

to the Rocky Mountains, with the view, among other things, of finding a route for a great line of communication within British territory to the Pacific coast.

Some years later the Home Government took active steps to arrange with the Hudson Bay Company for the surrender of its territorial rights, and encouraged the then Province of Canada to acquire those rights and assume authority over the vast region occupied only by scattered tribes of Indians.

In 1867 the Imperial Parliament passed an Act by which the several British-American Provinces were united, and the Dominion of Canada formed. One of the essential conditions was that the confederated Provinces should construct a railway from Halifax to Quebec, the Imperial Government assisting so far as to guarantee the interest on three millions (£3,000,000) of its cost. A further provision of the British North America Act was the entrance of British Columbia into the Confederation, and the construction of a railway across the Continent to the Pacific coast.

It will be manifest from this brief reference to historical facts that there has been a continual solicitude on the part of the Home Government for the maintenance and extension of Imperial interests in North America. That it was deemed of the greatest possible importance to establish the best means of communication (1) between the fortresses of Halifax and Quebec, separated by 700 miles, and (2) between Quebec and the Pacific coast, some 3,100 miles. That Canada, in deference to Imperial wishes and needs, has adopted the policy of establishing these great lines of communication, and that she has steadily pursued that policy, step by step, until the present time.

It will be borne in mind that the population of Canada is