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REPLY

OF THE

Hon. W. J. Bowser, K.C.

TO THE PAMPHLET ENTITLED

"THE CRISIS IN B. C."

Delivered in Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver, B.C.

July 29th, 1915

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THE HONOURABLE W. J. BOWSER, K.C.

TO THE PAMPHLET ENTITLED:

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DELIVERED IN THE ORPHEUM THEATRE, VANCOUVER
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F. W. Welsh, Esq., President of Vancouver Conservative Association in the chair.

Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—This meeting tonight has been organized by the Vancouver Conservative Association with one object, and that is that the people of the City of Vancouver might have an opportunity of hearing a reply to the charges which have been levelled against the Government in the pamphlet, which has been called "The Crisis in B. C.," and since this pamphlet was first brought to the notice of the public in the City of Vancouver, our Association thought that the most proper place for it to be answered by a member of the Government was in the City of Vancouver, and that there was no one more suitable, and no one more able to reply to this pamphlet than the Attorney-General, who represents this city in the Cabinet and Province. (Applause.)

I feel sure to-night that in answering this pamphlet that the same courteous hearing will be extended to the member of the Government as was extended to the gentleman who first brought this pamphlet to the notice of the people, and who, on two separate occasions, without let or hindrance, laid whatever virtues they may think were contained within it before the public; and I am sure to-night that the same courteous hearing will be extended to the Attorney-General in replying to this particular pamphlet. No more extended remarks of mine, I am sure, are needed in introducing him. The speaker needs no introduction to the City of Vancouver, whom he has represented so ably in the Government of British Columbia for so many years, and I have much pleasure now in calling upon the Attorney-General, the Honorable Mr. Bowser. (Prolonged applause.)

Mr. Bowser: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—While I am always pleased when I have an opportunity of meeting my

old friends in the City of Vancouver, and the electors of this, my own constituency, still, I regret very much on this occasion the reasons which have brought me at this particular time to discuss the questions mentioned in the pamphlet known as "The Crisis in British Columbia." While at this, the time when our Empire is in "travail and sorrow," and while our very future is in the balance, I regret to say that without any seeking on our part, or without any encouragement, a most political and partisan battle has been waged upon the members of the Government, and led by men in holy orders. I regret exceedingly that they have seen fit at this stage, when perhaps it was their first duty to have assisted the Empire in its great fight, and perhaps have urged in Canada at least that their teachings should be peace and good-will toward men, and one therefore would have thought they would have been the last to have launched into a political and partisan controversy of this nature. However, the gauntlet has been thrown down—they have challenged us, and it is now the duty of the Government, through myself on this occasion as their spokesman, to reply to the charges which have been made in this document. At the same time, I must tell you that it is not only the "political parson" who in my opinion has to answer for the criticisms which we may offer this evening; the leaders of the Liberal party, in my opinion, are as much to blame as those who have given their names to this document to which we will refer during to-night. Mr. Macdonald, the leader, or one of the leaders of the Liberal party (they have so many that I can hardly tell you which is the leader), who is also president of the Liberal Association of this Province, and a candidate for honors in this constituency on the Liberal ticket, saw fit to break the political truce by speaking throughout the Province a short time ago, after the suggestion had been made by the Liberal party that there should be a truce during the time of war. Their idea of a truce and ours is entirely different. We thought, of course, it would mean a truce to both parties; their idea, apparently, was a truce only so far as the Conservatives were concerned, and that the Liberals should take what steps they thought necessary in order to educate the public as to the shortcomings of the Government. Mr. Macdonald, in his tour in the upper country, in the town of Golden, and other places, made a most virulent attack upon myself in connection with the Dominion Trust Company, and at the same time expressed great pleasure and thanks to the people who had been the authors of this document, "The Crisis in British Columbia," for the excellent work which they had done in trying to convince the people how they had been deceived by the present administration. A little later, at a meeting in Vancouver, in Ward 2 Liberal Club, although there

had been a great deal of lip-loyalty in the air, and talk of duty to the Empire, Mr. Macdonald stated, in addressing this club, that "in war time attention must be turned to patriotic duties, and that the most patriotic thing British Columbians could do would be to turn the McBride Government out of power." That was his idea of patriotism in this our time of trouble.

Next morning in the Sun newspaper, Capt. Mowat, a member of his own legal firm in this city, who had volunteered to go to the front, and who is at present in camp at Vernon, and hopes shortly to be ordered overseas, wrote an open letter to Mr. Macdonald, as president of the Liberal Association, suggesting that there should be a real truce between the two parties in this Province, and that perhaps it would be a good thing if a joint meeting should be addressed by Mr. Macdonald, Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper and myself, held in the City of Vancouver, in order to arouse the sympathies of those who had not already volunteered to go to the front. Mr. Macdonald, the next morning in the papers, at once accepted the suggestion of Mr. Mowat, and said that so far as he was concerned, he would only be too glad to do so. I was not deceived by his language. I had heard similar suggestions coming from the same source before, and I had not forgotten what he had said the night before in the Ward 2 meeting, when he said it was the patriotic duty of the citizens of British Columbia to first hurl the McBride Government from power; but imagine my surprise that, notwithstanding what Mr. Macdonald had said, the Sun newspaper, of which Mr. Macdonald is a director, in this city, wrote a leading editorial the next day of two columns in reference to the suggested truce of Capt. Mowat, whom it is hardly necessary to state is a nephew of Sir Oliver Mowat, and of course a very strong Liberal. After going into the whole question, the "Sun" ended their editorial by stating:

> "That being the case, it is the obvious duty of the Opposition leaders to continue the campaign against the present corrupt Government unceasingly. It is a duty not only to the people of the Province, but to the nation itself, and it is a duty which as men they cannot neglect."

This all took place in three days.

A little later on there was a meeting of the Liberal party in the City of Vancouver in which the Vancouver City and District Liberal Executive set forth in resolution that it was the bounden duty of the Liberal party at this time to see that everything was done to educate the public, that the campaign must be kept up unceasingly, and every-

thing possible done to hurl from power this corrupt Government at Victoria. So that you see that it is not only the political parson, to whom I have referred, that has rushed in in this time of stress to arouse the people and their political passions, but it is the leaders of the Liberal party as well. They have forced the situation. So be it; and I am therefore here tonight to pick up the gauntlet, and I will make the best defence in my power. (Loud applause and cheering.)

Now, before proceeding in detail with the many extravagant and remarkable statements in this most remarkable document known as "The Crisis in British Columbia," there are certain features of the preface to which I wish to draw your attention. The document itself is supposed to have been issued under the auspices of the Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. It has been admitted on oath in a suit in the Supreme Court, since the pamphlet was issued, that this document was taken from a larger document of which one Moses B. Cotsworth is the author, and which has not yet been printed; but in order to have an influence upon the public (because we must all admit, those of us who have had an early religious training, that we have always been taught that ministers of the Gospel were men whom we should reverence and revere as a whole, as a class), it is to be expected of the ordinary elector, the ordinary man in the street, when a pamphlet of this nature is published, and spread broadcast throughout the Province, and authenticated and approved by ministers of the Gospel, one would naturally expect the statements in it would be worthy of belief; but it has now been shown that Mr. Cotsworth was the gentleman who was really the author, although Rev. Mr. Cooke, I believe, claims that he wrote it or fashioned it from the larger pamphlet of Mr. Cotsworth. However, in order to have the effect upon the public, it was necessary for them to put in a preface, or what they call a "foreword," in the document, and I wish to draw your attention to some of the language used in this pamphlet, as I intend to refer to it in the course of my remarks during the evening.

In paragraph 1 they say:

> "The facts set forth are not published in any partisan spirit, nor to serve the purposes of any political party whatever. Since November last we have had them under investigation, and we publish them now only from the most urgent sense of public duty. It is with the desire to keep the whole matter, so vital to the life of the Province, above the level of mere party politics that we append our names hereto."

