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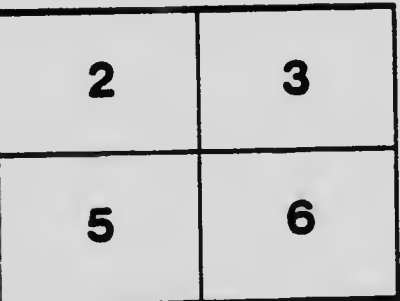
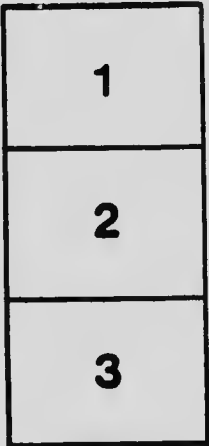
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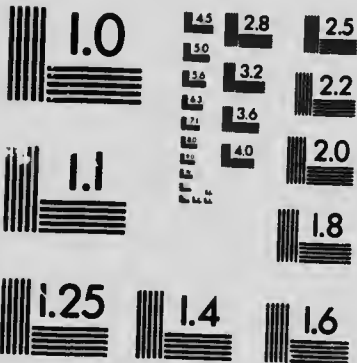
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REPLY

of

The Ministerial Union
of the Lower Mainland

to

Hon. W. J. Bowser
Attorney-General

on

“The Crisis in B.C.”

SPEECHES BY

Rev. Principal Mackay, D.D.

Rev. A. E. Cooke

and others

Dominion Hall, Vancouver, B.C.

Friday, October 1st, 1915

1915

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REV. G. R. WELCH:

Ladies and Gentlemen: We are pleased to find the audience tonight includes so many ladies. If the ladies are to have the franchise in the near future they do all to become interested in public life. Possibly if they had the vote this meeting would not have been necessary. This large and representative gathering manifests great interest in the matter of the "Crisis in B. C." pamphlet. The Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland has been adversely criticized for issuing this pamphlet. But we make no apology for assuming the moral leadership in this crisis. The ministers are the one great unpartisan body best fitted to take up without prejudice such questions as have arisen in this province and that affect its moral welfare. It is because of this moral aspect of the question that the ministers are behind it. If we do not take the lead, who will? Our motives cannot be called into question. We have no axe to grind. We have nothing to gain by our action. None of us are looking for the plums of office. We are not in pocket but out of pocket, by this movement. Some of those who have been disconcerted by the exposures of "The Crisis" pamphlet have said to the ministers: "Go on with your knitting and let us alone." That is the same cry that was raised by the unclean spirit when the World's Greatest Reformer was exorcising him from the devil-cursed man. "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee?" And the same cry has been echoed by those who have been doing the bad work ever since. But the ministers don't propose to stop until the unclean spirit is exorcised from the body politic. If anyone thinks that only a few of the ministers are in sympathy with the action of the Union such a one has only to look at the large number of members on the platform to be convinced to the contrary. Many others would be present did not other duties prevent.

The Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland has asked three gentlemen to represent it tonight. I now call on the first of these to address you—the Rev. Dr. John Mackay, principal of Westminster Hall.

REV. DR. MACKAY:

Ladies and gentlemen: At such a time as this when the whole Empire is engaged in a life-and-death struggle and all our hearts are heavy with anxiety for those who have gone to the front or sorrow for those who will never return, it is not a pleasant task to have to take part in a matter which from its very nature is more

or less contentious. But I am convinced that we at home have a duty quite as sacred as theirs who have gone to the front, to see to it that the land in which we live shall be worthy in life and institutions of the terrible price that is being paid for it. (Hear, hear!) Personally I would much prefer to remain silent tonight, but since I have been urged by my brethren to speak for them, I should feel myself a coward to let Mr. Cooke and the other five men who signed "The Crisis" bear the brunt of the criticism which it has brought out. (Applause.)

It is not enough to try to show that Mr. Cooke is a Liberal. Whatever he is, he and his five companions were chosen to represent the whole Union and the Union is ready and willing to shoulder the full responsibility for their words and acts in this matter. So, too, Mr. Cooke, Mr. Stillman and myself appear before you tonight as the duly accredited representatives of about sixty of the ministers of the Lower Mainland and what we say is said on their behalf, not as a personal matter in any sense of the term.

Since "The Crisis" appeared persistent attempts have been made from various directions to show that it was imposed by some sleight of hand on the part of Mr. Cotsworth upon the simple and guileless Ministerial Union and second that there is no such thing as the Ministerial Union, or at best it is a conspiracy of a few men. (Laughter.)

This is not a question of party politics. It is a question of the very life of the province. We have reached a crisis where the best men are needed and no Conservative or Liberal, should be elected, if an election must come first, who will not pledge himself to the fullest and fairest investigation and whose past record has not shown him capable and strong and, above all, unshakably honest.

The government organ in this city said after the Orpheum meeting, "Mr. Bowser's statement is commended to the attention of all who have read 'The Crisis' pamphlet and are anxious to know the truth of the matter and especially to the members of the Ministerial Union in whose name but without whose knowledge and approval the pamphlet was issued." (Laughter.) Again referring to a meeting of the Union it makes the extraordinary suggestion, "We wish to send a representative to

count the members and report the discussion."

The attorney-general spent a large part of his pamphlet on the same subject and the premier, writing to the Toronto Globe and the Toronto Saturday Night tells the people of the east what a bad man Mr. Moses Cotsworth is and then makes the following astounding series of statements: "For your information, I may tell you that Mr. Cotsworth, after interviewing members of the Liberal party, the Ministerial Association of Vancouver, the Federation of Labor, the Social Service League and other bodies, went to certain members of the Ministerial Union whose names appear in the foreword and a meeting of the Union was called to consider Mr. Cotsworth's pamphlet. The Ministerial Union has a membership of one hundred and fifty, but at this meeting only fifteen were present and of these only six appear as endorsing his statements." And from another quarter the people of Vancouver are asked to find out who the Ministerial Union are.

The Ministerial Union.

It does not seem to me that the Ministerial Union is the issue (applause), but since it seems so important in the eyes of the government certain facts should be made known now. First—The Ministerial Union is composed of the Ministerial Associations of Vancouver, South Vancouver and New Westminster with the men from intervening points and a few from the Fraser Valley. Like the Associations of which it is composed, it has never professed to speak for all the ministers of the community, but only for those who belong to its membership. That membership when "The Crisis" was under discussion numbered over eighty men to whom regular notices were sent. Second—"The Crisis" was not foisted on the Union by one or two men but was under discussion at many meetings from November till the end of April. I have been in Vancouver eight years and suppose I have attended as many meetings of the Ministerial Association and the Minis-

We have the right to demand an investigation. The government is the servant of the people and we have not only the right, but it is our duty to criticize where criticism is needed and to demand to know the truth where the truth is so evidently being concealed.

terial Union as any other man and I have never seen as large and interesting meetings as when this matter was

being decided. The six men who signed the pamphlet did so as representing the whole Union after being duly chosen by it. (Applause.) Third—Mr. Cotsworth acted throughout under the instructions of the ministers of the Lower Mainland in one capacity or another. He spoke by request to a meeting of the Ministerial Association of Vancouver in November, 1914. The facts he then had in his possession were of so serious a character that the association continued its sitting for two hours after its time for adjournment and reassembled again in the evening. No action was taken at that time, but at a very largely attended meeting a week later the Social Service Council representatives asked that they be given charge of the matter that a thorough investigation might be made. This was agreed to and two members of the Ministerial Association were appointed to cooperate with the committee of the Social Service Council. (A voice: "How many were at the meeting?") I will answer that in a moment. Mr. Cotsworth was employed by this committee to carry on his investigations and report to it. He spent nearly three months in Victoria, sending frequent reports to the committee and at every meeting of the Ministerial Association and Union our representatives made some reference to what was going on. When Mr. Cotsworth's work was completed his report was felt to be too voluminous for publication and was practically rewritten by the committee. Meanwhile the announcement had been made of an election in view of which the Vancouver members of the Social Service Council did not think it wise to commit that Council without a provincial meeting and the matter was handed over to the Ministerial Union for final action. At one of the largest meetings ever held by the Union, it was decided, after the whole report had been read and the original documents and the committee's verifications had been produced, to publish "The Crisis." (Applause.) Meanwhile a committee of six from the Union had been appointed to go carefully into the whole matter and a group of five other men were appointed to collaborate with these six. These made a final report which was passed upon by another large meeting before the matter was given to the printer. Thus for nearly six months this matter was under consideration and the great majority of the ministers of all the churches knew of what was going on, excepting that none of the Roman Catholic clergy have been identified with the Union, and only a few of the Anglican, and never once

did anyone at any meeting express dissent with the action which was being taken. After the publication of the pamphlet Dr. Crummy, of Wesley church, expressed his dissatisfaction with what had been done because of the likelihood of its being misunderstood in the heat of a political contest.

We believe that the whole bargain which saddled this province with a crushing burden of debt on behalf of a railway which we did not need, demands investigation.

Not One Dissenting Voice.

Therefore, if the constitution of the Ministerial Union and its deliberate acceptance of the responsibility for "The Crisis" is the issue, the facts are entirely opposed to the contention of the government. The facts are that the whole Union, following at every step its constitutional procedure, considered the matter from one point or another for six months and after all that time at least sixty men deliberately committed themselves to the course followed while dozens of others all over the province have since expressed their sympathy with that course, and only one member expressed his dissent and that after the pamphlet had been published. (Loud applause.)

Both the premier and the attorney-general, as well as the News-Advertiser, have made reference to the Lucas case as showing either carelessness or deliberate falsehood on the part of the Union. Now either all three of these parties have been badly misled, or they one or all have made one of the most unworthy attempts to deceive the public I have ever known. They quote a few lines from the evidence given on the trial for discovery in such a way as to make it appear that the ministers swore that for all the pamphlet they had no evidence but the word of Mr. Cotsworth. Now as Mr. Cooke will show you from the full report of that evidence, what they referred to was only six lines of the pamphlet. Thus the whole case for discrediting the origin and reliability of "The Crisis" falls to the ground. (Applause.)

Charge Equally Untrue.

