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emptor. The government has re-
served three miles wide on each side
of the river, but the valley insists on
running only from half a mile wide
to about four at the widest, between
mountains 7000 to 8000 feet high.
(Loud laughter.) Gentlemen, I do
not think we need worry much as to
why the settler is not crowding into
these districts, and if the members of
the government had taken half the
pains to verify their statements that
the members of the Ministerial Union
have done, they would not make such
ridiculous statements on the public
platform. (Applause.)

Seven Sets of Stakes.

There is only one other point re-
garding the land that is worth while
noticing in the speech at the Orphe-
um. Mr. Bowser pours copious ridi-
cule upon our heads because we have
not mentioned that many applications
for land were never completed and
others were "disallowed." Of course
there were many disallowed both as
regards land and coal areas. But
why? Simply because many "stakers"
in unsurveyed districts overlapped
each other. I am informed that in
some cases as many as seven sets of
stakes were found on the same sec-
tions. (Laughter.) Mr. Bowser asserts
that not a single application of James
Scott was proceeded with. How does he
know? On page 20 he plainly tells us
that the department at Victoria has no
means of knowing just how much land
a man acting as agent really gets. He
said the same in the house in January,
1912. Has Mr. Bowser gone through
the 75,980 acres staked by Scott, and
checked them up in the books of the
department? He has not, because
he tells us Scott only staked 47,000
acres, whereas I have shown you he
actually staked close on 76,000. Mr.
Bowser says Geo. M. Belrnes, who
staked 30,720 acres of coal lands did
not get one acre. But the fact is, the
B. C. Anthracite Co., of Quebec, for
whom Belrnes acted as staker, got the
whole thing, and have since sold out
to another party. That is how they
were disallowed. (Applause.)

What does this argument about ap-
plications being dropped amount to?
Mr. Bowser makes much out of it; he
takes great credit to the government
that they have sold much land which
they will get back sometime in addi-
tion to keeping the payments already
made. But it simply means this: The
government gladly loaded up the
speculator with all he could seize of
the public lands, and now when the
speculator falls down, Mr. Bowser
cries, "Give us the credit because the
other fellow wasn't able to carry away
all that we did our best to give him."

It seems to me a case of the burglar's
accomplice claiming a reward from
his master because the burglar broke
his neck climbing out of the window
with his plunder. (Loud laughter and
applause.)

Speculative Orgies.

Yet the attorney-general glories in
the fact that the government led in
the speculative orgies of 1909-1912.
He says: "We took advantage of the
land movement of the age, and those
who purchased knew exactly what
they were doing. Many of them would
only be too glad to have us pay them
back the 50 cents which they deposi-
tited. We will have the 50 cents, and
if they do not complete we will also
have the land (applause)." That, Mr.
Chairman, is the speech of half the
cabinet of the B. C. government, but
that is not all of it. Someone has
had the decency to cut out a sentence
or two at the close of this paragraph.
You will find part of it in "The
World" report, but everyone heard it.
It was perhaps a sudden inspiration,
a triumphant outburst that revealed
the soul of the man and the spirit of
the government he dominates, when
he cried, "Talk about real estate. I
don't think that any firm of real es-
tate agents ever equalled us in this
country." (Cries of "Shame!") Think
of it! Here is a province which
has been cursed to the bone
with the wildest forms of real estate
gambling, where, in the past few
years, men have been swooped off
their feet by the craze for getting-rich-
quick, where honesty and business
principle were flung to the winds of
heaven in the mad scramble for wealth
without work. Plotation schemes,
fraudulent combines, bogus trust com-
panies multiplied on every hand until
they totalled over 5000 and then came
the deluge. Honest men are hurled
into beggary, widows robbed of their
homes, orphans turned adrift, and the
good name of the province damned
throughout the Empire, yet the attor-
ney-general, custodian of law and jus-
tice, stands before a Vancouver audi-
ence to boast, and to glory in the
boast, that the government of the day
had actually led the frenzied dance
and out-sharked the greatest land-
sharks of them all. And the most
pitiable feature of it all was that the
crowd on the platform applauded
loudly instead of hanging their heads
in shame at the boast. (Loud and
prolonged applause.)

Oyster-bed Business.

Now, sir, let us look into the oyster-
bed business. (Laughter.) Mr. Bow-
ser has now accumulated several
arguments in defence of his own
position, and in doing so in-