Later on, in paragraph 3:

"Not only have we the results of Mr. Cotsworth's investigation of years into these matters, but we have made the strictest investigation possible ourselves. We have spared no pains to verify the statements made. We have original documents and copies of many others (verified by members of our committee from originals in the archives of the Legislature and elsewhere); the Journals and Records of the Legislative Assembly have been examined, and we are prepared to substantiate all statements made.

The references given throughout, and the documents published, give ample opportunity to any citizen to verify the facts.

As moral leaders of the people of this Province, we are in duty bound to make known the truth, regardless of consequences."

Now, in connection with this document a certain statement appeared touching upon the question of Mr. Alexander Lucas, a member of the Provincial Parliament for the constituency of Yale, having been dismissed from the public service of this Province as a result of Mr. Cotsworth's report to the Government. Mr. Cotsworth was appointed, not as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, as stated in the pamphlet, but Chairman of the committee to regrade the salaries of the civil servants—a great difference entirely in the two bodies. In the process of penning this document they stated that Mr. Alexander Lucas had been dismissed from public office as an officer of the Crown, as he had been Assessor for many years in Kaslo; that he had absented himself from his office, and came to the city of Vancouver without leave, where he had improperly received a commission of $15,000 in connection with a timber deal. I do not intend, tonight, to speak about anything in reference to the pending litigation which has arisen as the result of that statement. I happened at the time to have been occupying the position of Minister of Finance, and it was my duty, when Mr. Lucas sent in his resignation, to pen to him a suitable letter, expressing the regret of the Government that a man who had given the services that he had, and so satisfactorily, now saw fit to leave the service of the Crown. The result of this statement was that Mr. Lucas issued a Writ against the gentlemen who had appended their names to this document, and who had thus authenticated it. It would be well now, perhaps, for me to give you their names: Rev. Mr. Harkness is president; Rev. Mr. Cooke is secretary; Rev. Mr. Spillman, Rev. Dr. Henderson, Rev. W. S. A. Crux, Rev. A. M. O'Donnell are members of the committee who have verified the document, as I have already stated: "We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." "We are prepared to substantiate all statements made."

In the course of the suit of Mr. Lucas against these gentlemen for libel, they were examined on oath, or, at least, some of them, before the Supreme Court Registrar, in what is known as an examination for discovery; and Mr. Lucas' solicitor wished to pin those gentlemen down to the authority for the statements made by them, particularly referring to the matters which he considered libellous, and I will now read you shortly (and I hope that I will not weary you by my extracts, although there will be many during the evening) as to what took place on these examinations. Mr. Woodworth, who was acting for the ministers, said:

Question 33:

"Yes, everything he knows, and I am quite willing.

"Witness: Well, I have simply got Mr. Cotsworth's word for it, and that only."

This is the Rev. Mr. Harkness. They simply had Mr. Cotsworth's word for it, and that only.

Question 37:

"Now, what neglect of his duties do you know of that he was guilty of? A. I have no verification; I have just Mr. Cotsworth's statement.

Question 44:

"Q. You don't know the facts. You don't know anything about it whatever which would have anything to do with his resignation? A. Nothing but the statements of Mr. Cotsworth.

Question 53:

"Q. You look upon Mr. Cotsworth's statements to you in this matter beyond the reach or the need of any further investigation, do you? A. We accepted his finding.

Question 58:

"Q. You set it out in your 'Foreword' that you are prepared to substantiate all statements made in this book? A. Yes.

Question 59:

"Q. And the only substantiation for those statements are the statements of Mr. Cotsworth? A. The words of Mr. Cotsworth.

Question 60:

"Q. So that, contrary to having spared no pains to have the statements made verified, you have taken no pains what-

ever to verify these statements? A. We questioned Mr. Cotsworth very fully.

Question 61:

"Q. Of course, I mean, beyond accepting Mr. Cotsworth's statement, you took no pains to verify the allegations of fact. You have no evidence or anything to go on but Mr. Cotsworth's statements in making these charges on page 6? A. That is all."

Now, is it necessary for me to refer to the language again:

"We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, I will read the examination of the Rev. Mr. Stillman, and this is a question we find:

Question 45:

"Q. And Mr. Cotsworth did produce to you documents which satisfied you that the statements contained in the alleged libel were correct, did he? A. Well, regarding this here, the resignation of Mr. Lucas, I don't know that there was any document that verified that. We simply took Mr. Cotsworth's statement as a chairman of the Commission.

Question 51:

"Q. Do you know what compulsion, if any, they exercised on Mr. Lucas to compel him to resign (that is referring to the Government compelling him)? A. Nothing except Mr. Cotsworth's statements.

Question 52:

"Q. And you did not investigate the matter past his statement? A. No.

Question 58:

"Q. And beyond Mr. Cotsworth's statement to you that his neglect of his duties consisted in his absenting himself from them, you have no further information that you are relying on to support your statement? A. No.

Question 68:

"Q. So that, as far as you are concerned, when you state that you are prepared to substantiate all the statements made in regard to this statement, you have the allegation made by Mr. Cotsworth to you? A. Yes, as Chairman of the Commission.

Question 69:

"Q. As Chairman of the Commission, and you have no documentary or other evidence whatever? A. No."

Now, the next gentleman that we will examine is Mr. Cooke, the Rev. Mr. Cooke. (Laughter.)

Question 59:

"Q. And we can possibly go on and cover the whole matter in one question: Your information as to Mr. Lucas' neglect of his duties in the timber deal in which he pocketed $10,000, and about being compelled to resign on account of his neglecting his duties, and having left his post, and journeyed to Vancouver in spite of repeated refusals of leave of absence, to put through the timber deal—is it correct to say that you make these allegations on the unsupported statement of Mr. Cotsworth? A. On the statement of Mr. Cotsworth, yes."

Need I refer again:

"As moral leaders of the people of this Province, we are in duty bound to make known the truth regardless of consequences." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, we will take the document itself. At page 5 they have a long list of lands that had been purchased from the Crown, and they put in the names of those who bought them in connection with the attack they have made that we have been allowing the speculator to purchase the public lands of this Province. It is headed, "Land-grabbers and Their Booty." I must admit that it is not the class of choice language that I would expect to come from a minister of the Gospel (laughter)—"Land-grabbers and Their Booty," and in true Christian charity, which they expostulate on every Sunday evening, they first connect your humble servant with one of those land speculations, although they say in the first part of their "Foreword": "The facts set forth are not published in any partisan spirit, nor to serve the purposes of any political party whatever." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, what do we find? We have in this case, it is true, a very small acreage charged up to Bonthorne, Leonard & Co., care of Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge. They could not think, of course, of picking out any other legal firm (many of whom were, like ourselves, simply acting as solicitors for the purchaser) and place them at the head of the list. It must be Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge, because Bowser happened to be Attorney-General of the Province, and the senior partner of that firm; but they say that "they do so in no partisan spirit, nor to serve the purposes of any political party whatever." (Laughter.)