A further attempt has been made to discredit the pamphlet by calling it a tirade against speculation and the customs of a misguided period. That is equally untrue. There is much difference of opinion among the members of the Union as to the moral significance of speculation. Personally I believe that there are forms of

speculative investments which are perfectly legitimate and that it is not even morally wrong to buy and sell real estate. But what the pamphlet does attack is the breaking of the law to grasp large areas of land before the bona fide settler has had a chance to know of its existence. ("Hear, hear!" and applause.) The laws of British Columbia forbid the sale of more than 640 acres of crown land to any one person until he has improved that amount to the extent of \$3.00 per acre. A man may, however, stake this first 640 acres, and any other amounts to which he may become entitled by improving what he holds, through an agent. But with the connivance of the government hundreds of thousands of acres were staked by one man in many cases, or by one corporation by the use of bogus powers of attorney appointing the men who wished to do the staking agent for the giver of the power of attorney. To my own personal knowledge hundreds of these were got in the saloons and low dives of Winnipeg and Vancouver from men who got from a drink of whiskey up to a dollar or two for perjuring themselves in this manner. (Applause.) Furthermore, information was regularly handed out a year in advance of the places where surveying was to be done so that men could go in and pick out the best land before it was surveyed. This could only come from the government or its officials. (Applause.) It does not matter whether the men who got the information were Liberals or Conservatives, they were breaking the law and the government was helping them to do it. If this had only been done in a few isolated instances it would not have been so bad, but it was the uniform policy for years until the bona fide settler had no fair chance at all. Case after case has come to our personal knowledge of people who had been brought to British Columbia by our advertising campaign and were unable to get any land excepting by purchase from some speculator. On three different occasions I sent men to different land offices and they returned with the information that they could make nothing of the information given them as to where the land for pre-emptors was to be found. (Applause.) And many complaints have been made to different members of our Union that after men had completed their pre-emptors' duties they were unable to get their deeds if they were not on good terms with the local political machine. ("Hear, hear!") So unsatisfactory

had things become that for at least a year before the collapse of the land

Personally, I would much prefer to remain silent tonight, but since I have been urged by my brethren to speak for them, I should feel myself a coward to let Mr. Cooke and the other five men, who signed 'The Crisis,' bear the brunt of the criticism which it has brought about.

boom our immigration chaplain invariably wrote to people who thought of coming to British Columbia to settle on the land, advising them to stay away as this was no place for an honest poor man who wanted to get a fair chance on the land. (Applause.) The result has been that all our splendid advertising of British Columbia in the old land has been wholly in the interests of the speculator as the people brought here received not even decent courtesy from those who represented the government when they tried to get on land where they would have a fair chance to make a living, and so they had either to turn to the speculator, go back home or over the line or on to Australia, which hundreds of them have done.

Language of "The Crisis."

As to the exact language of "The Crisis." It must be understood that where so many different persons are concerned there must be more or less compromise and the exact form of expression is that of the committee who revised and rewrote the pamphlet. There are some expressions used which may do injustice to some very estimable men and corporations and to them we express our regrets. No name is included merely to pillory the man or company named, but to illustrate the contentions which we make. We are prepared to believe that all those named were quite as much the victims of the system as they were responsible agents in its creation, but the fact remains that they with the connivance of the government have landed our province in a position where its very existence is threatened and ordinary measures are quite inadequate to deal with it. Noth, but the most thorough and far reaching investigation can apportion the blame and show who is a legitimate inventor and who a mere reckless exploiter of our resources, can show how far the government has been remiss in its duties and how far it has used its position to enrich its own members and friends and to impoverish the country. (Loud applause.) We believe that the whole

bargain which saddled this province with a crushing burden of debt on behalf of a railway which we did not need demands investigation. (Applause.) Why was that bargain made behind closed doors by two members of the government? We believe that the whole public works administration needs rigid investigation to show where the millions which have gone into the different municipalities have gone and how much value the country has got for them. (Applause.) We believe that the country's condition will go from bad to worse until those who are now here and those whom we hope to attract here know exactly what our circumstances as a province are and what is done with our resources. We cannot hope to attract money here so long as British Columbia is likely to be the bottomless hole which it has proven to be in the past. We cannot hope to attract settlers here so long as they are treated as they have been in the past. (Loud applause.)

The first step in reform is to know the facts. And the facts can only be known by means of an impartial investigation. We do not care whether that investigation is conducted by an imperial commission or a federal one or one appointed from among the judiciary of British Columbia, so long as it is fair and thorough going and will spare no pains to get at the truth. ("Hear, hear!" and applause.)

And we have a right to demand an investigation. The government is the servant of the people and we have not only the right but it is our duty to criticise where criticism is needed and to demand to know the truth where the truth is so evidently being concealed. (Loud applause.)

When we issued "The Crisis" we knew we were taking a serious step, but we felt that the situation was intensely serious. So long as the matter is only the petty differences of parties we have no interest in it, but when the moral and spiritual health of our people, when the very existence of the state as a free democratic institution is jeopardized by a state of affairs which has grown up among us, we would be less than men if we did not demand that everything should be done to rectify that condition. (Applause.)

We believed an investigation was needed when we issued "The Crisis." We believe it far more firmly now. After months of study the attorney-general made what he described as the best possible defense. I have shown you that in several vital points that defense breaks down. I believe you will agree with me when Mr.

Cooke sits down that it has broken down at every point. (Applause.) It is no defense at all. There is a ready way by which our statements can be disproved and that is by an impartial tribunal investigating the matters to which we draw attention and if that tribunal finds that the administration of the government has been in the best interests of the province, I believe I speak for every man in the Ministerial Union when I say, we will advise the people to continue them in power. (Applause.) But if they refuse we have only one recourse and that is to advise the public to put other men in power who will be sure to give us the facts we seek and thus make it possible for our province to come into its own. (A voice: "Where will you get them?")

This is not a question of party politics. It is a question of the very life of the province. (Applause.) We have reached a crisis where our best men are needed and no man, Conservative or Liberal, should be elected, if an election must come first, who will not pledge himself to the fullest and fairest investigation and whose past record has not shown him capable and strong, and above all, unshakably honest. (Loud applause.)

REV. R. F. STILLMAN:

Rev. R. F. Stillman, president of the Methodist Conference, whose name is one of those appearing upon the famous pamphlet, stated that he spoke simply as a private citizen. He had been told that he should not go on the platform and be engaged in anything of a controversial nature. He was not speaking for the Methodist church. He wanted to correct a false impression that had gone out through the Conservative paper in Vancouver, the attorney-general and other individuals that the Methodist church frowned down on this "Crisis in B. C." and that the official organ of the church condemned it. The "Recorder" in Victoria is not the official organ of the Methodist church. It is a private concern and does not speak for the Methodist church. I would just like to tell the editor of the News-Advertiser who is a Methodist and attends Conference, that it is not the organ of the Methodist church. (Laughter and applause.) The Methodist church has a department of social service and that department will speak and when it does I trust the editor of the News-Advertiser will have the report published on the front page. (Loud applause.) I did not sign the pamphlet in any other capacity than as a citizen and as a representative of the Ministerial Union. It would have

been cowardly on my part to have refused to sign it. (Applause.) In it there is something that hurts the feelings of some of my best friends, but it was either playing the part of a man or of a coward. Few know my politics but I will say to you that I was nursed and brought up a Conservative and whatever political leanings I have are Conservative, but the first question is the welfare of the province. We have done our part.

REV. A. E. COOKE:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: I would like to ask this audience a question and get an answer. I want to ask it in all seriousness, and from no spirit of bravado. It is this: Do you want me to touch only some points of this speech of the attorney-general, and leave ourselves open to the charge that we cannot answer what I do not touch tonight, or do you want me to take the whole thing to pieces and bury it so deeply that in future no man will mention the Orpheum speech without being thoroughly ashamed of it? (Applause and cries of "Go on! Take your time! Finish the job!") Thank you. Now, Mr. Chairman, exactly five months ago, the now famous pamphlet, "The Crisis in B. C.," was issued to the public by the Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland. In that pamphlet very definite statements were made and grave charges preferred regarding the conduct of public affairs in this province by the present administration. Those statements and charges did not simply concern any one department of our government, but all of them. Not only one minister of the crown, but practically every one of them was criticised, and yet fully three months passed before any serious attempt was made by anyone to reply to the pamphlet. Then after three months time to go through the records, with the whole government staff at their disposal, we had a deliverance on the subject from the government to their specially selected friends in a building whose every avenue of approach

"We have succeeded in putting the attorney-general and his colleagues on their defense, and my business tonight, as spokesman for my brethren, is simply to strip bare the subterfuge and false statements of Mr. Bowser."

was lined with police. (Applause.) In the Orpheum theatre of this city on July 29th the attorney-general, the minister of agriculture, the minister of

finance, the commissioner of fisheries and the acting premier—all five in one—spent two and a half hours wrestling with the problem of how to avoid a reply to the pamphlet "The Crisis in British Columbia." (Laughter and loud applause.)

Gallery-Play, Abuse, Distortion.

Although my good friends of the Conservative Association had forgotten my existence, and were unkind enough to refuse me a ticket when I applied at their office, I managed to be present and had the privilege of hearing the speech, and for once at least seeing myself as others see me. Next morning I said to a friend, who was surprised to see me alive, and who asked what I thought of the speech, "It consisted of three parts: One-third gallery-play, one-third abuse of Cotsworth and the ministers, and one-third distortion of details and complete evasion of the main issues. These three parts were equal to the whole, which was a gallant attempt to deceive the public on issues vital to the life of the whole country." (Applause.) That was my opinion then and now that we have had it presented to the public in complete form, twice over, I see no reason whatever to change my estimate. The bulk of this speech is based on the ancient principle, "When you have no case abuse the plaintiff." Now Mr. Bowser and his supporters may really believe that the gallery-play and abuse of Mr. Cotsworth and the ministers, in which he indulged so freely, was in perfect keeping with the dignity of the many offices which he holds, but I can assure them that it will take more than two and a half hours of that kind of thing to convince the people of this province that the ministers who have had the courage of their convictions in publishing this pamphlet are either a group of simpletons or a crowd of bigoted political partisans. (Applause.) And I can also assure him that we have not the slightest intention of following his lead in that direction. (Loud applause.) Vituperation is not argument, and we are quite content to deal with the facts. Certainly we are not going to be dragged into any side issues; the main issue is too vastly important, and the people have brains enough to see on which side the real argument lies. So I am here to deal with facts, not fancies. I am not going to defend our position, for we are not on the defensive. We have succeeded in putting the attorney-general and his colleagues on their defense, and my business tonight, as spokesman for my brethren is simply to strip bare the subterfuge and false statements of

Mr. Bowser and show you that his defense is not a defense at all, but

"The bulk of this speech (Bowser's) is based on the ancient principle, 'When you have no case abuse the plaintiff.'"

a specious attempt to cloud the issues. (Applause and interruption, cries of "Put him out!") Never mind, friends! Let him slumber down, I'm Irish myself. (Loud laughter.) Hear in mind that Mr. Bowser, on page 4 of his speech, claims to give the reply of the government to our pamphlet and twice over, on pages 6 and 15 he states he will make "the best defense possible." To assist him in this defense, he has access to all the government files and records and the complete control and influence of the government staff at Victoria, so I claim that if "the best" is in his power" breaks down, the case for the government is absolutely gone, and the whole people of British Columbia have a right to the investigation we demand. ("Hear, hear!")

