

Victoria to Nanaimo should at once be made.

And that in Manitoba, with like urgency, the Pembina Branch should be "pushed through."

All this may, I presume, at once be begun with the eight millions of dollars, or at least half of that, now being raised in England on the pretension that the great scheme is to be faithfully and earnestly begun and carried out.

INCIDENTAL

to the above is the consideration of "ways and means." This branch of the subject is beyond what I intended to touch on, but, as I have already done so in my Britannicus letters of 1869, in the course of which the editor of the *Ottawa Times* of that day yielding, after controversy, to the force of my argument against alienation of the "Crown Domain" in areas of such extent as to create a predominating class interest to the jeopardy of individual political liberty; and to my argument also that the "Crown Domain"—so called—is a holding merely in trust by this Government for due administration, and only administration, in permanent national behest, happily suggested a system of *hypothecation* of lands to the end sought. Issue about 8 July, 1869—or about then—I have not the precise words. The "idea" struck me with much force, and I really think it is, as matters now are, the most practicable one that has yet been mooted: adopting it, I respectfully conclude,

5thly. That our best North-West and British Columbia lands, to adequate ex-

tent, should be *hypothecated*, and in due course, for settlement, be sold, on terms to attract, and that the proceeds should be appropriated to the establishment of a sinking fund to meet railway debentures.

This, with Imperial aid in fair measure, and a moderate Pacific Railway tax, amply compensated by beneficial returns in a thousand shapes, ought, I humbly think, to be a financial basis that none should complain of.

6thly. But, above all, this great Canadian enterprise must not be made the plaything, or worse, of political parties; but as a work vital to our national existence, must be *nonerthly* as well as intelligently dealt with; and, moreover, be urged with all our power.

The scheme as at present laid before us, by the present Government, in its executive and financial aspects is, I think, utterly impracticable. In fact, their whole policy, from first to last, in it, has been one really of obstruction, though latterly (probably to raise money in England) they give it seeming countenance. The subterfuge is too transparent for us at home, here. They speak of "selling a charter." There was no sale of charter. But that aside. *They, really*, are selling not only a railway charter, but our *charter of charters—that which we acquired at Runnymede*; for on this scheme—its success, or its failure—rests, I take it, the question of all British charter right—question of BRITAIN IN AMERICA.

Yours ever faithfully,

M. McLEOD,

Aylmer, June, 1874.