Now, we will turn to page 6, where they again connect my firm in either a malicious statement, or a reckless mis-statement. One of my friends told me the other day, after reading the pamphlet, and knowing a good deal about the public affairs of this country, and that there was a lie on every page of the pamphlet. (Applause.) I said: "Well, I wouldn't put it that way; I would be more Christian-like than that towards my brethren of the clerical profession (laughter), and wouldn't say that there was a lie on every page, but that there were at least five mis-statements." (Laughter and applause.) Now, they explain at page 6 of the pamphlet that the British Columbia Government paid no less than forty cents an acre in the purchase of the Columbia & Western Railway subsidy lands. These were lands not given by our Government, but a Government of many years ago, in order to encourage the building of a very expensive piece of railroad from Trail to Rossland, and thus encourage the opening up of the Rossland Camp; and further extending their line around Christiana Lake into the Boundary country. The Government of that day gave a bonus by way of land to the Columbia & Western Railway Company. The Columbia & Western Railway was afterwards purchased by the Canadian Pacific Railway, so we might refer to it as the Canadian Pacific. Now, they state as a charge against the Government—and you must not forget that since this deal was made between our Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway as to the purchase of these lands, that the matter was placed before the Legislature, nothing kept back; and the following year we went to the country, and this agreement, as well as many other actions of the Government, was entirely approved of by nearly the unanimous vote of the people of this Province; but it is now resurrected because it is thought that perhaps there may be something made of it in connection with the purchase of these lands. They tell you that we have purchased worthless lands at forty cents an acre, and to the man who does not think, or he "who runs as he reads" might perhaps feel that there was something in that statement, but they were not honest enough to tell you that we were at that time assessing and collecting taxes on those same lands at the rate of fifty cents an acre, and we purchased them from the C. P. R. at forty cents an acre. There were a great many difficulties in connection with the holding of the Columbia & Western Railway land by the Company. There was the question of pre-emptors who were always having trouble with the C. P. R. There was the question of the prospector who is endeavoring to develop a mine having trouble with timber on his mineral claim, as the C. P. R. claimed it. There was so much difficulty which tended to keep back settlement that the people of that country felt that this great area of

land, which had been given by a prior Government, should be bought back by us from the C. P. R.; and if those people who had been so careful as they state—and I don't think that they would purposely want to deceive the public, I think they were deceived by Mr. Cotsworth—but you would think that those people in holy orders, as careful men, would have endeavored to have found out all the facts in connection with this sale of the lands to us before making these statements in this pamphlet.

Now, what are the facts? We bought 931,786 acres from the C. P. R. for forty cents an acre. Heinze still owned a half interest in 583,000 acres. Heinze was a New York gentleman who had built the original smelter at Trail. We only bought the C. P. R.'s interest in the last mentioned acres, because Heinze had an undivided half interest. The C. P. R.'s interest we paid for at the rate of forty cents for the whole, that is twenty cents for their interest; but that was not the whole deal so far as these lands were concerned. We had been on the guarantee of the Shuswap & Okanagan Railway Company, which was a railway operated by the C. P. R. from Sicamous Junction to Vernon. This guarantee had been put through by the Government long before we came into power, and we had been paying yearly on this guarantee; and one of the covenants, or one of the sections in the agreement with the C. P. R. on this purchase of ours when we paid them forty cents an acre for the Columbia & Western land, in order to wipe out, as I have already told you, the great difficulty existing in the Boundary country, was that they were to pay back, and did pay back, to the Province the sum of $401,113, moneys which we had already paid on the Shuswap & Okanagan guarantee. They paid us back $401,000. The Ministerial Union did not take you into their confidence and tell you that. That was all part of the deal; and they further released us from any further payments on this road, amounting to about $50,000 more, on the future guarantee. That is to say, the time of the guarantee was not up, and they repaid us this $401,000, and $50,000 more they relieved us from. They also agreed to take over the Kaslo & Slocan Railway, a railway owned by the Great Northern Railway of the United States, a railway running from Kaslo to Sandon, and which had been abandoned by the Great Northern people. The local people in Sandon, those who were interested in mines, were so anxious to have that road opened up that they contributed $25,000 to the Great Northern, the price of the purchase of the Great Northern's interest. We, on the other hand, contributed $100,000, in order to see that road taken over, and the C. P. R. agreed in this purchase agreement of the Columbia & Western Lands that they would take over the road, they would standardize it; which they have done, and that they would operate

it continuously. That was another part of the Columbia & Western deal. Then we come to the Nakusp & Slocan Railway. A former Government (not ours) had guaranteed the principal and interest on the road, and it was secured by a first mortgage which falls due on July 1st, 1918. The C. P. R. also operate the road on a basis of receiving forty per cent. of the gross earnings. We have had to pay on this guarantee, as well as many other guarantees that have been entered into by previous Governments in this Province, and they refer to it in the pamphlet, at page 24, as having handed this road over to the C. P. R. in 1912—a gross mis-statement. "We are prepared to substantiate all statements made." They also refer to the guarantee of the Victoria & Sydney Railway, which was a small railway running from Victoria to Sydney of some few miles in length, and which had afterwards been acquired, and is now owned, by the Great Northern Railway Company. The City of Victoria had guaranteed three-fifths of the interest of the bonds of that railway, and the Government (not our Government, but a Government of years ago) had guaranteed two-fifths. The City of Victoria, the Great Northern and ourselves came together, and in March, 1913, we received from the Great Northern Railway Company a repayment of $33,000 on account of the guarantees which we had paid, and also received an indemnity from the Great Northern Railway Company that in future we would not have to pay any further guarantees; and still, at page 25 of this remarkable document, they say that we have to pay $92,230 a year on account of the Nakusp & Slocan, Shuswap & Okanagan, and Victoria & Sydney guarantees. And I have just pointed out to you that we have been entirely relieved from the Shuswap & Okanagan guarantee and from the Victoria & Sydney guarantee, but still they tell you that "we made the strictest investigation possible ourselves." (Laughter.)

Now, we will go a little further into the Columbia & Western deal. They made a great point in reference to the Columbia & Western, and they make this statement, at page 6, that the British Columbia Government paid no less than forty cents an acre for the railway subsidy lands in this region; and then they speak of Mr. Lucas as one who had voted for it; and they say we paid forty cents an acre to certain railway schemehs, including F. Augustus Heinze. F. Augustus Heinze was a fine name to conjure with. He was an American German from New York, and therefore our clerical friends could not fail to take advantage of that; it might raise some feeling of an anti-German nature to refer to the fact that Mr. F. Augustus Heinze had been treated so liberally by the Government. So far as F. Augustus Heinze is concerned, we never purchased his interest. He still owns it, or his estate does, be-

cause he has passed to the great beyond, as the Government never purchased it. "We have made careful inquiries and verified all statements made." (Laughter and applause.) Now, how much confidence havet he people of this Province in such mis-statements as that? But I might tell you why they introduced Mr. F. Augustus Heinze into the question: I happened to be solicitor for Mr. F. Augustus Heinze up to the year 1911 in his fight with the C. P. R. over his interest in these very railway subsidy lands. That litigation started before I became a member of the Government, and if these clerical gentlemen with this Mr. Cotsworth, this adventurer from London, were able to put in a pamphlet that Mr. Heinze (no matter whether the statement was correct or not) had sold his lands to the Government at the rate of forty cents an acre, and then state, as they do here, that Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge were acting as solicitors, it, of course, brings home to the Attorney-General that his influence was used while a member of the Cabinet, to purchase from his client worthless lands at the rate of forty cents an acre; but I have already told you that we have never purchased Heinze's lands, no agreement has ever been entered into between us; and I will show you now what the real facts are (and I regret that I have to bring these personal matters up in my own constituency, where my reputation is equally as good as any of these reverend gentlemen). (Loud applause and cheering.) It is true that I was solicitor for Mr. Heinze, and we fought the C. P. R. through the courts in this Province, and finally to the Supreme Court of Canada; and they afterwards made application to the Privy Council to appeal there, but it was refused. In 1911 the litigation ended. I was then a member of the Government, and in 1912 the question then arose of taxing Heinze's interest in these lands, as the time for the subsidy lands of the Columbia & Western under the Statute being taxable had arrived. In the year 1912, the year that they could become taxable, the C. P. R., in order to avoid taxation, sold out to us at this cheap rate of forty cents an acre, but it still left outstanding Heinze's half interest in 583,000 acres, of which we had bought the C. P. R.'s half interest; but the balance remained in Heinze. It was impossible to tax him because the title was then in the Crown, the C. P. R. having transferred it to us, and, true to the interests of the Province as Attorney-General, I introduced an amendment to the Assessment Act in the year 1913 to tax Heinze's interest, notwithstanding that the title was in the Crown, and the result was that we taxed him in 1914. Mr. Heinze at once took the ground that we had no right to tax his interest as it was not in his own name; and he appealed from our assessment to Mr. R. S. Lennie, who was appointed judge of the Court of Revision at Nelson; but Mr. Lennie upheld our amendment to