Lucas' Libel Suit.

Now, first, let me take this much-discussed Lucas' libel suit to which Mr. Bowser devotes over three pages of his oration. All over the province I have met men who believed that the Ministerial Union had fallen down badly upon this point. The "News-Advertiser" had done some of its finest work on this point, and with the help of Mr. Lucas' lawyer sons had scattered abroad the story that three of our colleagues had definitely sworn we had no proof of anything whatever in our pamphlet beyond the unsupported statements of Mr. Cotsworth. Even Mr. Bowser repeats this on page 17 where he says: "By the evidence given on oath they apparently take Mr. Cotsworth's statement for everything which appears in the document." And again, on page 40, "I have shown you by their sworn evidence that they depend entirely on Cotsworth, they depend absolutely on him." But all of them know perfectly well that every question put to us in the "examination for discovery" in the libel suit, and every answer made by us, had to do with nothing whatever in the pamphlet beyond this one paragraph of six lines and a half. Not another single point in the whole 32 pages was at issue and Mr. Bowser knew it. He also knew that at Hamilton hall and in this hall I produced a mass of original documents in support of our statements. (Applause.)

Now, here are the facts. At the "examination for discovery" it was the business of Mr. Lucas' lawyers to find out all they could about our defense, and it was our business to tell the truth, but not to volunteer any information they did not ask for or know how to get. So, in spite of the fact that we were allowing ourselves to be put in a false position, we answered correctly all questions put to us, and stated that we had not the documentary proof of the facts in this particular instance, but had taken the statement of Mr. Cotsworth. They did not even ask us why we had taken his statement, and we did not give our reasons.

Strictest Investigation Possible.

But why did we not have further proofs, or documentary evidence of these particular facts? Simply because we believed that all such evidence was on confidential files at Victoria, and it would be impossible to get it without an order of the court. Mr. Cotsworth had told us what and where the documents were, and in all the multitude of other cases where we could get the proofs, we had not once found that he had advised us wrongly. Our claim is that we had made the strictest investigation possible to us, and even in this case, we were, and are still, prepared to "substantiate the statements made." (Applause.) I told them so at our examination, though Mr. Bowser did not quote that part of my evidence from the Orpheum platform. Now, how could we do it?

Listen, gentlemen. There has been some little commotion in political circles in Manitoba lately. (Laughter and applause.) There was a commission appointed some time ago to enquire into the doings of certain gentlemen in control of the legisla-

"Next morning I said to a friend, who was surprised to see me alive, and who asked what I thought of the speech, 'It consisted of three parts: one-third gallery play, one-third abuse of Cotsworth and the ministers, and one-third distortion of details and complete evasion of the main issues.' These three parts were equal to the whole, which was a gallant attempt to deceive the public on issues vital to the life of the whole country."

ture, and Justice Mathers was chairman of that commission. Suppose that five years from now certain questions arise as to what actually took place in the work of that commission,

questions involving some of the witnesses examined before it. Would it not be considered good proof as to the facts to put Judge Mathers, chairman of that commission, on the witness stand under oath, and have him testify as to what took place? Would his sworn testimony not be evidence acceptable in any court of law? Well, we are prepared to substantiate our statements in this paragraph in question by putting the chairman of the commission that examined Mr. Lucas and recommended his dismissal, on the witness stand, and having him testify under oath as to their truth. (Applause.) The man was certified by the McBride government to the other governments of this Dominion as an expert of unusual ability and experience and he presented to us credentials far greater than any the McBride government could ever give him if it existed till doomsday. So we accepted his statement, and were prepared, and are still prepared to put him on oath as our leading witness. (Applause.) But wait a minute. We had no documents on this point then, for we believed it impossible for us to get them without an order of the court, but since then Mr. Cotsworth has discovered that he still has in his possession several documents that bear out his statements. (Loud applause.) These have already been sworn to and placed in evidence, and will go far to prove our case if it is ever allowed to go before the judge. I need not discuss their contents, the court can do that when the time comes. But here is a document I am going to risk quoting tonight. You may remember that last May Messrs. Lucas & Lucas published a long letter in the "News-Advertiser" the bulk of which was certain extracts from the evidence of Messrs. Harkness, Stillman and myself. Now, I had always understood that to publish such evidence while a case was still before the court, was gross contempt of court. ("Hear, hear!") So thought the members of our Union, and some legal gentlemen we consulted, but evidently we were all wrong, else the custodian of law and justice in British Columbia, even the attorney-general, has repeated the offense in a desperate attempt to gain political advantage at our expense. At any rate I'm going to risk my freedom by following his professional example, and quoting a few sentences from the sworn evidence of Mr. Alexander Lucas, M.P.P., at his examination the same day as ours. I may possibly be committing contempt of court, but I have good precedent, and if I happen to land in the dock, I shall demand that the attorney-gen-

eral of this province stand beside me on the same charge. (Laughter and applause.)

Peculiar Admissions.

Remember that those six and a half lines for which the action is taken, state that Mr. Alexander Lucas was compelled to resign from his post of travelling assessor "in December, 1909, on account of neglect of his duties, and a timber deal by which he pocketed about \$10,000. He had left his post and journeyed to Vancouver, in spite of repeated refusals of leave of absence to put through the deal." Quite naturally Mr. Lucas does not agree with us upon all these details (laughter) else he would not have started an action for libel. He point-blank denies that he was compelled to resign by the commission, or that his resignation was even discussed with its members when they met him in Nelson. But immediately after this he makes some peculiar admissions. He was asked—"Did they make any objections to your leaving your post at Nelson and journeying to Vancouver?" Ans. No, never a word.

Q. Had you received any complaints from your department as regards that? Ans.—Occasionally I would have a letter finding fault with my leaving without leave of absence.

Q. Yes? A. I think two or three times in 8 or 9 years.

Q. Would there be any objection to your coming to Vancouver?

A. Coming to Vancouver? Yes. That was the objection that I had from Mr. Tatlow, and from Mr. McKilligan as representing Mr. Tatlow.

Q. Mr. McKilligan would be rather the head of that department at Victoria, would he? A. Yes, he was my immediate superior officer.

Q. And did you keep any copies of your reply? A. No.

Q. You think that not more than three of such letters were written to you? A. Three or four, I don't recollect any more.

Q. Well, would it be unfair to say that there might be possibly as many as half a dozen? A. Oh, yes, there might be, yes.

Q. It would not take you by surprise if there were half a dozen or a dozen?

A. Well, a dozen would surprise me, yes.

Q. How does it come that there was need of so many? Did you uphold the position that you were taking of leaving, or were you justified? A. How do you mean?

Understanding with Sir Richard.

Q. Well, supposing on letter number one being written to you saying that

you have left when you should not, how was it that there was need of letter number two? Did you say "I have not done wrong"? A. I don't think there would be any more than three or four, when I really left, you see. I have applied for leave when I did not get leave of absence. Now I had an understanding, or I explained the matter to Sir Richard McBride, and I had his authority to leave when I wanted to, so long as I would account for the time.

Q. So your understanding was with the premier? A. Yes.

Q. So, therefore, you could disregard Captain Tatlow and Mr. McKilligan? A. I could, but I did not wish to.

Q. Well, without breaking faith? A. Yes, I would be in good standing with the government even if I did. (Laughter.)

Q. And did they accept that as a sufficient excuse? A. Mr. Tatlow wrote me a letter stating he did not remember it. I had some understanding with Mr. Tatlow.

Q. Yes? A. But he said he did not remember making it.

Q. Yes? A. Then afterwards I saw him and had a conversation with him.

Q. And what was the result of the conversation? A. The result of it was that he said it was all right, only it was a bad example to set to the other members of the civil service, and he did not approve of it.

Q. And to your immediate superior Mr. McKilligan?

A. I don't remember. He said if I would apply he would always recommend it, and I would get it; and it was only a matter of form anyway.

Q. He said that in a letter? A. No, that would be in a conversation.

Q. And he understood that the justification was your arrangement with Sir Richard McBride? A. He understood that was what I claimed.

Q. Did he agree to that? A. I don't know whether he did or not, but I suppose he did. It did not make any difference to me. (Laughter.)

Q. It did not make any difference to you? A. No.

Q. And Mr. McKilligan could go his own way about it? A. Sure. (Laughter.)

Journeys to Vancouver.

Q. Now, was one of these journeys to Vancouver made in regard to the timber deal? A. No.

Q. None of them? A. Not that I can think of.

Q. Well, you were absent in regard to the timber deal? A. Yes, but I think I had leave of absence every time in connection with that. I was

absent twice to my knowledge according to what I remember now.

Q. And where did you go in regard to that timber deal? A. To Vancouver. (Loud laughter.)

Q. And anywhere else? A. No.

Q. And with whom were you dealing? A. Oh, I was not dealing with anybody.

Q. Well, what I mean— A. It was in connection with the timber deal, but I was not making the timber deal.

Q. Whose deal was it? A. It was a deal made between my sons acting for Mr. Newell and Mr. J. A. Dewar.

Q. And you were there? A. I was interested in the thing sufficiently that I liked to be here, and I was here on both occasions.

Q. I see that there is a mention of the sum of \$10,000 that you got? A. Well, I did not get it. My sons got more than that, though. (Laughter.)

Q. And do you know how much your sons got out of it? A. I don't know exactly, but I know it was more than \$10,000.

Q. \$20,000? A. Oh, no. It was something in the neighborhood of \$12,000, I think, but I don't know the exact amount.

Q. How long was it before you resigned that these commissioners visited you? A. Well, I have been trying to think that over, and as nearly as my recollection can go, it must have been in November or December when they visited Nelson.

Q. So it was only a short time before your resignation? A. Yes. Well, it was before I quit finally.

He then states that he "had been calculating to quit for 18 months," and had so informed Sir Richard McBride, who was not the minister of that department.

Question 199 then asks—"Who was the minister of the department then?" A. Mr. Tatiow was at that particular time.

Q. Did you communicate with Mr. Tatiow about your resignation? A. I think I did later on.

Peculiar Type of Servant.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have quoted those questions and answers without doing any violence to the context which I have only omitted because I cannot take up your time. But I think these sworn statements of Mr. Lucas' clearly prove that he was a very peculiar type of civil servant. (Applause.) He had a private arrangement with Premier McBride that permitted him to flout the orders of his immediate superior, Mr. McKillop, and Capt. Tatiow, the minister of that department. He left his post when it suited him in spite of

remonstrance from both these men; he came twice to Vancouver to help put through a timber deal which brought \$12,000 into the family purse. (Laughter.) He was interviewed by the commission of which Mr. Cotsworth was chairman, in the month of November or December and he later wrote the minister of finance his resignation which took effect that same month of December, as we have stated. (Applause.) These are his own admissions under oath, and I assure you that if he ever permits this case to get into court, the documents in our possession will abundantly account for the points wherein he contradicts our published statements. (Loud applause.)

