

"The figures I have quoted to you in a general way cannot fail to impress fair-minded people as to what we have succeeded in achieving during the short time we have administered these lands. I think it constitutes a very enviable record and it would compare favorably with the record of any other Province in Canada, including the Prairie Provinces, although at the first glance it might seem that the land in those countries is more desirable than the wooded areas of British Columbia. I think, perhaps, the fairest comparison that we can make of our administration in this railway belt would be a comparison with the administration that has taken place in the railway belt adjoining the Canadian Pacific Railway, twenty miles each side, running from the eastern boundary of the Dominion to the Pacific Ocean. It was administered for fifteen years, from 1896 to 1910, by the Liberal administration at Ottawa; it has been administered since that time by the Conservative administration at Ottawa. When I give you the facts in connection with that administration I think you will admit that we have done quite as well, if not better.

A COMPARISON

"From 1896 to 1911—this was under the administration of the Liberal party at Ottawa—in the year 1911, which saw twenty-four years of constructed railway line, the total number of pre-emptions was 2,203 in fifteen years, or an average of 146 per annum.

"From 1911 to 1914, and this during a Conservative administration—I draw the attention of my friends of that persuasion in this House to this fact—the annual average was raised from 146 to 351, or a total of 1,025.

"Now, while this may seem good administration, our case is this—that with less than one half the area to draw upon, with only one railway completed and in operation for less than a year and two others not yet completed, we have placed 2,400 pre-emptors in ten years as against a Liberal record of 2,203 in fifteen years in more than double the area following the operations of the railway through that land for twenty-four years. And the comparison does not end there, because while I have given you the nominal figures for ten years, in point of fact we have succeeded in three years in placing 2,400, or at the rate of 800 per annum.

"I want to refer to that section of the land which lies within that portion of the line operated by the Grand Trunk Pacific, a portion of the railway belt which I have just referred to. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway traverses this Province for 700 miles,