VI.

CONCLUSION.

To return to our beginning. Let the Province awake to the duty and right of having the Island Railway Lands managed for the country's good. To that end let the Province manage and dispose of them, at the public expence in the first place, (which would be trifling) setting aside the proceeds. So much the Province is entitled to do, whoever the land belongs to. As regards the rights of the Company and the claim of mineral claim holders, etc., and of the Provincial Treasury, let all such matters be promptly referred to an impartial decision ; for instance, to the Privy Council. Upon such a decision the rights of all parties will be established.

This can only be done by union and courage. All know how for years the interests connected with the E. & N. have overridden and defied the law. All know well that Ministers and members actually in the pay or under the influence of the Company can not be depended on even to have the Company's position, as set forth in Chapter IV, fairly decided, much less to redress the country's wrongs. The first step towards honest government in British Columbia, the first requisite for any sound prosperity on Vancouver Island, is to destroy the political influence of the E. & N. Do we need awakening to the danger and disgrace of allowing a grasping corporation to feel itself above the law ? I do not mean to say that it has happened, but suppose a fat thing was offered in the way of an unlawful supplying of coal to a belligerent power. What do forms and pretences count for in war ? Shall we trust it to their honour, indeed, their unselfishness, their loyalty, to decline the offered job ? Or shall we do our duty by ourselves and the whole nation, and hold these people in terror of doing what might both disgrace the Province and embarrass the entire Empire ?

On the E. & N. question there is no room for three parties. Whoever is not against the Company is against the country. No issue now before the people of the Island, perhaps no task