I may add here also that when Messrs. Lucas & Lucas wrote their letter to the "News-Advertiser" in May last, they adroitly induced the public to believe that they had issued a writ for Mr. Cotsworth, and could not set the case down for trial until his statement of defense had been filed. Therefore, the idea was that we were holding back the case. But the truth was that they had not served Mr. Cotsworth with any writ, and it was not until ten days later, as he stood at the back of this hall, beside me at our last meeting here, that Mr. Cotsworth received a writ. And it was then two weeks too late to set the case down for trial before September. (Applause.) But September has come and gone, and they have made not a move to bring on the trial. The whole thing so far has been a bold bid for public opinion, and if that case reaches court before the next election it seems to me that we ourselves will have to force the issue. (Applause.)

Attack on Mr. Cotsworth.

And now I want to say a word regarding Mr. Bowser's attack on Mr. Cotsworth. That attack, made on a man who was refused a ticket to Mr. Bowser's meeting and three times refused admittance at the door, needs to be exposed for what it is; though I insist that "Moses is not the issue." ("Hear, hear!") It consists of two main charges. First, that Mr. Cotsworth himself was a land-grabber, exactly like those whom we have exposed in this pamphlet. Second, that he used unfair and underhand methods to dispossess honest pre-emptors from their holdings, that he himself might secure them. Now, sir, I say fairly and squarely that both these charges are utterly and contemptibly false. (Loud applause.) Strong language, you say. Yes, but I am going here and now to prove it, and, when an attack like this has been made on a man's character, and the

good name of his whole family, weak and watery terms are not in order. (Applause.) Mr. Bowser makes the first of these charges against Mr. Cotsworth on page 21 of his speech in these words: "Now, it will be very interesting to the Ministerial Union and their friends . . . to know that one Moses B. Cotsworth was one of the greatest operators along the line of this alleged fraudulent method of obtaining crown lands." And the crowd who sat on the platform with him applauded. That statement and every similar statement about Mr. Cotsworth's attempts to get land for his family is founded on the deliberate falsehood on the previous page—I can find no other word than "falsehood" for it—(a voice, "There's a shorter word!") and loud laughter) where Mr. Bowser asserts that we have stated in our pamphlet that the staking of land by means of an agent is fraudulent. Twice over in the same paragraph he makes the assertion. Speaking of the passing of the 1907 amendment, which provided for such staking of land, he says (page 20): "Now Mr. Cotsworth states that that was a fraud," and again, "Mr. Cotsworth said, or the Ministerial Union, that because this was done, and powers of attorney were taken, that inerefore a fraud is committed upon the Government." But neither Mr. Cotsworth nor the Ministerial Union ever said any such thing. Never. (Applause.) We distinctly state on page 7 of "The Crisis" that this method of securing land was made legal in 1907, and we take the longest paragraph on the page to describe exactly what we meant when we speak of fraudulent staking. We did state that this opened the door to the real fraud, which is the staking of land by the use of "dummy names" in thousands of acres for one and the same individuals or corporations. That is the fraud, and we cite the cases in which both the Supreme Courts of B. C. and Canada decided it is so. (Applause.) The laws of the Province provide for any man staking land for bona-fide settlers up to 640 acres for each, but no more, and according to that Moses B. Cotsworth had a perfect right to secure more than twice the amount he did secure for himself and the grown-up members of his family. (Applause.) Yet Mr. Bowser deliberately labored throughout his speech to produce the impression that Mr. Cotsworth had obtained his small acreage of land by the selfsame methods as the men who evaded the law and fraudulently secured their thousands and tens of thousands of acres. (Cries of "Shame!")

Honest Pre-emptors.

Now, what of the charge that Mr. Cotsworth tried to dispossess honest pre-emptors that he might get hold of their lands?

The Attorney-General makes several statements in this connection. He asserts that Mr. Cotsworth did not inform the Ministerial Union that he had located these lands; that six years ago he travelled at the public expense out to Quatsino to locate land for himself and family; that he used the provincial constable at Alberni, named Cox, as an agent to cancel the pre-emption of a Mr. Wall, that he himself might get it. He also asserts that Mr. Cotsworth did his best to cancel the holdings of Charles B. Noot and Guy Hlad. Now in the first place, Mr. Cotsworth informed our committee right at the start of our investigations that he had purchased these lands for himself and his family, as he had a perfect right to do. Also I have here the correspondence between Mr. Cotsworth and Mr. H. C. Rayson, government agent at Alberni, as well as numerous other letters regarding the lands purchased by Mr. Cotsworth, all covering a space of time from 1909 to 1912. I spent a day and a half going carefully through the whole thing, and I have Mr. Cotsworth's assurance that he is willing to place the whole correspondence in the hands of any impartial committee of men for examination. (Applause.) From beginning to end there is not one thing but is perfectly legal and perfectly straightforward and aboveboard in all these transactions. (Loud applause.) From first to last he acted in close consultation with and on the advice of the Department of Lands through its agent at Alberni. Both he and the government agent acted in a perfectly honorable and legal way according to this correspondence. In three different letters, dated October, May and July, 1909-1910, Mr. Cotsworth asks the agent's advice upon certain points, insisting that "only the right thing must be done." Here are letters in which the agent gives him advice as to where there is suitable land to be had, and enclosing sketch maps of what is vacant and unsurveyed. They are dated July and August, 1909. They advise him that he can make application for his friends up to the extent of 640 acres each, but no more.

Not at Public Expense

Here are two letters of Mr. Cotsworth to the Member of Parliament for that constituency and the Deputy Commissioner of Lands, dated Feb'y. 11th and July 29th, 1910, definitely showing that Mr. Cotsworth had gone

to see that land when on his holidays, and therefore, not at the public expense, as a re-grading commissioner, as Mr. Bowser states. (Applause.)

Here is a letter published since the Orpheum speech of Mr. Bowser, published in the "Daily Province" of August 9th, by Charles A. Cox, former constable at Alberni, in which he flatly denies the attorney-general's reference to him and the land of Thos. Wall. He says: "I am the individual referred to, and I wish to deny absolutely ever staking an acre of land for Moses B. Cotsworth or any other Cotsworth, or ever acting as agent for Mr. Cotsworth, or anyone else, either directly or indirectly." (Loud applause.)

Here is a letter of 20th October, 1909, from the government agent at Alberni, advising Mr. Cotsworth that "In the past people have taken up pre-emptions and have held them for years and not paid any taxes or done any work, and if they sell for a good price they will pay up, but if not, they simply let them go until they are cancelled." It states that if he knows of any land "that is vacant or can be cancelled" he will let him know. On the same date he advised him that the pre-emption of Charles B. Noot had previously been cancelled and application had already been made to purchase it. But if Mr. Cotsworth had tried to cancel it, as stated by Mr. Bowser, he would have been perfectly justified, because Noot was living in Victoria and doing nothing whatever on the land. He would only have anticipated the action of the Department itself when it waked up later to the fact that the pre-emption laws were being evaded in hundreds of cases. Why, last year alone the inspection department cancelled 900 pre-emptions and notified an additional 800 pre-emptors that they were liable to cancellation. And this was only out of 3,600 inspected.

The Iistad Holding.

Now a word about Iistad's holding. This is another of Mr. Bowser's proofs that Cotsworth was an underhand robber of the poor pre-emptor. Mr. Cotsworth, like any man with an ounce of brains, wanted, if possible, to get the land for his family all together, so that it could be developed effectively. When he secured the first lots with the government agent's advice, he found he had no outlet whatever to the coast. Some pieces of land that were not being developed lay between him and the shore, amongst them a hundred acres applied for as pre-emption by Guy Iistad. None of the conditions were being fulfilled, and on Nov. 18th, one month after the government agent had advised him of

the methods of bogus pre-emptors, Mr. Cotsworth wrote the agent that Iistad had done nothing and was doing nothing whatever to secure his land, and gave notice that he wished to cancel it. Now Mr. Bowser says that this proves Mr. Cotsworth was trying to cheat a bona-fide pre-emptor out of his land. He does not tell us that when complaints were made on Iistad's behalf to both the government agent and Mr. Brewster, member of parliament for that district, Mr. Cotsworth fully explained the situation, and made this offer to Iistad if he honestly wanted to pre-empt the land. Here is his letter to Mr. Brewster, dated Feby. 11th, 1910. He says that if he buys the land he is "prepared to give Iistad every opportunity, as I would not allow injustice to anyone in my transactions." He will allow Iistad to "choose half of the water front and clear back what he can, and for every acre he can clear I will not only give him that acre, but also five others, thus giving him six acres for each one he effectively prepares by his own labor for agricultural use within four years, up to a distance of half a mile back." And he adds that if Iistad fails to make good in this way, he will pay him the value of any work done, as may be determined between them by the local member of parliament. (Applause.) Now, I ask if that offer made at the time is the offer of a dishonest man who was playing the cheat with both pre-

The attorney-general has repeated the offense in a desperate attempt to gain political advantage at our expense.

emptors and government? (Cries of "No!" and loud applause.) I repeat again that not only did Mr. Cotsworth inform the Ministerial Union committee of his having taken up these lands, but his correspondence proves that he acted throughout with the advice of the land department, and both he and the government agent acted honorably in the whole business. (Applause.)

Mr. Cotsworth's Record.

Ladies and gentlemen, listen. This Mr. Cotsworth is the man who was specially accredited by the McBride government to almost every government in this Dominion as the expert they were "employing for special work on account of his exceptional ability and experience." Here is the letter which so described him to Premier Roblin of Manitoba. I read it on this platform before. This is the man who assisted the Dominion government in the work of civil service reform and

in drafting the Canadian Annuities Act. This is the man who was selected by English chambers of commerce and the British government to assist them in railway legislation, and who is author of the greatest book on "Railway Rates" in Great Britain today. This is the man who was elected to a fellowship in their ranks by the Geological Society of England; whom the British Association for the Advancement of Science delighted to honor with a place on their programme in 1906; and whom Premier McBride chose to set forth the claims of British Columbia in this souvenir booklet presented to the members of that association when they met in Winnipeg in 1910. Yet Mr. Bowser has nothing better to say of him than that he is "a very meddlesome old man," "an adventurer from London," and insists that he has stultified his whole career by suddenly becoming a dishonest grafter, a looter of the public domain, and an underhand thief of the rights of the honest settler.