the Assessment Act, which I had placed upon the Statute book. The same year, 1914, Mr. Heinze appealed to the Appeal Court at Victoria; and it is hardly necessary for me to tell you that I was not Mr. Heinze's solicitor. Mr. Hamilton, King's Counsel, of Nelson, had been acting for him ever since we had ceased to be his solicitors in 1911. The case was argued before the Appeal Court in Victoria and the section in the Assessment Act was upheld. They then appealed to the Supreme Court at Ottawa, and in May of this year a unanimous decision was given upholding the Province's right to tax Heinze. Since that time Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper has been engaged by a Trust Company in the City of New York who are interested in Heinze's estate, and they are now preparing to take this case to the Privy Council in order to have it declared in that Final Court that our Amendment was ultra vires. Now, don't you think it would be more Christian-like and more charitable for those gentlemen, "who verified every statement in this pamphlet," to have taken you into their confidence and have told you, well, Mr. Bowser was solicitor and counsel for Mr. Heinze up to 1911, but from his public course of conduct in amending the Assessment Act, and carrying this case to the highest Courts in the country, he had shown that he could rise above his own personal gain, and was acting as he should act as Attorney-General, in the interests of and for the people of this Province. (Prolonged applause.) Can you conceive of a more malicious insinuation from preachers of the Gospel against any man in public life? "We have made the strictest investigation possible ourselves." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, the next point to which I wish to refer is page 25, as to oyster leases; and I must apologize for taking up so much time in connection with my own affairs, but a great deal of this pamphlet is aimed at me personally, with the idea to hurt me politically in my own constituency, notwithstanding the fact that they say "The facts set forth are not published in any partisan spirit (laughter) nor to serve the purposes of any political body whatever"; but it is most noticeable that all the way through, when they can bring anything home to me or my firm, they do so, and it is for that reason, as a man in public life, that I have a perfect right, in any portion of the Province, to make the best defence possible when charges of this sort are made. Now, they make this statement that all the companies who had oyster leases, and who were fortunate enough to have retained the firm of Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge, had their rentals reduced. They introduce here the case of the Crescent Oyster Company, a company in which I have put a great deal of money with other good citizens of this city, and we are all of the opinion (like a great many

more of you) that we would be delighted if the Ministerial Association would buy out our stock. (Laughter.) It is not on a paying basis; never was. We are trying to build up an industry, but, when we first located that land, owing to the state of the tides, on account of our surveyor having to work at night, it was not always possible for him to place his stakes on the land which would be most suitable for oyster culture, and as a result a great many acres were taken in and surveyed, and for which we got leases that was really of no benefit to us at all for oyster culture, being shifting sand. These facts were brought before the Honorable Mr. Fulton, the then Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, and at a time before I entered the Cabinet, and it was pointed out to him that the 444 acres that we had under lease, and for which we were paying a dollar an acre, were really more land than we wanted; that the company was not on a paying basis; that we had undertaken entirely too much by way of ground rental, and the company presented such a case before him that he decided in case of oyster leases that he would reduce the rentals to fifty cents an acre to those with large areas, and a dollar an acre would be charged to those with small areas. Our company was reduced the first ten years down to fifty cents an acre, and after that, for the balance of the term, we would pay a dollar. The only other lease in existence at that time, in good standing, was one by Norris & Havelaque, at Clayoquot, issued in 1904, covering fifty acres, and, being a small area, he did not reduce it, but left it at a dollar an acre. We were paying $444 a year, and they were paying $50. So he laid it down as a principle, as a rule in the Department, that in all future leases which would issue, if the area was large the rental was only to be fifty cents an acre; if the area was small, a dollar an acre. Our firm afterwards acted for the B. C. Native Oyster Company, one of the members of which was Mr. Chick, Mr. Bryce, two men well known to the old-timers of Vancouver, and also Capt. Moody, who is still running in one of the Union Steamship Company's boats up the Northern coast. They made application to the Department, and under the rule that was put in force they received a lease at fifty cents an acre. They make the statement that all the leases held by Bowser, Reid & Wallbridge, and those only, are paying fifty cents an acre, and the leases owned by any other company with a different firm of solicitors are paying a dollar an acre. Messrs. Ellis & Kemp and M. G. John are only paying fifty cents an acre, and they have had no connection with our office at all. But I only refer to these matters, and I must apologize for referring to them, so that you can see the venom, the animus that pervades this whole document, when they don't go to the trouble to find out whether these leases were issued at a time when I was a member of the

Cabinet or not. They don't care anything about that. The bald statement is made, and by the evidence given on oath, they apparently take Mr. Cotsworth's statement for everything which appears in the document. But there is a "method in their madness" in referring to my firm and myself.

Now, I am not going to dwell at any further length on these matters, and I will pass on to the main questions in the pamphlet itself, so far as I can in the necessarily limited time at my disposal. Now, we will turn to page 4, where they refer to the returns that the Assessors have given in connection with our public lands. They state at page 4 that the Assessors who made returns to the Agricultural Commission were asked certain questions in reference to the number of acres in each assessed district that were within twenty miles of a railway, or twenty miles of a wagon road. They state in their pamphlet that twenty Assessors out of twenty-nine reported that there was no land, no public lands, available for settlement within twenty miles of a railway, or within twenty miles of a wagon road. Now, we will go to the returns, and see how much of that statement will bear the light of day. Nine Assessors out of the twenty-nine did not reply to the question at all. Nine Assessors gave estimates. Seven were unable to give correct estimates, and three replied that there were no lands within twenty miles of a railway. The pamphlet states that twenty out of twenty-nine said there was no land within twenty miles of a railway. The reports on file show that three out of twenty-nine made that statement. "We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." (Laughter.) Three of those Assessors who said that there were no lands at all within twenty miles of a railway in their district, afterwards stated to the Department that they misunderstood the question, that in one case there was no railways in the man's district at all, so he answered it literally, that there were no Government lands within twenty miles of a railway. Another case was where the land was in the railway belt, and owned by the Dominion Government, and he stated that there were no lands in his district available for settlement. The other man was at Comox. These are the three who stated there were no lands for settlement in their different districts. Now, let me tell you what the facts prove since that. Since 1903 the assessment roll has been made up in Barkerville, where there was no railway, and where the Government agent answered that there were no available lands in his district; he has, since 1913, issued 3,275 pre-emption records covering 520,000 acres. (Applause.) In Comox, since 1913, where the Government agent replied there was no Government land for settlement, he has issued 549 records amounting to 87,000 acres, a total of 607,000 acres of public lands suitable for pre-emption in these two districts. In

Ashcroft, where a similar answer was made, they have since issued twenty records amounting to 3,200 acres. Now, you see the statement, twenty out of twenty-nine answered, according to the document, that there were no lands at all; and I have shown that there were only three out of twenty-nine.

