

Commission on Agriculture makes these and other valuable recommendations, and they are but the beginning of what a progressive Government would do.

2. The obstacles in the farmers' way should be removed. The Land Settlement Committee of the Vancouver Board of Trade pointed out in 1912 "that the very condition of mountain, forest, and stream, which makes our Province so abundantly rich in timber, minerals and fish, and from which such a large revenue is derived, are conditions adverse to agriculture, and are therefore good and sufficient reasons for warranting a liberal Government outlay, such as might not be considered wise under other conditions." For example, there can be no settlement where timber limits are held. On some of our best lands settlement will therefore be impossible for years to come. This led the committee quoted above to recommend that "where logged or partly cleared lands held under timber licenses are suitable for agriculture, the Government endeavour to secure them for that purpose." This has been done lately in different sections both on the coast and in the Interior. Another recommendation by the same board is still more drastic: "That land held suitable for agriculture as timber lands, or portions thereof, containing less than 5,000 feet per acre west of the Cascades, and 3,000 feet east of the Cascades, be cancelled and held by the Government, if possible, for pre-emption." Vigorous action along these lines would accomplish a great deal.

Speculation in farm lands must be stopped. This is the curse of British Columbia. Ours is the only Province where unsurveyed land can be staked. Then, to make bad worse, in the year 1907, the Government added a clause to Section 34 of the Land Act allowing a purchaser to stake land by agent. The enactment which forbids the sale of more than 640 acres to one man until the first purchase is improved is evaded in this way. The speculator secures from different individuals a power of attorney authorizing him to stake, buy, sell and receive money for Government land in their names. Then he stakes 640 acres in each name, thus acquired. The courts of the country have declared these methods fraudulent. The law provides that land grants fraudulently obtained may be cancelled, and yet the illegal practice has been allowed to go on until hundreds of thousands of acres of the best lands in the Province have gone into the hands of speculators. Until last December the Government asked only the first payment on these lands. And they justify the policy by saying that the taxes &c. were necessary for the road building and other public works which the country required. But why should not these taxes and payments have been obtained from the actual settler?

The consequences of their policy have been disastrous. In the newer districts intending settlers have found that the preference was