzling complex of enterprises under the all-embracing Consolidated Lake Superior Company. Whitney's decision to accept public power was much more crucial to the Ontario economy than the resistance offered by Henry Pellatt, one of the most prominent Canadian financiers of his day. Again, at the core of any study of the paper industry between the wars would be Ferguson's policy towards that industry. Ontario premiers were not pallid, bloodless puppets, without character or philosophy who merely responded mechanically to strings pulled by the master financiers. While economic and political circumstances imposed limits on them, they still had lots of room for choice. It is now clear that what each chose to do really affected economic development. Yet the concrete nature of each decision was often influenced crucially by the character and outlook of the premier concerned. The vivid portrayal of such a reciprocal relationship between individual politicians and powerful entrepreneurs makes this book an exciting piece of historical writing.

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MARCEL HAMELIN. — *Les Premières années du parlementarisme québécois, 1867-1878.* Québec, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1974.

The study of provincial politics in Canada has been seriously hampered by the lack of official records of debates until relatively recent years in most provincial assemblies. One consequence has been that only those big mouth-filling, mind-boggling questions such as provincial autonomy, nationalism and, of course, scandal have had much attention paid to them for the simple reason that historians have followed, and relied upon, newspaper reports. (In passing it may be worth remarking that historians, who in real life frequently criticize journalists, have a touching faith in the validity of newspapers as evidence.) Anyone with the willpower and the attention span required can read the Debates of the House of Commons and discover how many journalists depart hurriedly after question period when the real work begins: chartering companies, altering fishing legislation, jiggling tariff schedules, quarrelling about bridges and feeder lines. Moreover, as Leacock long ago demonstrated in his seminal study of local politics, *Sunshine Sketches*, these are the sorts of issues that form the stuff of everyday politics.

Consequently the closer the examination of politics the more clearly certain contradictions between day-to-day realities and the big issues, which historians often use to explain political change, become. Historical writing on Quebec makes this observation especially striking. For one thing only a small amount of detailed work has been done on that province's politics and that chiefly by Robert Rumilly whose *Histoire* is both invaluable for sources and sometimes misleading in its concentration on the headline stories. Secondly, the role played by intellectuals in Quebec politics has meant that ideological issues have impressed themselves on many writers who themselves may be engaged in political wars of an ideological type. The persuasive, but also polemical, writings of P.-E. Trudeau and Michel