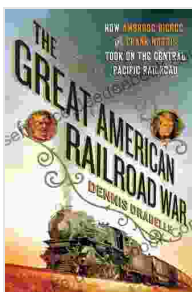


The Muckrakers: Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris vs. the Notorious Central Pacific Railroad

In the late 19th century, the United States was undergoing a period of rapid industrialization. The transcontinental railroad had been completed in 1869, and the country was experiencing a population boom. However, this period of growth also saw the rise of powerful corporations, which often used their wealth and influence to exploit workers and consumers.

Two of the most notorious corporations of this era were the Southern Pacific Railroad and its subsidiary, the Central Pacific Railroad. These railroads were responsible for building much of the transcontinental railroad, but they were also known for their ruthless business practices. They charged exorbitant rates, bribed politicians, and used violence to suppress dissent.



The Great American Railroad War: How Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris Took On the Notorious Central Pacific

Railroad by Dennis Drabelle

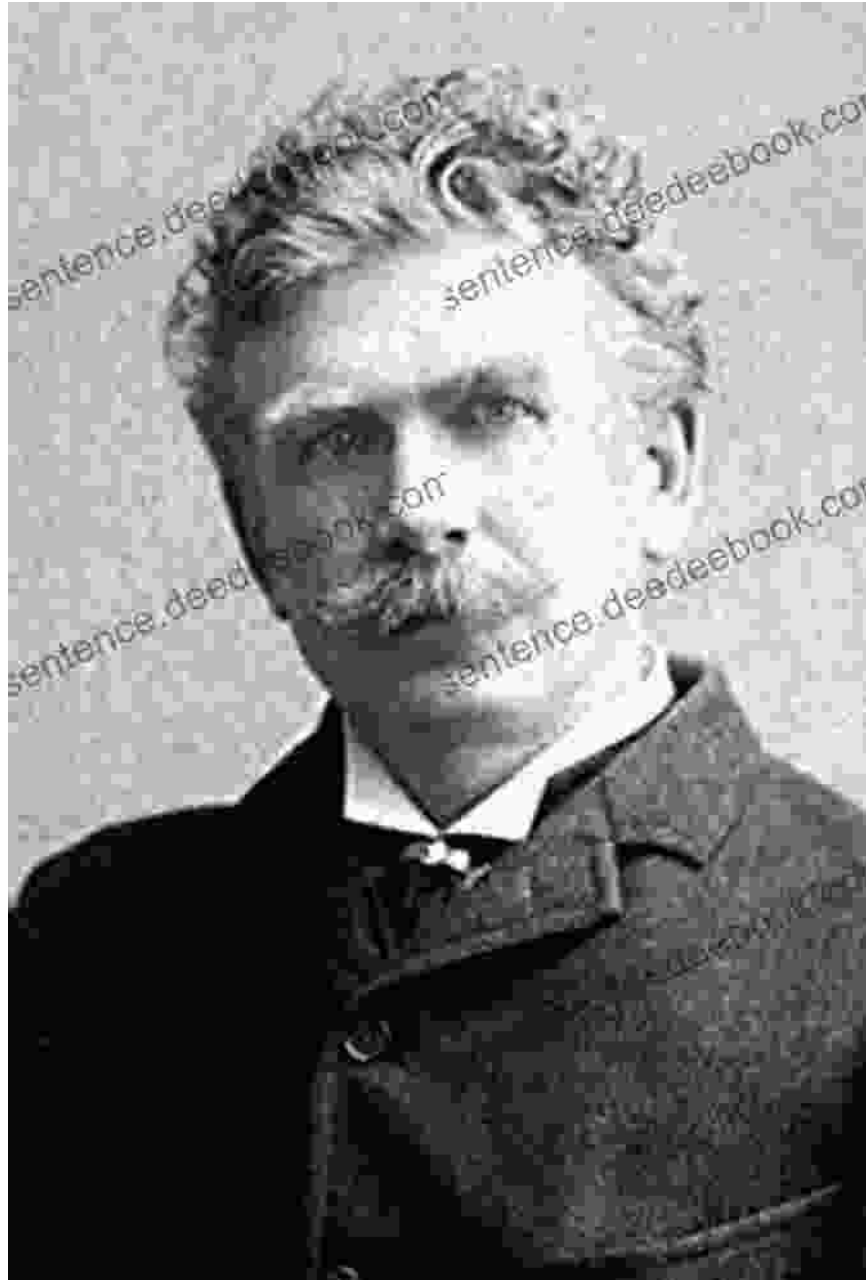
★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2241 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 319 pages



Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris were two writers who exposed the corruption of the Central Pacific Railroad. Bierce was a journalist and short story writer who wrote a series of scathing articles about the railroad for the San Francisco Examiner. Norris was a novelist who wrote "The Octopus," a novel that depicted the railroad's stranglehold on the California wheat industry.

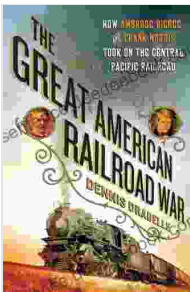
Bierce's articles were full of wit and sarcasm. He called the Central Pacific Railroad "the Octopus" and accused it of being a "monster" that was "fattening on the blood of the people." He also criticized the railroad's political corruption, writing that "the Octopus has its tentacles in every department of government." Bierce's attitude towards the Central Pacific Railroad is best exemplified by this quote: "The railroad is a monster. It has a mouth of steel and teeth of iron, and it crushes everything that comes in its way."



Norris's novel, "The Octopus," was a more subtle indictment of the Central Pacific Railroad. The novel tells the story of a group of California wheat farmers who are forced to sell their land to the railroad at a below-market price. Norris's novel depicts the railroad as a powerful and oppressive force that is destroying the lives of ordinary people.

The work of Bierce and Norris helped to raise public awareness of the corruption of the Central Pacific Railroad. In 1887, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) was created to regulate the railroad industry. The ICC eventually broke up the Central Pacific Railroad and forced it to lower its rates. Bierce and Norris's work also helped to pave the way for the progressive movement, which sought to reform the country's political and economic system.

Ambrose Bierce and Frank Norris were two of the most important muckrakers of the late 19th century. Their work exposed the corruption of the Central Pacific Railroad and helped to bring about much-needed reforms.



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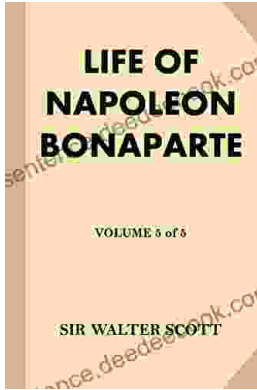
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