This is the man who has travelled the globe in his researches into ancient and modern systems of time, and whose work on calendar reform was endorsed by the Royal Society of Canada on the motion of Sir Sanford Fleming and Dr. Wilfrid Campbell, the poet. Here is the late Sir Sanford Fleming's original letter stating the facts and congratulating Mr. Cotsworth on his success. (Applause.) The whole council of the Royal Society met Premier Borden on June 7th, 1912, secured his endorsement of the scheme, and the governor general was requested to bring the matter before the imperial government as "a benefit of the utmost importance to the whole civilized world." I quote from the petition of the Royal Society. Other great men such as President Hadley of Yale, Camille Flammarion, the famous astronomer of Paris, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Norman Lockyer, Lord Avebury, and other great scientists of Europe have advocated this reform, but the massive genius of the attorney-general of British Columbia dismisses the whole subject with the sneering remark that it is "a change in the Westminster Almanac" needed to give Mr. Cotsworth more time to steal land from pre-emptors. (Laughter and loud applause.) Mr. Chairman, you will pardon me for spending time on these points, but I think it is due to ourselves, as well as to Mr. Cotsworth, to state the actual facts. (Applause.) Mr. Bowser has seen fit to demean himself and the provincial government in a most contemptible attack on a man whom the greatest brains of the world

have chosen to honor, and who, but for his sterling integrity, could have been as wealthy today as some of our British Columbia aristocracy. (Laughter and applause.) That attack has been used as the 'last weapon of political desperation because the "spokesman of the government" dared not face the real issue. Mr. Bowser has been forced to admit that Cotsworth is not the issue, but he drags him in because he says the character of the witness affects his evidence. That is true, but the effect is directly opposite to what Mr. Bowser tries to produce. It is just because the character of Mr. Cotsworth is right in line with his great ability that we are prepared to stand by him, and it will take much more than the cowardly and contemptible attack made on both him and his family to discredit him or to upset the mass of evidence he has placed in our hands. (Loud applause.) So I advise Mr. Bowser to say nothing more about Mr. Cotsworth in this discussion. If he and his colleagues have no other arguments to bring forth, let them henceforth never mention the name of Moses. (Laughter.) The one way to prove their case and upset the evidence against them is to give the investigation we demand on behalf of the people of the province. Since the Orpheum speech of Mr. Bowser there

Our claim is that we made the strictest investigation possible to us and even in this case we were and are still prepared to "substantiate the statements made."

is no other method left open. (Prolonged applause.)

"Best Possible Defence"

And now to show the value of this "best possible defence" the government can make, where it touches the details of our pamphlet. For I want you to notice particularly that Mr. Bowser avoids the main issues and discusses only the details we have used as illustrations of our intentions. I begin with the land department.

Take first, what seems to be the most damaging refutation of our statement regarding the work of the agricultural commission. On page 17 of his speech the attorney-general flatly contradicts what we have said about the returns made to the commission by the twenty-nine assessors of the province. Now just what is our charge in this matter? On pages 4 and 26 we show that the statement made by Mr. Ross, minister of lands, that there are 4,500,000 acres of land

still available for settlement within three miles of railways in this province, cannot be correct because 20 out of the 29 assessors in the province did not report any land suitable and available for agricultural purposes within 20 miles of a railway or wagon road throughout the whole province. Now, I want to frankly admit that the actual wording we have used on page 4, has, quite unconsciously on our part, been left open to objection, and has provided Mr. Bowser with a loop hole out of which he squirms adroitly to cloud the actual fact. But on page 26 we have stated the fact clearly and correctly, and Mr. Bowser himself confirms the statement. It is not verbally accurate to say that 20 out of 29 actually reported no such lands left in their districts, but the actual fact is that 20 out of 29 did not report any land suitable and available for cultivation, within 20 miles of a railroad or wagon road in their districts. The fact that certain small acreages may have been preempted since in three of these districts does not refute our statement or diminish its value as proof of the main charge. Here are the abstracts made direct from the original returns sent in to the commission, and they prove absolutely what we state on page 26 of "The Crisis"—that in the year 1913, only 9 out of 29 provincial assessors reported any land available for settlement within 20 miles of a railroad or wagon road in the whole of British Columbia. (Loud applause.) Also they give as their total estimate of land suitable for agriculture within that radius only 824,654 acres. That is our reason for saying that Mr. Ross' estimates of 4,500,000 within three miles of railways is entire-

Vituperation is not argument, and we are quite content to deal with the facts. Certainly we are not going to be dragged into any side issues; the main issue is too vast, important and the people have brains enough to see on which side the real argument lies.

ly without foundation. (Applause.) Here are the abstracts proving our statement, and Mr. Bowser's speech, while pretending to be a refutation is really a confirmation of our argument. If we are wrong then why did the government refuse to print the "returns" in full when the house ordered it to be done? ("Hear, hear!") Here are the "Votes and Proceedings" of the last session of the assembly and on 19th February an order of the house was

granted on motion of Mr. Parker Williams that these "returns" be brought down, but the order was disregarded. Fifteen days later—when the house was closing—Premier McBride stated that there had not been time to get them ready. Now, Mr. Chairman, before Mr. Bowser or anyone else says anything more upon this point I challenge him or the government to publish in full those returns made by the assessors in answer to question 11 of the Royal Commission. That will settle the question as to whether we are right or wrong. (Applause.)

Perhaps Memory Poor.

But Mr. Bowser produces an affidavit of the secretary of the commission on agriculture in which he swears that "no one but Mr. Cotsworth ever examined the returns sent in by provincial assessors, and neither he, nor anyone else, ever made a copy of those returns." Now, I would not for a moment accuse the secretary of making a false affidavit. I mean that. But I am forced to say that in making this affidavit the secretary must certainly have overlooked or forgotten some of the facts. Here are the abstracts made by Mr. Cotsworth in the office of the secretary which fully cover the points in dispute. And we are fully prepared to prove that a full copy of these returns was made by another gentleman before our pamphlet was printed, and Mr. Cotsworth checked off his own abstract with this gentleman's copy. (Applause.)

Again, the secretary, according to Mr. Bowser, swears that pages 352 and 353 of the Commission's Report contains "a complete and correct transmission of the provincial assessor's and deputy assessor's" returns to the commission. Now, I will not again take up the points we have made regarding Nelson and Lillooet districts which have not been answered by Mr. Bowser or anyone else, though desperate attempts have been made. But I will ask the secretary and Mr. Bowser just one question that applies to both pages. If this is "a complete and correct transmission" of the returns why are the figures for New Westminster district entirely left out on page 352; and why are those for Slokan district also entirely missing on page 353? These figures are all here in the abstracts, but they are not in the published report. (Applause.) When these gentlemen have answered that question I have just 25 other questions awaiting them regarding these two pages, and Mr. Cotsworth did not suggest one of them. (Laughter and applause.)

Before I pass on, let me here point out a peculiar touch which has cast

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such an air of mystery over some of our statements. On page 18 of his speech, Mr. Bowser makes an apparently successful attempt to rebut our statement that "about 90 per cent of the available agricultural lands of this province have been alienated from the people." He asserts that "over 50 per cent of the estimated agricultural land in this province still belongs to the Crown." But what on earth has the "estimated" agricultural land got to do with the question? We are talking about land suitable and "available" for agriculture. The Dominion census returns give 22,618,000 acres as the total area possible of cultivation in the province (laughter), but how much of that is "available" or "accessible" today is a very different question. (Applause.) And we must not forget that Mr. Bowser repeatedly claims that lands not yet Crown-granted, even though they are sold, are still in possession of the Crown. Therefore his talk about 50 per cent of the "estimated" agricultural land still being held by the Crown is simply evading and beclouding the whole issue. Throughout the whole speech this practice of dodging from one set of figures or ideas to another is constantly in evidence. (Applause.) It may deceive the general public but not the man who knows the facts. Our statement that 90 per cent. of the "available agricultural land" has been alienated from the people still holds good, for Mr. Bowser has deliberately avoided the issue. (Loud applause.)

Tremendous Land-Grabbing.

Then he speaks of the Land Act Amendment of 1907 which we maintain opened the door to the tremendous land-grabbing of the following years. Does he deny it? No. He immediately switches off by declaring that staking by agent had gone on for years before, and always had been the law, also that the Liberals said nothing about it at the time. If this had always been lawful in previous years, will Mr. Bowser kindly produce the statute permitting it? ("Hear, hear!" and applause.) If it was lawful before, why enact a special amendment in 1907 to make it legal? As to what the Liberals did or did not do at that time, Mr. Bowser and they can thresh the question out between them, but I find here in the "Journals of the Legislative Assembly" for 1907, pages 6 to 120, that this very bill was debated for three days on the second reading, two days in committee and again two days in the house. There were no less than four divisions before the bill was passed, and Mr. John Oliver has publicly stated that,

when he opposed this very amendment because it would lead to wild speculation in Crown lands, Mr. Bowser replied, "The speculator must have a chance." (Applause.)

Wholesale Speculation.

Now, I have lately discovered a rather interesting point in this very connection. I have here an extract from the "Victoria Times" of January 25th, 1912, which states that the revising commissioners of the statutes in 1911 did their work during the absence of Mr. Bowser in England, and in revising section 159 of the Land Act they so framed it that it would have effectively stopped the wholesale speculation in lands by means of these powers of attorney. But when Mr. Bowser returned he announced that "this would have to be cut out of the statutes," and later he introduced a new section, which by skilful wording allows the speculator to sell and transfer lands before he has acquired a title. Now, here is the copy of the Land Act as revised in 1911, which I obtained from the Land Office, and the new wording as changed by Mr. Bowser is pasted over the section as printed by the revising commissioners in his absence. (Laughter and applause.) I have taken the opinion of three well-known lawyers upon this point and they sustain the argument of the "Victoria Times." Mr. Bowser defends his action regarding this amendment by stating on page 20 that there was no demand for land in 1907, and it was not until some time after that the movement in land became active, also attributing to us the false statement that "the old method of securing land has been done away with." We never said so, but we do maintain that this "one-line amendment" gave full swing to a tremendous increase in staking of lands, and urged on a land-grabbing boom that had begun a year before and grew to the proportions of a wild raid on the lands of this province in the next three years. (Applause.) Mr. Ross, Minister of Lands, gives in the "Journals" of 1912, page 21, the areas of land sold in each year from 1905 to 1911 inclusive. Here it is, and this proves that the applications to purchase land in 1906 were 450 per cent. more than in 1905. But after the amendment of 1907 the real exploitation began. We have shown in our pamphlet how 2,274,560 acres were staked in the next three years by 117 men. But Mr. Bowser denounces us because, according to him (on page 27) "there was only 929,000 acres for which records were issued." He does not say what he

means by "records" but he lashes the Ministerial Union once more with a whip of sarcasm, "We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." Now, let us see who has verified the facts. We state that these men staked 2,274,560 acres of land which is recorded in the B. C. Gazette for those three years. Mr. Bowser says that only 929,000 acres were recorded, adroitly suggesting to the public that this was the total land sold in those three years. Now, I thank Mr. Bowser for bringing up this point, for it gives me the opportunity of frankly confessing that while we are quite correct in giving these figures as the area staked by these men in those three years, we are entirely wrong in assuming that they represent the actual sales in that period. Mr. Ross when he gave the figures for the years 1904 to 1911 which I have already referred to gave the total for the three years 1908-1910 as 2,832,773 acres, or 558,213 acres more than we quote as being staked. (Applause.) Over half a million acres more than we mention, and nearly a million more than Mr. Bowser says was recorded. Again I thank him for the correction. (Loud applause.)

