

The Government was bound by its obligation to enter into no bargains or undertakings that would conflict with the plans adopted at Ottawa. And the Ottawa Government was averse to community settlements. Did the Government dull the keen edge of the zeal of these courageous men whose minds were set on carrying out their plans? Not at all. They sent a committee of these men to Ottawa to lay their scheme before the Government there. And they did the right thing in doing so. What a howl of dissembled rage Mr. Bowser would have raised if the Government had met these projects with cold refusal. At any rate, as a result of protracted deliberations the two Governments reached a *modus vivendi* and a plan of associated settlement was entered upon. Land was selected and the men put to work clearing and bringing it under cultivation. All parties to this arrangement had to face the facts of cold, hard, practical experience; all had something to learn and contingencies were to be met when they arose. I may state that up to this time the experiment has been more than justified. Notwithstanding the fact that many of the men had little practical experience in land-clearing, they attacked their work seriously and adapted themselves to their new conditions with commendable zeal.

Mr. Bowser told you that \$2,320,000 had been spent in this work on "soldier settlement areas," but at present no soldier has title to a foot of land in British Columbia under the Act. All they have got out of it, he says, is \$4 per day for land clearing. They are no nearer getting title, he says, than they were two years ago and the clearing has cost \$150 per acre. He says the Provincial Government is afraid to tell the people how much it has cost to clear these lands, but, when they eventually do, the Dominion Government will send appraisers to value the land and the people of British Columbia will have to pay the difference between this appraisal and the cost of clearing, etc. Worse than this, he says, the soldiers cannot draw on the Dominion Government until they have a title to the land.

These statements combine cleverly devised but disingenuous and mis-leading assertions with flights of imagination worthy of a much better cause. The amount expended on soldier settlement areas, all of which is chargeable to their lands and will be repaid, at June 15th of this year was \$930,000, and not \$2,320,000 as Mr. Bowser says. If there is one thing Mr. Bowser is more reckless about than truth it is in his handling of figures and statistics, especially in connection with money matters, expenditures, interest, loans, public debts, and so on. Half a million or a million dollars more or less does not matter. He just turns his tongue loose and lets it talk. In one case, however—and let us do him justice—he understates a figure. He says clearing costs \$150 per acre. It cost more than that at Courtenay, where the outlay was slightly over \$200 per acre. It is much less at Creston—only about \$100 per acre; but the Government is not afraid to tell you what it has cost. Does Mr. Bowser intend to accuse these hard-working men of idleness? Or does he not know that the cost of clearing land is determined by the character of clearing undertaken? These lands have been