

the prospective scrapping of their costly plants after the capital invested in their construction has been gratefully absorbed in local expenditure, in order to make way for other prospective plants which will involve for a few years the expenditure of much new capital and thus procure a temporary return of good times. Nor will they appreciate the false kindness of any encouragement to continue at heavy annual loss a system of transportation or any other public utility which it is cheerfully declared in advance can never be restored to a paying basis, because the competing system which is the chief cause of its accumulating losses is destined to replace it as a much superior method of transportation. The only coldly self-interested, not to mention the only honest, method of dealing with a company placed in such an undesirable situation is not to encourage it in the continued sacrifice not only of its past investments, but of such existing reserves as it may have accumulated in more fortunate times. It should be encouraged to at once face frankly the inevitable and to save what is possible from the wreck of its investments. Moreover, in parting with the unfortunate investors who have themselves parted with so many millions of their capital, almost entirely expended in contributing to the past prosperity of the urban districts of Vancouver and Victoria, it were well to do so in a courteous if not a kindly manner. Doubtless there is some temptation to abuse those from whom we have received benefits too great to repay, particularly when there is little more to be expected from them. Even on the lowest grounds, however, it is poor policy to give way to such temptation. I feel convinced, however, that the great majority of the people of the chief cities of British Columbia do not endorse the bitter references to the Company and its investors which are contained in some of the evidence and arguments of those supporting the

jitney interests. Least of all will they subscribe to the sentiment that it matters little what investors in Britain may think of our treatment of them, because hereafter, in consequence of the great war, supplies of capital are to be sought in the United States.

#### STREET CAR MUST ROW TO JITNEY OR JITNEY TO STREET CAR

If, however, the advocates of the jitney cause should prove to be mistaken in their estimates and the jitney should not be a form of transportation which is able to take the place of the electric street car, but can only at best, even in such developments of it as are in sight, act as a supplementary form of transportation, then the alternative proposition, recognized as such by the advocates of the jitneys, must be accepted. Instead of the electric street car being sacrificed for the preservation and extension of the jitney, the jitney should be sacrificed for the preservation of an electric service in the best interests of the public.

Though few of those who appeared before the Commission and practically none of those who faced the actual situation of the B. C. Electric were prepared to argue that both the electric cars and the jitneys can operate in competition with each other on the present basis without the elimination of the larger and more costly service, yet it is possible that a number of citizens, especially those who have not actually faced the facts, may be under the impression that these two systems can operate indefinitely in competition. Such citizens may at least have the conviction that under the ownership and superior management and economy of the respective city corporations and with access to the public purse it may be possible to operate the present electric service on a profitable basis, while permitting the jitneys to freely take what they please of the cream of the business.