Now, on page 26 of the "Crisis" they figure that only 161,000 acres are available within twenty miles of a railway or wagon road, and on page 4 they say that 90 per cent. of the available agricultural land has been alienated, that only ten per cent. of the agricultural land in this Province is now available for settlement. As a matter of fact, from a strict investigation in the Department of Land, I am in a position to say that over fifty per cent. of the estimated agricultural land in this Province still belongs to the Crown. (Applause.) Since the 1913 rolls have been made up, there have been 8,159 pre-emptions located, amounting to 1,300,000 acres; and 1915 promises to be equally as good. Now, is it necessary for me to compare these figures with the pamphlet figures which Mr. Cotsworth is the sole author of? Now, they say on page 6 that the falsification of these reports was made by the Royal Commission on Agriculture. They make that statement deliberately. You may know some of the gentlemen who composed that Commission: Mr. W. H. Hayward, M.P.P., of Cowichan, was Chairman; Mr. Alexander Lucas, M.P.P., of Yale, was another member; Mr. Campbell, a very estimable and honorable man in the City of Nelson, was also on the Commission; as well as Mr. Kitson, of Vernon; Mr. Duncan, of Comox, and Mr. Shannon, of Cloverdale. Now, these are the gentlemen that they charge with having falsified the returns in connection with the reports to the Royal Commission on Agriculture. I have here availed myself of an affidavit made by the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Christiansen. In this statement in the pamphlet they also say that they had gone direct to the secretary, and also had made copies of these reports. Now, Mr. Christiansen says, and this is on oath, with reference to the report of the Agricultural Commission issued last year, that the statement that the report had been cleverly manipulated to cover up the most glaring instances of land-grabbing in certain districts is untrue in every particular. That pages 352 and 353 of the said Commission's full report contained a complete and correct transmission of the Provincial Assessors and Deputy Assessors, showing the acreage classed as real property, and the acreage classed as wild land, in answer to questions Numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the question sheet sent to the said Assessors at the request of the said Commission. He further swears that the Commission decided to publish only such returns as they considered absolutely reliable, and the answers to question 11 were so indefinite, many of the

Assessors not replying to that question at all, and others expressing themselves as unable to answer the questions, that it was decided by the Commissioners that the answers would be of no statistical value to the report. He further swears this was pointed out to Mr. Cotsworth by him at the time he (Cotsworth) examined the returns in his office. With exception of the members of the Commission, he further swears 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, how do you reconcile this with the statement made: "We have made the strictest investigation possible ourselves." (Applause.)

Now, the next point to which I wish to call your attention is the one in the pamphlet headed, "How Government Has Aided the 'Grabber'." At page 7 of the pamphlet they say that the Land Act was amended in 1907 in order that the grabber, or the speculator, should have a chance at the public lands of our Province. The Land Act was amended, it is true, in 1907. The Sun newspaper, I think, or perhaps it was one of the Liberal speakers of the Province, I don't want to lay a single charge at the door of the Sun that is not correct, because Heaven knows they have enough to account for now (laughter and applause)—but either the Sun newspaper, or one of the Liberal speakers, made the statement that Bowser amended the Land Act in 1907 in order to give the "land grabber" a chance. Of course, that sounds better. It is a good deal more effective to say Bowser did it than to say it was Mr. Fulton, who was the man that introduced the amendment. He was then the Minister of Lands, and he afterwards left the Government; and with regard to him the Liberal party have always given him every credit, and on every possible occasion have showered him with every possible honor that they could, because he left our Government. In 1907 Mr. Fulton amended the Land Act, and in that amendment he made it clear that land could be located by agents for other people. It had always been the practice of the Department since we first entered Confederation in the year 1871; it is the same practice that is still in vogue in all the other Acts, such as the Mineral Act, the Placer Mining Act, the Timber Act; all those Acts have always permitted locations to be staked by an agent. It was never suggested for one moment that if you wanted to buy land, or timber licence, that you had to go personally into the hills to do it. You could locate it through an agent, and this has always been the practice, always was the law, it was the practice that had been followed by Governments long prior to our ascending to office in Victoria, but in order to make it clear the

amendment was passed. This amendment was put through by Mr. Fulton in 1907, before there was any real boom in land purchases. Now, Mr. Cotsworth states that that was a fraud, that it was done for the purpose of our standing in with the speculator who wanted to grab the public lands of this Province. I want to ask my Liberal friends if they have ever asked Chief Justice Macdonald, if they have asked Mr. Oliver, who is still in public life, and Mr. Brewster, why they didn't object to that amendment when it went through the House in 1907, when they occupied seats in the Legislature? They never made any complaint against it at that time, and my Liberal friends know it well; but Mr. Cotsworth said, or the Ministerial Union, that because this was done, and Powers of Attorney are taken, that therefore a fraud is committed upon the Government, and they cite a certain case in the Supreme Court of Canada to prove it.

So far as the Department in Victoria is concerned, they do not know when certain applications are brought in where land is located by an agent, that they are not bona fide. They have no way of finding out that one man alone holds all these locations. There is no reason in the world why sixteen men should not form a syndicate and have one man go out and locate land for each one of those sixteen—perfectly justifiable, perfectly legal under the Land Act. When a man goes out for himself, or sends out an agent to stake in the names of sixteen others, and it all belongs to him, then the courts have said that that is wrong, and a fraud on the Land Act; but what has the Land Department to show that there is any fraud being committed? These applications come in in the ordinary way; the records are issued in the name of each principal, notwithstanding who is agent. The Powers of Attorney referred to in the pamphlet make no difference so far as the Department is concerned, because if they ever reach the final stage and make their final payment, the Crown Grant is issued, not to the man who holds the Power of Attorney, but to the man in whose name the land was located, and, as I have already pointed out, so far as the Department is concerned, they have only been doing what has been done in Victoria since 1871. There was no demand in 1907, and it was not until some time after the amendment that the movement in land became active, but they say in the document that the old method of securing land has been done away with. Now, I have shown clearly that that is not the case. But they have gone to a great extent, and they speak in very harsh language about the Government having introduced this legislation, and they say that "the law was evaded, the Crown tricked, and the bona fide settler fleeced, while the land-thief grew rich, and the public conscience became debauched, from the owner of the 'dummy' name to Min-

isters responsible for the honest administration of the law." And then they go on to say "hundreds of speculative friends have been allowed to seize more land than they can even pay taxes for."

Now, it will be very interesting to the Ministerial Union and their friends, or those ministers who have signed this document, 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. (Applause and laughter.) Mr. Cotsworth was Chairman of the Civil Service Grading Commission, a Commission appointed to regrade the salaries of the civil service in this country. We have a Government agent at Alberni, and we also have a constable there. The Government agent was named Rayson and the constable's name was Cox. There was away out at Quatsino, away out on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, what we call a half-pay constable, Mr. T. Sorenson, who had been receiving the large amount of $30 a month to represent our Department on that part of the Coast. There was very little crime going on, and we didn't think it was worth while to put in a regular constable there, and as this man was a settler we retained him at the rate of $30 a month to do any arresting or serving any process that might be necessary. Mr. Cotsworth had heard of some lands out in Quatsino that would be rather good for Mr. Cotsworth, so, travelling at the public expense of this country, as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, he felt it was his bounden duty to go out to Quatsino to regrade my $30 constable. (Laughter.) This man had been receiving $30 from the year 1907, when I entered the Cabinet, until the year 1914, when he left our service. Mr. Cotsworth made this first trip in order to regrade Mr. Sorensen, and he found he couldn't do it in one trip. He had heard of some more lands that he had missed the first time, so he went back to regrade him a second time. (Laughter.) This was in 1909, and it is hardly necessary for me to point out that Mr. Sorensen was never regraded, he still received $30 after 1909 and for five years afterwards, but this personally conducted land hunting trip of Mr. Cotsworth had to be made. He had Mr. Cox, my constable in Alberni, imbued with the idea that if he could assist the Chairman of the Grading Commission in the way of obtaining land, that perhaps his salary horizon might be raised; instead of receiving $90 a month, Mr. Cotsworth might give him $95; and as a result, I will show you how he worked in, or tried to, with my Provincial constable at Alberni. He went out to Quatsino on this special trip of his in reference to the regrading of my constable, and I find that he secured a piece of land for himself amounting to 389 acres, and then by this alleged fraudulent method of locating through an agent, Moses B. Cotsworth located for his wife, Kezia Ellen Cotsworth,

320 acres. (Laughter and applause.) Not satisfied with that, he carried his fraud further on the Government, and although he was in the pay of the Government, regrading the civil service, so to speak, travelling at the public expense, regrading my $30 constable at Quatsino (laughter), he located another piece of land for Daisy Edith Cotsworth in this fraudulent way (laughter) amounting to 240 acres. Now, I will explain a little later on how it was that he did not receive more than 240 acres for Edith, and as agent he also purchased for a friend in Yorkshire, England, named Wm. Bell, another parcel.

