

naturally as ready as others to be "sociable" under ordinary circumstances have to choose between principle and possible misinterpretation of their attitude.

Gambling is either right or wrong. If men believe that gambling in any form tends to foster the unhealthy desire to "get something for nothing," and to obtain money without *earning* it, at another's loss, then its sanction under *any* circumstances must be held detrimental to the public welfare.

To suggest—as some may do—that the end justified the means, and that because the cause was a national one for worthy purposes the wheel-whirling gambling on the streets of Vancouver was permissible, is jesuitical or worse.

The toleration of that action also by the civic or provincial authorities was regrettable, and reflected unhappily on what was otherwise a campaign of great credit to Vancouver and British Columbia and the business men of all grades who took part in it.

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#### THE SKID ROAD AND CIGAR STAND GAMBLING.

Our valued contributor, Mr. R. G. MacBeth, has commented upon the "skid road" more than once; and it is noteworthy that not only have readers of the BRITISH COLUMBIA MONTHLY referred to his notes on the subject, but we understand a member of the Board of Trade thought fit to read Mr. MacBeth's comments in this magazine at a recent meeting of a bureau.

As was to be expected when this matter was raised, a certain gentleman readily cited the toleration of the wheel of fortune in the Victory

Bond campaign, and also the practice of gambling at the open-front cigar stores in the city. Of course the obvious answer is that "two blacks do not make a white," nor will a dozen "blacks." But why is such a practice permitted at cigar stores or stands? Here again the superficial argument may be heard, "What or where's the harm?" But surely it is high time that members of Boards of Trade and other city luminaries—who should be men of light and leading, whether or not they are called "councillors" or "counsellors," men who *believe in something* other than a policy of *laissez faire*—awoke to the situation and exercised such influence as they may or should have to make such practices matters of history.

If there is not lawful authority in Vancouver or Victoria to achieve that end let the authority be got, and let not legal "technicalities" stand in the way of commonsense interpretation and application of law and justice.

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#### A CITIZENS' WELFARE ASSOCIATION?

For various reasons it seems fitting to raise a question as to whether the time is not opportune for the organization of a Citizens' Welfare Association in Vancouver and throughout the Province. If it be urged that there are already numerous organizations, it may be rejoined that there are facts other than those commented upon above which emphasize that British Columbia has much need of effective bodies, other than its government for the time being, who will fairly represent and fearlessly set forth the facts affecting community conditions.