"The agitation for increased traction fares is one of the interesting developments in American cities. Permission to increase its fares from 5 cents to 6 cents has been granted to the Huntingdon Railroad Co. by the New York Up-State Public Service Commission. There was no dispute that the company required increased revenue to enable it to pay operating expenses. The Commission decided that the Public Service Commission laws were intended by the Legislature to make it the duty of the Commission, where it found that the maximum rates or fares chargeable under the railroad law, or under local franchise were insufficient to yield reasonable compensation for the services rendered, to authorize an increase of such fares."

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New York Times,

November, 1917.

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"If the price paid for street car service doesn't make the business attractive, the investor will go into something else, and the street railway service will suffer."

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JOSEPH K. CHOATE,

New York, 1917.

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There is nothing sacred about the five cent fare. Except that we have a 5 cent coin, it is probable that 4 cents, or perhaps 6 cents, might have been the universal fare from the inception of street railway business. As far as the writer can figure out, five cents is an arbitrary charge, bearing no relation to either the fixed charges, or the gross receipts, nor to the earnings. If the street railway companies, though carrying more passengers, are making less money, either the companies must go out of business, or be taken over by the municipalities and operated at a loss.

The alternative seems to be, either that the sale of six tickets for a quarter may have to be abolished, and the straight five cent fare retained; or that an increased rate of fare must be charged all round. Capital invested in the Tramways must be safeguarded and a good rate of interest, as well as an annual dividend, must be assured. At the same time the City must secure an adequate annual rental from the Company for the use of the streets, and the best of service for the people.

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F. S. W.

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