Now, this all happened in 1909, some six years ago, and it is doubtful if the information as to this deal that he put up on the Province in this fraudulent way (according to the pamphlet) would have ever been discovered had a Crisis not been reached in the affairs of British Columbia. (Laughter.) Mr. Brown, who had some trouble with Mr. Cotsworth about surveying fees—Mr. Brown is a surveyor at Alberni—had the hardihood, after this pamphlet had been issued in the City of Vancouver, to write a letter to the papers, saying that Moses himself had been one of those committing a fraud on the Government. (Laughter.) Did Moses tell the Rev. Mr. Cooke, when they met in the Ministerial Union, that although everybody else should be punished who was "an exploiter and a thief," as they say in the language of the document, that he himself had been one of those? He did not know then, when he located this land, that a Crisis had perhaps been reached in British Columbia. Real estate was in good fettle then, it was turning over very fast, and it may be now that, like a lot of other people, Moses considers it a fraud to complete on a falling real estate market sales which were commenced on a rising market. (Applause and laughter.) Moses has not paid for the land, but he succeeded, if my information is correct, in obtaining from a friend of his in England a loan of £1,000, in connection with which part of the security offered was his holdings of Crown land in Quatsino, to which he has never yet obtained title. (Applause.)

Now, Mr. Brown stated in the newspaper that Moses had been guilty of the very fraud that they denounce. Moses then had to square himself with his clerical brethren, and he wrote a letter to the paper. He hadn't told them about it—apparently had overlooked it, but he wrote a letter to the papers, and what do you think his defence was? He says that he was only doing it "in order to unearth the grave dangers underlying the ruinous exploitation land policy (laughter) which the McBride Administration had recklessly enacted in 1907." Oh, he was a true patriot. He had purchased all these lands simply to show that fraud could be com-

mitted upon the Crown, and he at that time was receiving money in the pay of the Crown. If that was the case in 1909, why did he keep the secret for five years? Why did he make other payments upon his land in the meantime? And why did he not demand back from us, with interest, the moneys that he had paid in this way? Why, gentlemen, I only want to mention this experience of Mr. Cotsworth in this connection in order to show you the style of man upon whom the ministers are depending in their statements in their document. (Loud applause.)

Now, one of the evils of which the ministers complain, and one of the evils which Mr. Cotsworth, the author of the document, complains of, is, that the sale of Crown lands has been such that there is no land left for the pre-emptor. That, of course, is very bad. These people are bleeding for the poor pre-emptor; as they say in the "Crisis" document, "the bona fide settler was fleeced." But I want to tell you that if a pre-emptor happened to be the locator of any land that Moses B. Cotsworth fancied on Quatsino, it was all day with the pre-emptor. (Laughter.) I want to give you a few records in that regard. There was a young man named Guy Ilstad who held a pre-emption record for a hundred acres in section 9, township 18, Rupert district. Ilstad stood in the way of the purchase of Daisy Edith Cotsworth, but Moses included the Ilstad pre-emption in his daughter's application without entering upon the formality of cancellation proceedings, although the existence of the pre-emption was well known to him (to quote from the pamphlet: "The Crown tricked and the bona fide settler fleeced while the land thief grew rich and the public conscience became debauched"). When the application was received by the Government agent at Alberni the Ilstad pre-emption was excluded and this is why Daisy Edith only received 240 acres instead of 340 acres, which her agent, Moses B. Cotsworth, intended she should receive. (Great applause.) I might tell you that there is a section in the Land Act which deals with any pre-emptor who does not live up to the statutory requirements calling for residence and so forth, and any person can make complaint to the Department and ask to have a pre-emption cancelled. In that case the man who has brought the information to the Department has the first right to purchase; and Mr. Moses (laughter and applause), in making this trip at the public expense to regrade by $30-constable, who was never regraded, spied out the pre-emption of Mr. E. J. Wall, so he sits down and writes Mr. Rayson, the Government agent. I hold in my hand the original letter. He didn't forget that Mr. Rayson was one of the members of the civil service, and who perhaps thought he was underpaid. Moses was the man who could make it right with him in his regrading, so he writes this letter, dated June 5th, 1909: "I

make application hereby to have the pre-emption record of E. J. Wall, covering the east half of the south-east quarter of section 8, township 18, Rupert, cancelled, for the reason that he has not complied with the requirements of the Land Act. When cancelled please notify me in order that I may make application to purchase." (Laughter.) There was a poor pre-emptor that the ministers are bleeding for, and that Moses tried to do. (Laughter and applause.) I may say, however, that the Government agent was not influenced by the blandishments of Cotsworth, but honestly did his duty.

Now, let us come to the case of Charles B. Noot. Noot was an unfortunate pre-emptor that Moses had his eye on—or at least on his land, and he decided that he would try to cancel it because Mr. Noot apparently was not complying with the requirements of the Land Act, so he brought it to the attention of the Government agent in a letter, dated October 7th, 1909, and said that if it was cancelled he wanted Daisy Edith Cotsworth to purchase it. They went through quite an investigation at the suggestion of Mr. Moses Cotsworth, and as a result the pre-emptor was upheld in his holding, and the Government agent gave a decision against Moses, and incidentally Edith. After all his persecutions of Noot, Noot still held the land and is to-day in possesion of a Crown grant of the land which Cotsworth tried to take from him. (Prolonged applause)

Now, he spied out another good pre-emption. I imagine this is perhaps on his second or third trip, because it took a long time to regrade this $30-constable. (Laughter.) There was a pre-emption owned by Thomas G. Wall, a brother of E. J. Wall. What happened? The pre-emption was cancelled, but, unfortunately for Moses, Mr. Cox, my constable, whom Moses thought he had assisting him in his nefarious work and who has since left our service, was a little suspicious of the Chairman of the Grading Commission, and in stead of carrying out apparently the suggestion of the chairman, that an application should be put in the name of Moses, or one of his family, Mr. Cox put in an application in the name of his own wife. (Laughter and applause.) So Moses found that he had been "hoist on his own petard; in this case he happened to be "left at the post," and as a result the only thing he could do then was to buy out Cox, which he did, and he became possessor of the Wall pre-emption, which he had succeeded in cancelling.

Now, perhaps it might be interesting to read Cotsworth on Cotsworth in connection with this very matter. This is what Moses says of Moses (laughter): "Thus the law was evaded, the Crown tricked, and the bona fide settler fleeced, while the land thief grew rich and the public conscience became debauched (laughter) from the owner of the 'dummy' name to the ministers

responsible for the honest administration of the law. . . . . So hundreds of speculative friends have been allowed to seize more land than they can even pay the taxes for." That is Mr. Cotsworth on Mr. Cotsworth, our Grading Commissioner, trying to dispossess honest, hard-working pre-emptors in this Province. (Applause.)