Some Bowser Figures.

Take another sample of the attorney-general's verification. On page 28 he says distinctly that in the past twelve years only two millions of acres have been Crown-granted, "while 1,300,000 acres have been located by pre-emptors." Now according to Hon. Mr. Ross' figures ("Journals" for 1912, page 21), he is 556,309 acres short on the Crown-grants to purchasers, while only 705,080 pre-emptions were deeded, and no man knows how many of those pre-emptions he says were located have already been abandoned or cancelled. I have shown you by the Minister of Lands' report that last year alone 25 per cent of those inspected were cancelled and another 22 per cent were liable to cancellation. As a matter of fact this report gives a total of 3,552,942 acres as having been deeded during the past 12 years, so Mr. Bowser is entirely wrong in his figures. (Applause.) Again, he says the government has agreed to sell less than 5,200,000 acres in the last 10 years, but Mr. Ross again contradicts him, for in his speech of January last in the house on page 9 he gives the figures as 22,509 more than Mr. Bowser quotes, and over 4,900,000 acres of this has gone since the passing of the 1907 amendment. (Applause.) The fact is these two gentlemen, the minister of lands and the minister of agriculture, can-

not seem to agree upon anything relating to their own records and the Ministerial Union has to step in to correct them both. (Loud laughter and applause.) Here is another example. Mr. Bowser scourges us heavily on page 25 for stating that the B. C. Gazette for October 3rd, 1912, covers applications advertised in one week only. He states that we say 1051 applications for lands amounting to 492,414 acres were made in one week only. Now, the gentleman is wrong even in quoting both sets of figures, and in the interpretation he puts on our statement. He makes the area about 30,000 acres more than we give, in fact he seems incapable of quoting figures correctly even with the printed pamphlet in his hands. (Laughter.) What we say is that the record of applications published in a single weekly issue of the Gazette is 1052 applications for 464,995 acres. And there is no other way of putting it without falling into the grievous error Mr. Bowser has made without seeming conscious of it. Just because what he says about advertisements running for several weeks is true, if you take more than one week's issue you get all tangled up with overlappings, and make statements entirely false. The attorney-general gives us a perfect illustration of this. He ridicules us for quoting James Scott as having staked 74,000 acres of land, when according to Mr. Bowser he only got 47,000. When I heard Mr. Bowser make that statement I wondered if that was one rascally printer's error that had escaped our utmost vigilance. But when I looked up the record afterwards I saw where Mr. Bowser had tumbled headfirst into the pit he had dug for us. (Laughter.) He says: "In the Gazette of August 8th and 22nd and Sept. 5th, there was advertised a total in the name of Scott of 47,440 acres." Quite possibly true, Mr. Bowser; but in the Gazette of October 3rd, one week's issue, there was advertised in the name of James Scott not simply 47,000 nor 74,000 either, but a total of 75,980 acres. (Applause.) And here is every single name he used, the location and acreage, the address and occupation, and even the page of the Gazette on which each appears. This is a complete abstract from that one week's Gazette, therefore it gives additional stakings which we did not at first include because they were smaller areas scattered singly over other pages. We were not after minor details, but the main facts. Now, ladies and gentlemen, which of us have taken most pains "to verify every statement made"? (Loud applause.)

Shuffles Statistics.

Again he states on page 27 that land purchases in 1914 had fallen to 45,000 acres, while "pre-emptions for the three years surrounding 1914" (whatever that means) was 1,300,000 acres. Again he shuffles from one set of statistics to another, for the minister of lands' reports show plainly that in the last three years the sales were 983,534 acres and the pre-emptions Crown-granted were only 298,208 acres. (Applause.)

But listen to this from page 28: "I have this further statement to make, and I make it in all seriousness here, that no denial has ever been made to the statement made by the honourable minister of lands in a public statement that we have today 90,000,000 acres of lands under reserve for the pre-emptor. There is nobody who has ever denied that." Well, ladies and gentlemen, it was 93,000,000 acres that the minister of lands stated was reserved, but 3,000,000 doesn't matter. (Laughter.) Anyhow, we denied it in "The Crisis." I denied it on every platform I have occupied throughout the province; the Dominion census returns denied it, for they give the total possible farm lands of this province as only 22,618,000 acres. But last and greatest of all, the Hon. W. J. Bowser, attorney-general of British Columbia, denied it. (Applause.) Here it is in the Daily Province of May 7th of this year: "Nor does it mean that all the land in the 93,000,000 acres is fit for pre-emption, but that throughout the whole extent of the 93,000,000 acres any land suitable for pre-emption is available for settlers." (Laughter.) As I pointed out before, he might as well have said, "The whole province, from the Illicillewaet Glacier down to my oyster beds, is reserved for pre-emption; and all the man who wants a pre-emption has to do is to find it. It's somewhere, and if it isn't there it is somewhere else." (Loud laughter.) Yet this is the kind of argument which the News-Advertiser asserts has absolutely killed "The Crisis in B. C." Why, gentlemen, the thing is only beginning to live (applause), and if you will bear with me a little longer this "best possible defence" of the government will be ready for burial when I get through with it. (Loud applause.) I assure you I shall condense it all I can.

The Heinze Lands.

Now, I want right here, and in the frankest manner possible, to say that we have found one real error in our pamphlet. We discovered it long before Mr. Bowser made his speech, and we have not the slightest desire to

hide any mistake we have made, so I am going to show where the one-third of one of our statements is wrong. On page 6 of "The Crisis" we say that the government bought back worthless lands at 40 cents an acre from the railway companies in the neighborhood of Nelson, and that the late Augustus Heinze was bought out at this rate. Now, it is a mistake to say that Heinze's interest in these lands was purchased, and I make Mr. Bowser and his followers an honest apology for this error. (Applause.) It is the one exception that proves the rule; and if you read the complicated Railway Subsidy Act and Agreement of 1912, you will easily see how we made the mistake. But I have to offset that with something else, which further illustrates the attorney-general's methods of argument. (Laughter.)

I will try to state the whole case in the fewest possible sentences. On pages 11 to 14 of his speech Mr. Bowser asserts that the government bought 931,786 acres of land from the C. P. R. and that P. Augustus Heinze held a half interest in 583,000 acres. He says this was bought at the cheap price of 40 cents an acre at the time when the government was "assessing and collecting taxes at the rate of 50 cents an acre," therefore we are entirely wrong when we say that these lands were worthless. He is deeply offended because we suggest that his being solicitor for Mr. Heinze in any way affected him in doing his duty by this province. He asserts that Heinze's land was not taxable at all till at least 1912, and claims great credit for passing a law which caused Heinze to be taxed in 1914.

Investigated Scandal.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have here the government records, including the Railway Subsidy and Lands Purchase Act of 1912, the Agreement of sale between the C. P. R. and B. C. government, the Journals of the legislature for 1903 with full report and all the evidence of the select committee which investigated the scandal connected with these very lands; the Journals for 1906, and other documents, which conclusively prove that Mr. Bowser is absolutely wrong in every statement he has made on the points I have quoted. (Applause.) Even his figures are wildly astray. Here are the actual facts which I am prepared to discuss with Mr. Bowser himself. (Loud applause.) The government bought from the C. P. R. in 1912, certain lands originally granted to the Columbia and Western railway in the Boundary country, and to the B. C. Southern in the Crow's Nest

district. The area purchased was over four millions of acres instead of 931,786 as Mr. Bowser states, and the order-in-council of Sept. 4th, 1901, proves that Heinze's interest was not in 583,000 but 543,312, although the agreement of 1913 says 615,000. The price paid was 40 cents an acre, after remitting all arrears of taxes, which must have been a very great sum, if Mr. Bowser's 50 cents an acre is right; they also allowed very large timber limits to be reserved by the company. No taxes had ever been collected, for, on page 14, Mr. Bowser himself admits that "In 1912, the year they could become taxable, the C. P. R. sold out to avoid taxation." (Applause.) But Heinze's interest and other large areas were taxable from the year 1901, and here, in the Journals of 1906, page 123, is a resolution declaring that these lands were taxable, and condemning the present government for failing to collect at least \$450,000 in taxes from June, 1903, when they took office, till 1906. (Applause.) So instead of doing his duty at the proper time Mr. Bowser failed to do it all the time he acted as solicitor for Mr. Heinze. Heinze was taxable from 1901 instead of 1914, but Mr. Bowser sat four years in the house as a private member and six years as attorney-general before he brought in the act to tax his former client. (Loud applause.)

Only "Mountain Tops."

Again the C. P. R. or the older companies had sold out over three-quarters of a million acres of the best land, including the Crow's Nest coal fields, before the government bought what remained, and Sir Thomas Shaughnessy swore before the select committee of 1903 that the Columbia & Western lands along the railway in the Nelson district were only "mountain tops" while the C. P. R. land commissioner stated they were "of no value whatever." Yet this is what was bought by the government at 40 cents an acre, while, as we have stated in the "The Crisis," the Nelson assessment rolls for 1913 show that the pick of the land previously secured by certain speculators is assessed at an average value of 10 cents per acre. The taxation on that is 4 per cent. (Laughter and applause.)

The long discussion of other railways by Mr. Bowser is beside the mark. We simply mentioned them on page 25 in discussing the government guarantees to the C. N. P. railway and P. G. E. railway to show that in every case where guarantees of bonds had been given, the government has had to pay the interest. (Applause.) And Mr. Bowser puts a false statement

in our mouth when he quotes us as saying they have yet to pay \$92,230 a year. We distinctly said this had been done in the past 12 years, and we prove our statement by page 21 of the public accounts. Again I ask, who is best able to prove all statements made?

Puzzles Mr. Bowser.

