

AN ACTIVE POLICY .

"Leaving this subject, I would like for a moment to show in a general way what has been accomplished outside of these railway belts, and I think it should silence forever the criticisms now levelled at us. In fact, I think I am safe to assume that it will not be very long indeed before the criticisms will be that perhaps we are endeavoring to do too much in bringing people on to the lands, and that we should direct our attention to helping out the man who is already there. This is receiving the attention of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, and some matters in connection with this have been ably presented to the House by the two gentlemen who spoke yesterday or the day before.

"It is not my intention to discuss the contents of the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, because I am limiting my attention particularly to our own actual land administration, the position I take being that it is not sufficient in land administration to offer lands to the public, but the administration should avail itself of every workable recommendation to increase productivity.

"Up to the present time our work has been to prepare the land by survey and to acquire information about it so as to make it available by surveys for allotment and location later on, and I think I can point with pride and considerable confidence to what has already been done.

"Our total pre-emptions during the last five years were:

In 1910	2,011
In 1911	2,455
In 1912	3,655
In 1913	3,855
In 1914	4,283

—making a total of 16,259 in the last five years, or an average of 3,419 per annum.

"I say, in view of these figures, that it must be convincing to the public that we are as active as possible under all the circumstances.

MARKED PROGRESS

"I might say that the year 1914 shows a marked progress in this connection in the Province of British Columbia, and greater relative progress than any Province in the East as to the number of homesteaders.

"In 1903 the number of pre-emptors was 783, in 1914 the number was 4,300; fifty per cent. of those issued in the year 1914 were out of four offices in the North, namely, Prince Rupert, Hazelton,