Now, at page 7 they speak of the result of the amendment of the Land Act. They say, at page 8, that we brought down railway legislation in 1910, "which naturally raised the value of the lands thus stolen." Surely they are not suggesting that their friend Moses is in this criminal category as a man who has stolen land. They say 117 agents in three years "looted the" public domain. Do they call Cotsworth a looter because he is one of those who acted by way of an agent? Now, let me refer you to Appendix D in order to show you how much you can depend on this pamphlet which has been issued. They say that in one week, ending the 3rd of October, there were 1051 applications for the purchase of public lands, amounting to 492,414 acres. Now, I want to show you how honest they are. Every application to purchase land must be edvertised in the Gazette for 60 days for eight weeks. Mr. Cotsworth takes the date of the 3rd day of October, and he tells you that on that date there were 1051 applications for the purchase of public lands. He does not tell you, neither do our ministerial friends who vouch for this document, that he has taken into that, instead of one week, nine weeks, because he has taken all the applications that have been located and advertised for sixty days or eight weeks prior to the 3rd day of October, and he has taken the new ones that were put in on the 3rd day of October. Now, do you follow me? Instead of telling you that these were applications for nine weeks, he says they are applications for one week. Now, let us test this. They say 1051 applications in nine weeks amounting to 492,414 acres. They leave it at that. They do not tell you that 617 of those applications were dropped, leaving only 434 that were proceeded with. He doesn't tell you that. That would spoil the story of the ministers. 617 applications out of 1051 are dropped. He does not tell you that the department disallowed 131 of those preceeded with, leaving a balance of 303, or less than 25 per cent. of those mentioned in the document. The purchasers received records for 125,013 acres out of 492,414; and in Appendix D they give the most elaborate details about the married women and spinsters who made those applications; but they forgot to put in the Cotsworth family. (Laughter.)

Now, he goes on in Appendix D, and he says in a footnote that James Scott staked 74,040 acres. In the Gazette of August 8th and 22nd, and September 5th, there was advertised a total in the name

of Scott of 47,440 acres. They have transposed the figures; but that is nothing, a mere detail. They have changed them from 47,000, what they actually were, to 74,000, because it makes a far better story to say it was 74,000. Now, what do we find happened to James Scott? Not a single application of Mr. James Scott was proceeded with. Do they tell you that in the document? No, they lead every one of you, ladies and gentlemen, to believe that Mr. Scott staked 74,000, and received them. This was in the time of the land boom; there were many acres of our public lands that were staked and advertised that were never proceeded with. Then he goes to the case of Mr. Robert Cross. He advertised 61,760 acres, and they leave it at that. They lead you to believe that he received records for that acreage by way of purchase. As a matter of fact, he received records for 1280—1280 acres out of 61,000. Now, if they were ordinary men making those statements, but they state that they are "prepared to substantiate all statements made, and as moral leaders of the people of this Province we are in duty bound to make known the truth, regardless of consequences." (Laughter.) If it was an ordinary man, a layman, I might try to overlook it, and I would not be so critical as I am to-night; but when a minister of the Gospel, surrounding himself with all the sanctity of that holy calling, makes a statement such as this, full of such inaccuracies, then I think it is my duty as a public man to unclothe them, and show them as they really are. (Loud cheering and applause.)

Now, in this footnote in Appendix D he says that G. M. Beirnes staked 30,720 acres of coal—48 licences; but he does not tell you what the result of those applications were. I will tell you: 42 out of the 48 were not proceeded with, and the balance of them were disallowed. (Laughter and applause.) He goes on further and says that A. D. Lloyd advertised 26,880 acres, that is 42 licences; and not a single application was proceeded with. Don't you think it would have been much more honest, much more charitable for these ministers to have told the public exactly what became of those applications?

Then they complain of our raising the price of land in 1911, suggesting, I suppose, to stand in with the speculator who had already purchased. We took advantage of the land movement of that age, and those who purchased knew exactly what they were doing. Many of them to-day would only be too glad to have us pay them the fifty cents which they deposited. We will have the fifty cents, and if they do not complete we will also have the land. (Applause.) It was a speculative age, and we took advantage of it. We certainly raised the price of land. As good real estate sellers, we took

advantage of the rising market, and acting for you people in the interests of your public domain, we raised the price of our lands from the prices in existence in 1903 when we came into power to five and ten dollars as it is today. (Applause.)

We knew what would happen as a result of the operation of those railways whose bonds we had guaranteed, and we took advantage of that, and we have received very large sums of money in the treasury as a result of these sales. Now, at page 8 of the document they say that 117 agents looted 2,274,560 acres. As a matter of fact, they were allowed to purchase out of these 2,274,560 acres mentioned only 929,000 acres—about forty per cent. of their applications at that time were allowed to purchase. The applications that were not proceeded with amounted to 1,329,000 acres. But I suppose it is rather a shame for me to go on with these figures and spoil their good story. (A voice: "Go ahead.") 2,274,560, they say, were looted by 117 agents, and now here are the facts to prove that there was only 929,000 acres for which records were issued. "We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." We knew that the price would go up, and we took advantage of it. We did not stand in with our speculative friends, as they suggest, or we never would have raised the price of our Crown lands. The Crown got the benefit of the increased price, and took advantage also of the demand.

Now, speaking of the question of the land speculation of that age (because it was along in 1909), I think our opponents should be fair, and remember conditions as they were at that time. The amendment to the Land Act was in 1907. The land movement started in 1909, and we sold a large acreage of land, but it has absolutely ceased now, and I have only to give you the figures during the year 1914 to show how that speculation has died out; but in addressing sensible men and women, I should not take up your time by referring to those matters which are now a matter of history, but I want to point out that in 1914 our land purchases had fallen to only 45,000 acres, while our pre-emptions in that same period of three years surrounding 1914 had reached the very large amount of 1,300,000 acres. (Applause.) Do you want any better evidence of what the Government has been doing to put the pre-emptor upon our Crown lands than the figures which I have just given you, and still they say we have no land for the settler. I wonder what intimate knowledge of the Province these ministers, or Mr. Cotsworth, really have when they make those statements. They must surely have never travelled throughout the Province, nor have they made any enquiries. We did not start the policy of selling our public lands. That was the policy followed by governments long

before our time. And 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 Honorable Minister of Lands in a public statement that we have today 90,000,000 acres of Crown lands under reserve for the pre-emptor. There is nobody who has ever denied that, but they introduced the statement which they credit to me, made in a public meeting in Vancouver, that I stated that 90 millions of our public lands had been surveyed. I never made any such statement, or if I did it was a slip of the tongue. I knew better than that, that there were no 90 millions of our public lands surveyed in this Province, because most of the surveys have been in our time. We are the people that have been trying to get our public land surveyed, but it is a great Province, great in area; topographically it is very difficult to survey, and it would take a very long time and a very large sum of money to ever survey, in the short time that we have been working at it, a large acreage such as that, but it suits my friends, the enemy, to charge me in this connection with this statement. But leave me out of the question entirely, and come back to the Minister of Lands, and deny the statement which he has made that 90 millions of acres of our public lands are to-day reserved for the pre-emptor, and the pre-emptor alone. (Applause.) He also made the statement that 4,500,000 acres lies within three miles of a railway. That has never been denied. In December, 1914, we had reserved and surveyed for the pre-emptor 2,394,000 acres, surveyed for the pre-emptor and for him alone, and at the public expense. And since 1904, notwithstanding the statements made in this most remarkable and most extravagant document, only two millions of acres of lands in this Province that have been purchased have been Crown granted—two million out of an acreage of 238 millions. Now, to read "The Crisis" document, you would think that we had given away all the public lands of this Province; but I make the statement that during our term of office of twelve years only two millions of acres have been Crown granted, and the rest still remains in the Crown, while 1,300,000 acres have been located by pre-emptors in three years. You will then see how we are conserving the public lands of the country for the settler.