Now, let me point out to Mr. Bowser something which seems to puzzle him very much. Talking of land for pre-emption on page 30, he assured us that they have the land but not the pre-emptor, and he cannot explain why when pre-emptions are offered in such places as Malcolm Island, Nootka Island, and the South Fork of the Fraser River it is not taken. If he, as minister of agriculture, will turn up the surveyor-general's report for last year, he will know all about it. On page 169 we learn that in Malcolm Island "the whole island is heavily timbered" with scrubby timber "of little commercial value" with a "dense thicket of underbrush through which it is difficult to force one's way without the use of a machete." The only "fairly-open" area is jack-pine swamp in the interior which needs ditching and draining. "The cost of clearing would be very great, probably \$300 per acre, and it is not to be expected that a pre-emptor could make a living off his land alone for several years." (Laughter.) On pages 175 and 176 we are told the same regarding Nootka Island. The area suggested for settlement is partly "cut up with rough, rocky knolls and ridges" and where it is flat it is "swampy"; the timber is "generally scrubby". There is not a waggon road on the island, and the cost of clearing will run from \$150 to \$500 per acre. The surveyor says: "I would estimate the cost of clearing at about \$300 per acre on the average." (Laughter and applause.)

When I came to read the report on the South Fork of the Fraser, I thought that here there was a reasonable chance to pre-empt decent land, but I found on looking at the pre-emptor's map, that practically all that is at all suitable or accessible is already taken, while "beaver-swamps and sloughs," "swampy land and muskeg," "considerable rock and boulders," and flooding from the Fraser river, are terms that describe much of the whole area. There are no roads at all and the surveyor refuses to prophesy about the agricultural value of the district. Truck gardening is recommended, with the prairie as the nearest market. (Laughter.) And, remember, this is where the most of the Hon. Mr. Ross' 4,500,000 acres are reserved for the pre-

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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 swept 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-

formed us that he himself is the largest holder of these leases. We did not previously know he was so deeply interested. He pleads that the business has never paid, and that he has gained nothing by it; an argument that we have heard before from Hon. Price Ellison in defence of his investments in cattle. (Loud laughter.) But Mr. Bowser's real reply to our charge is that these leases were granted and the reductions made before he entered the government; also that the government decided to lease large areas at 50 cents an acre and small areas at a dollar, evidently on the principle that it is public property and the more you take the less it costs. Now, I shall answer both charges in one breath. Mr. Bowser entered the cabinet in 1907, and folio 272 of the provincial lease ledgers shows that on April 6th, 1908, Messrs. W. Ellis and L. Kemp secured a lease of 55 acres at 50 cents an acre, which is held in care of Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge. This is one of the smaller leases, yet it costs half what Alfred Markham of Esquimalt paid, the year before, for 56 acres, which is not handled by Mr. Bowser's firm. It was granted the year after he entered the cabinet. But he assures us on page 16 that "Messrs. Ellis and Kemp and M. G. John have had no connection with our office at all." Well, ladies and gentlemen, here is the abstract made direct from the ledgers by Mr. Cotsworth. (A voice: "He's a liar!" and interruption.) Gentlemen, please allow me to do the talking and I'll answer all your questions and objections before you put them. (Loud applause.) Here is the abstract made direct from the provincial ledger by Mr. Cotsworth, and here is another one made by another gentleman quite independently, and both give Ellis & Kemp as "care of Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge," and Matilda G. John as holding, not an oyster lease, but a clam lease, which is properly leased at 50 cents per acre. Both these abstracts prove that every oyster lease handled by Mr. Bowser's firm has been cut down to half the usual rental while all others large and small are the full price of \$1.00. (Applause.) "We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." Which of us has done so? (Loud applause.)

Worthlessness of Attack.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have, I think, already thoroughly exposed the worthlessness of every direct attack the attorney-general has made on "The Crisis in B. C." and shown that he seems thoroughly incapable of discussing this most serious subject as it must be discussed. (Applause.) But be-

fore sitting down, I want to show you how completely Mr. Bowser has missed the whole point of the discussion, and avoided every main issue we have raised. I will point out in briefest possible manner some things in "The Crisis" that he has entirely failed to deal with.

I have shown you how he has juggled with figures, and dodged from one set of statistics to another in everything he said on the land question. But the two strongest arguments we have set forth on this point he has not attempted to touch. Let me vary things a little, and show you one or two pictures. Here is a folder which I showed you at both our previous meetings. I will let you see it on the screen. (Picture shown.) Read the title page from top to bottom. "Free Surveyed Lands. British Columbia, Canada. Surveyed lands for settlers. Room for Thousands along the Railways. Free Surveyed Lands." Now open it up and see these two maps of the railroad areas of the province. On each we read "Surveyed lands colored red," remembering this is a publication dealing with "Free Surveyed Lands for Settlers." It has been issued since the House of Assembly closed last March, and every acre of land ever surveyed in this province is here printed in red, no matter to whom it belongs. Now fix that red area in your mind, and then look at this pre-emptor's map of Fort George district. On this map we are told that "Lands open to pre-emptors are coloured red." The white area is land that is already taken, and you can see that practically everything that was in red on the maps in the Free-Surveyed-Lands folder is snow-white in this. (Laughter.) It is "surveyed" all right, and "free for settlers" when they pay from 10 to 100 dollars an acre to the speculators who have cornered the best of it with the full consent of the McBride government. (Applause.) Here is the Bulkeley map which shows the very same thing, and proves that practically every foot of surveyed land was already seized when this map was printed. Here also is the Nechaco map, with the same artistic results, and the self-same exclusion of the bona-fide pre-emptor. Everywhere he has been pushed back by the land-grabber. Ladies and gentlemen, I challenge any man in this province to find in this speech of Mr. Bowser one word of explanation about this "All red folder" which we have correctly characterised as the "most deliberate and cruel piece of misrepresentation ever perpetrated on prospective settlers." (Prolonged applause.)

In the second place, we have printed

original letters where hundreds of thousands of acres of our choicest lands are offered at syndicate prices to be sold over again at any price that can be extorted out of the settler. Here is one on page 9 of "The Crisis," but evidently Mr. Bowser never saw it, for he never mentions it. We have printed five pages of names of men and firms that hold areas of land the law does not allow them to have, and Mr. Bowser has clearly proved our impartiality in this by pointing out certain Liberals whom we have listed as they are recorded on the rolls. Yet not one of these scores of men, nor Mr. Bowser himself, has attempted to prove we are wrong in one single instance. (Applause.) He mentions his own firm, and in misquoting us, he admits that Howser, Reid & Wallbridge hold not only the 16,909 acres we credit to them, but that they also handle another 16,435 for Bonthorne, Leonard & Co. (laughter.) Of course his argument was that our pamphlet was proved to be partisan because the name of his firm was printed at the top of the page. Well, gentlemen, this whole list is printed in alphabetical order, and if Mr. Bowser insists not only on heading both his own firm and the B. C. government, but the English alphabet, he must suffer the consequences. (Laughter.)

This charge of partisanship he also tries to prove by stating, on page 31, that Mr. Appleby, our distributing agent, is a Liberal. In proof of this he produced a post card signed "E. C. Appleby, secretary Ward One Liberal Association." But when I asked for the date of that post card, he was not honest enough to give any date but the year 1914, for Mr. Appleby resigned from the Liberal party on February 9th, 1914, and has since become president of one of the largest labor unions in this city, and a most active spirit in bringing out labor candidates. Yet Mr. Bowser insists the pamphlet is partisan and bolsters his argument with such proofs. (Applause.)

The second great issue that Mr. Bowser entirely dodges is the alienation of the coal resources of this country. You may say, he deals with that. But I reply he does nothing of the sort. He cleverly avoids it by again attacking Mr. Cotsworth, and stating that all our information was based upon his say-so. Now, I challenge Mr. Bowser to find one syllable in all we have said on the question of coal that can even be twisted to prove his assertion. Our authorities are printed in every instance in black and white, and we took nothing whatever on Cot-

worth's word. Our first authority was the B. C. Gazette, the government's official paper, and I have shown you that Geo. M. Beltrac put through every section of coal he staked for the B. C. Anthracite Co. of Quebec, although Mr. Howser says he got none of them. I make that statement on the authority of the manager of the B. C. Anthracite Company. (Applause.) Our next and chief authority was the full and technical report which I hold in my hand, made by Mr. Campbell-Johnston, mining engineer of this city, & Messrs. Kobes and Heaton to present to the Chicago Syndicate they tried to get to back them, when Sir Donald Mann failed to dispose of their lands in England. This professional report, made after an exhaustive survey of the whole area, definitely states that these two men, who, I understand keep a saloon at Coquitlam, own 145 sq. miles or 92,800 acres, instead of 60,000 as Mr. Bowser says. (Cries of Shame!) The price stated here is \$10.00 per acre, and if those men have kept their licenses or leases in good standing, I have legal opinion that they can complete their purchase at \$10 per acre.

Tries to Blind Public.

Mr. Bowser also asserts that "not a single crown grant of coal has been issued in the Ground Hog Basin," the only trying to blind the public to the real facts, that the government has issued shoals of licenses, and that men like Panvini, whose original letter we print, can trade in these licenses to the extent of millions, while no less than 11 great syndicates have been formed to exploit these coal lands, as proved by these maps in our possession. (Applause.)

There again he flounders helplessly when he touches figures. He tells us, on page 32, that in 10 years the total coal lands licensed, leased and granted only come to 1,022,863 acres. Why, in one year only, 1911, the area under license alone was 1,500,000 acres. (Applause.) Here is the statement from the minister of lands' report for that year, page 6: "For the year the number of licenses issued totalled 2,223, which amounts in acreage close upon 1,500,000 acres." Again, I ask, who has most carefully "verified all statements made?"

The third great issue entirely avoided by Mr. Bowser is the exploitation of timber resources. He mentions "Timber" and then runs off to quote what this and that outside authority has said in a general way about our timber resources and laws. He then informs us that the department's legislation has been based on the re-

port of the Royal Commission of Forestry of 1910. Now that report is the very authority upon which we base our allegations as to the alienation of the timber wealth of this province. It is in this very report, on page 17, we find that 12 millions of acres of the most valuable timber in this province was alienated before 1910, and that about 10,000,000 of that was grabbed in the years 1905 to 1907, immediately after the present government passed the act giving special licenses "transferable and renewable each year for 21 successive years." On page 48 the commissioners definitely state that it was this legislation which created the enormous rush for timber lands, and they give this diagram which shows what happened before the government placed the reserve on what remained. From less than one million acres in 1904, the special license area leaped to about 10 millions in 1907. Then when the horse was gone the stable door was locked. (Applause.) On the same page they tell us that "very great laxity had been allowed in the payment of rentals."

Commission's Recommendations.

Undoubtedly some recommendations of the commission were put into force, chiefly those dealing with departmental methods and fire protection. But here is without doubt the most emphatic and strongest recommendation of the 21 they made. They had made it in an interim report, and they repeat it in this. They say, on page 49, "One thing alone stands out from the near future with grim certainty—the value of stumpage in the West will soon be much higher than it is today"; therefore, they add, "Your commissioners recommend, definitely and emphatically, that the license rentals, fees and royalty shall not be fixed for any period beyond one calendar year at any time; that the present right of the government to regulate and adjust rentals, fees, royalties or other charges in timber property, shall in no way be restricted or limited," etc. This is the weightiest deliverance in the whole report, and Mr. Bowser says the government has based its legislation upon this report. Now let us see. Here is the "Timber Royalty Act" of last year, and section 18 fixes the license fees at \$100 and \$140 each according as they are east or west of the Cascade mountains. For how long? Listen. "The foregoing fees shall be the maximum fees for renewals of such special timber licenses as are affected by this act during the period from the first day of January, 1915, to the thirty-first day of December, 1954." The commission says in the strongest

terms that the interests of the province absolutely require no fees to be fixed for more than one year at a time. And the government proceeds to fix them solid for 40 years. (Loud applause.) Yet the attorney-general declares, "It was on their report we based our legislation." Listen, gentlemen. I would like to know just what a Mathers commission could find out as to why the timber-holders of this province got such a mighty concession in the face of this report. ("Hear, hear!" and applause.) Mr. Bowser speaks of the splendid revenue from timber. What is being done with it? On page 72 this royal commission on forestry most urgently recommend that the timber royalties should not be used as current revenue, but be put into a sinking fund for forest purposes. But I can find no one who has even heard of such a fund being formed for this purpose and the Public Accounts on page 21 show that timber leases, royalties and license fees all go into the ordinary funds.

Why didn't Mr. Bowser explain how so many Americans and others outside this province can hold our timber, as we have clearly shown on page 15 of "The Crisis"? ("Hear, hear!") Why did he not explain the rest of that page where we print the "return" given in the house, which said that there was only 982,520 acres alienated though this report said nearly 12,000,000 had gone five years ago? Or the fact that the Canadian Puget Sound Co. had 57,393 acres, when the government told the house it had only 4,280 acres? He says, "Not a single stick of timber covered by special license has been given away, only the right to cut." But this "right to cut," which he says is given away, can be sold for thousands of dollars by the speculator, who may live in Jericho. Will Mr. Bowser kindly explain how Alvo von Alvensleben, the Kaiser's "Governor of British Columbia," could purchase \$2,000,000 worth of timber limits in this province from the Red Cliff Lumber Co. in Duluth? (Loud applause.) This may be crown-grant timber or something other than licenses, but I should like Mr. Bowser to face some aspect of the timber question.

Evasion of Accusation.

Now, sir, let me show you the most glaring, the most amazing evasion of one of the gravest accusations we have made in the whole pamphlet. It is the last one I shall discuss. On pages 18 to 20 of "The Crisis" we have set forth in full the agreements which have handed over the property of the Ocean Falls Co. with immense

additional values from our provincial assets to the Fleishhacker people of San Francisco. Very briefly the transaction is this: The Ocean Falls Co. went bankrupt some time ago, and the liquidator finally arranged to sell its properties to a German-American syndicate in San Francisco—Fleishhacker Bros. & Johnson. These properties included two pulp leases, covering 80,000 acres of timber, a small area of land and some valuable water powers. The Fleishhacker people proposed to form a new company called the Pacific Mills Company, which was to develop this pulp area. But certain creditors of the Ocean Falls Co. were still short about \$310,000, and the liquidator evidently insisted on their being protected. So an agreement was drawn and registered in the attorney-general's department, January 26, 1914. Here it is. In this agreement the Fleishhackers insist that they will only take over the Ocean Falls on certain conditions. First, they must have three years extension of time to put up a pulp mill as the law requires. Second, they must have the pulp leases extended for thirty years at the old rates. Third, the government of British Columbia must assure them that they will give them an additional 2,000,000 feet of timber and assist them in selecting it. Fourth, they must have the water licenses extended for twenty-one years at the former rates. These are the conditions which the document definitely states the government of the province "have consented to grant" and when these things have been done, and not before, the new company will give the creditors \$310,000 worth of its shares. In the whole thing there is not a word about the shareholders, most of whom reside in England. Now what happened? Just thirty-seven days after that agreement was registered the government passed an act extending the pulp leases for 30 years at the old rates. A year later, on the last day of the last session, they passed the bill extending water licenses for 21 years, both bills being almost identical in wording with the agreement drawn by the Fleishhackers. Quite evidently the assurance regarding the 2,000,000,000 feet of additional timber has been given, since the deal has gone through and the new company, the Pacific Mills Co., has been floated at a capital of \$11,000,000, though the minister of land did not mention it in answer to a question regarding such promises put by Mr. Parker Williams on the first of last March. (Cries of "Shame!")

Over Heads of People.

That is the deal made over the heads of the people of this province,

and that is why we say that certain Germans have dictated our laws. What had Mr. Bowser to say about it? He simply avoided the terms of the transaction as he would have avoided the plague. He produced a letter from Mr. Fleishhacker stating he was born in San Francisco, and argues "These men were born in America, therefore they are not Germans, and our transaction is therefore all right." I suppose if they had been born in a stable they would have been neither Germans nor Americans but something else, and the deal would have been still more all right. (Laughter.) Now these men may be estimable American citizens and we were careful not to speak of them as an "enemy syndicate," but I think the world understands today where the German-American stands regarding things British. (Applause.) Here, too, is a front page report from the Daily Province of July 17 of this year giving the names of the attorneys as Oscar Sutro and Mr. Bloch, which helps to let daylight through the letter quoted by Mr. Bowser.

But the attorney-general's crushing argument was to produce an order of the supreme court granted by Judge Morrison, which he solemnly says approved of the whole transaction. He gives an imposing array of counsel and says "They all approved the transfer of the Ocean Falls property and leases to Fleishhacker." Now here is a correct copy of the order of the court to which he refers. I have discussed it fully with four prominent legal gentlemen and all of them are perfectly agreed as to the use that Mr. Bowser makes of it. It was simply a deliberate attempt to fool the public. (Applause.) Neither the judge or one of the counsel ever dreamt of discussing the share the government had in making such arrangements at the expense of the public. The counsel were there to protect the interests of the creditors and bondholders who retained them, and they had nothing at all to do with the public policy of the government in this matter. It was the business of the attorney-general to protect the public. (Loud applause.) He says these men approved. Of course they did, and if the government had made agreements and passed laws to give Fleishhacker twice as much of the public resources, these men, as good lawyers, would have been twice as ready with their approval, because their clients would have been doubly secured. I challenge Mr. Bowser to produce another lawyer who will risk his reputation by stating that either Judge Morrison or these

counsel employed either discussed or approved the action of the government in the whole transaction. (Prolonged applause.) And I assert again that the attorney-general has deliberately avoided answering our charge. (Applause.) Now, ladies and gentlemen, I shall discuss no further points in the speech. I will only point out that this "spokesman of the government" has not even mentioned section 5 of our pamphlet which deals with the terrible scandal of company promoters in British Columbia and Mr. Price Ellison's connection with some of them while Minister of Finance. ("Hear, hear!") He has not mentioned section 6 on "Public Accounts" which shows that the last five years have exhausted the surplus of the previous seven, and over \$5,500,000 besides. He is now Minister of Finance and might have explained why the public debt is being doubled, and why \$13,000,000 of arrears on land sales kept out of the provincial balance sheet. Sir Richard McBride informs us that these arrears are upwards of \$15,000,000. Mr. Bowser did not discuss the fact that these arrears are more than double the arrears due to the Ottawa government for all its sales throughout the Dominion. This is proved by the auditor-general's report on page 44. (Applause.)

Evaded Serious Statements.

He did not discuss our section on railway guarantees which points out the coming burden of \$3,500,000 yearly interest. In fact, as a gentleman who sat behind him on the platform said to me next morning, "He did not touch one-tenth of the serious statements in the pamphlet." (Applause.) No! He preferred to waste time throwing discredit on Mr. Cotsworth and ridiculing the Ministerial Union. He even found time to waste on me (laughter), and added three falsehoods to the poisonous bomb his friends had constructed to finish me. I had made him a present of it at our previous meeting in this hall, but he did not scruple to throw it from the police-filled trenches of the Orpheum theatre. (Laughter.) He says I lived in Elkhorn, Manitoba, from 1896 to 1911. I was there eleven months in 1903. He says I got \$1,089 from the Ottawa government. If that is so they still owe me about \$640, for all I got for six months work on the platform in Ireland was \$450, and anything over that was travelling expenses for which they demanded vouchers for every cent. He says I was appointed by "Preston of machine-fame." I was appointed by

the Interior department at Ottawa, then under the very man whose name was cheered by Mr. Bowser's friends when he mentioned it—Sir Clifford Sifton. But even Mr. Sifton did not ask me to produce a card of membership in the political association which supported him. (Applause.) The question of political leaning was never suggested, but if I were going to do similar public service to British Columbia today I would have to do like everyone else, even the man who is starving through unemployment, and produce my ticket of membership in the Conservative Association. (Loud applause.) Over two years ago, at Brockton Point on the 12th of July, I stood on the platform alongside Mr. H. H. Stevens to speak on Irish affairs and my first words declared emphatically that I was neither Liberal nor Conservative, but an independent citizen who would think for himself and vote according to conscience for whatever party best served the best interests of our country. (Applause.) And I defy Mr. Bowser, or any of his supporters, or the author of this false editorial printed here on the cover of this Orpheum speech without my reply, to discover word or action of mine which has since contradicted that public statement. (Loud applause.)

A Confirmation of Claims.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I have done. I thank you for your splendid patience and courtesy. I have trespassed heavily upon both. But I think I have shown you that the "best possible defense" of the government, put forward by the only man who has had the courage to face the question at all, is not a refutation but a confirmation of all we have claimed in "The Crisis in B. C." ("Hear, hear!") I have shown you how carefully we have verified all our statements. I have not asked you to accept my word in a single instance tonight. I have shown you the documents, given chapter and page of the government records and other authorities. I have proved that, in spite of the fact that he has access to all the records at Victoria, the attorney-general is entirely wrong in his figures, that he is guilty of gross misstatements of fact, and that he has completely evaded the great issues at the heart of this whole question. (Applause.) I claim, therefore, that the people of the province of British Columbia have greater reason today than ever for the most thorough and most impartial investigation into public affairs that it is possible to institute. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

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