Now, I claim the sale of our public lands was justified. Every one knows that who knows anything about this sparsely settled Province, with a very small population, with a very small tax-paying population, that we could not possibly, during the past twelve years, have carried on the great work of development, trying to cope with the private individual in his development, and investments of money. We could not do it under the conditions existing —have kept up our expenditures without selling some lands. It

was the only thing we could do, by selling our public lands which are our assets. The capital assets of the Province must of necessity be reduced. Take the Skeena District alone. In the last five years we have spent in public works, outside of Prince Rupert, not referring to that city at all, where we have spent a large sum of money, and where we have very valuable real estate holdings; without any reference to education; without any reference to the money spent in surveys; without any reference to the administration of justice, or civil service salaries, we have spent in that district in the last five years, in public works alone, $2,443,669. Now, where would my clerical friends suggest to me, as Minister of Finance, that we should get that money. How could we raise two millions of that money in one district alone in the Province; from the tax-payer? No, there was only one way to raise it, and that was to take advantage of the real estate sales, and we sold our public lands in that district amounting to 2,502,000 dollars in that period. That, to my mind, is perfectly justifiable. Many of those who have bought from us would very much like to re-sell again—they would like to sell back. Those who have made the first payment on their land of fifty cents, now wish us to pay them the fifty cents back. In addition to this they have made surveys at their own expense, of which we have received the benefit, and that goes to the Crown as well; and I suppose in the end we will have the fifty cents an acre, the cost of their surveys, as well as the public lands, which will be turned back on our hands. (Applause.)

During the past ten years we have agreed to sell less than 5,200,000 acres out of a total acreage of 238,483,000 acres.

Compare our sales in this Province with those in Australia, New Zealand and the Western States and you will find that our sales are infinitesimal in comparison.

Only 5,200,000 acres, and I ask you in all seriousness, remembering present conditions, how many acres of this amount do you think will be paid for and Crown grants issued? They say the country has been ruined, all our assets gone, but it is wonderful the enthusiasm and ambition displayed by our Liberal friends to attain office. They must think "there is still corn in Egypt."

Now, they speak in the pamphlet of "hundreds of our speculative friends," and they make the charge that the administration of all the departments was carried on in favor of political allies. There is nobody knows better than the authors of that document that that statement is not true. The Department in Victoria is not affected by any political coloring of any nature. (Hear, hear.) The Liberal, as well as the Socialist or Conservative, if he lives up to our public statutes and fulfils all requirements, receives just as

much consideration at the hands of our officials as one of my best Tory friends in the City of Vancouver would. (Applause.) And in order to prove that many of the allies of the Ministerial Union (I refer to the Liberal party) have been speculating in this Province, I only wish to refer, if you will allow me, to two or three well-known names. We will take the Honorable Edward Brown, Provincial Treasurer in the Norris cabinet in Manitoba, lately sworn in. It has been disclosed that Mr. Brown is the holder—he is the Liberal speculator, that is, a fraudulent Liberal speculator—is the holder of 107 sections of land in the Peace River District, upon which fifty cents an acre has been paid to the Government. Mr. Brown did not purchase the lands direct, but he did it through the Peace River Land Company, and we would never have known that this good, honest Liberal had been purchasing our public lands had he not got "cold feet" in connection with the purchase (laughter); and he then made the proposition to our Government that he would surrender his 68,480 acres if we would return him his deposit of $34,240. (Laughter.) He also spent $23,968 in surveys, which we get the benefit of now, and $6,163 in wild land taxes. If he fulfills the requirements of the Land Act—and we will be only too willing to complete the sale to him because I don't imagine the land is worth what he paid for it (laughter)—he will have to pay the Government $150,000; but he wants to receive back his money, his fifty cents an acre; and this fraudulent Liberal speculator, according to this pamphlet, now wishes us to pay him back 50 cents an acre. The matter was brought before the Executive Council, and the application was refused. In the end we will have received $34,240 from Mr. Brown, $6,000 wild land tax, which is $40,000; and he will give us back our land. (Laughter.)

Now, let us take Mr. Bledsoe, Mr. J. F. Bledsoe, well known in this city, a very prominent Liberal, lives in Alberni. Mr. Bledsoe operated as the Grand Trunk Land Company, as the Peace River Land Company, and the Bledsoe & McClintock Land Company; and then he was afterwards known as the Lillooet and Cariboo Land Company. He bought a great many acres of our public lands which we were delighted to sell him.

Need I refer to Mr. Stewart Henderson, formerly member for Yale in the Provincial Legislature, who had also very large holdings purchased in the ordinary way, and the fact that he was a Liberal did not affect him so far as he Land Department was concerned.

Now, I have a few interesting figures that I would like to give you on the question of pre-emptors, in order to show you the situation as to the position of pre-emptors in the Province. We have a large number of acres of land, but we have not the pre-emptor. In

1914 we placed at the disposal of the pre-emptor 979 parcels of land which were formerly under reserve, and 382 only of those pre-emptions were taken up. Does that look as if we had no land for the pre-emptor? In 1915 we offered to the pre-emptors free, surveyed, costing them nothing except to put on their improvements, 694 parcels, and 119 were taken; and a great deal of this land was land that we had reserved prior to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway coming along the south fork of the Fraser River from Tete Jaune Cache west to Fort George, alluvial deposit in the bed of the Fraser River, which we, as ordinary business men, looking after the interests of the public, had reserved from the purchaser, and placed it before the pre-emptor, and still it was not taken up. In two years 1,673 parcels have been offered, and only 501 taken up. On Malcolm Island we had 247 parcels offered to the public some two months ago, and six were taken up—six out of 247. On Nootka Island we had 39 parcels offered, and none were taken. We have found that with the pre-emptor, I am sorry to say, in many cases, the only demand is for land near a city. When you throw open any land at Sechelt or Howe Sound, you will have hundreds of people standing in line at the Court House; but when you throw open equally as good land to the pre-emptor on the south fork of the Fraser, Malcolm Island, or Nootka Sound, then the pre-emptor does not wish to go there and take up his pre-emption.

Now, I wish to refer to the first clause in the pamphlet, which says: "The facts set forth are not published in any partisan spirit, nor to serve the purposes of any political party whatever. Since November last we have had them under investigation, and we publish them now only from the most urgent sense of public duty. It is with the desire to keep the whole matter, so vital to the life of the Province, above the level of mere party politics, that we append our names hereto." Now, I might tell you, if you haven't time to read it, that this whole document is couched in the most extreme language. It reeks with political bias, and the most virulent attack upon our Government. Who is selling the document today? Let me read you a little notice that I saw in the Province newspaper of May 15th: "Before casting your ballot, read 'The Crisis in B. C.' Five cents. Sole distributing agent, Appleby, 438 Richards Street." I have a postal card here sent out by E. C. Appleby to a voter in this constituency, in which he signs himself as secretary of Ward 1 Liberal Association; but they say in the pamphlet: "The facts set forth are not published in any partisan spirit, nor to serve the purposes of any political party." (Applause.)

Now, the next point to which I wish to refer is the "Exploitation of Coal Lands." I hope that I am not wearying you, but it is

so important that I should touch upon the most vital points in the document itself.

A Voice—What is the date of that post card, please?

Mr. Bowser—I don't think there is any date on it—perhaps last year. Last year.

A Voice—1914.

Mr. Bowser—1914. I suppose he is still a Liberal. (Laughter and applause.)

Now, they speak of our coal licences. I will just be a moment in explaining how you obtain coal lands in this Province. When you stake the land you obtain a licence good for three years, if the rental is paid and the work done amounting to $100 a year. Then if you discover coal you advance it to what is called a lease, which is for five years at fifteen cents an acre; then you put on $50 worth of work each year, and you also survey, and then, if you wish, after that, you can obtain a Crown Grant; and if you mine coal, the Crown receives 10c royalty a ton.

Mr. Cotsworth, by a wonderful feat of financial juggling, in this document, shows the great profits the coal locators will reap in the future, and the Crown lands, as he says, dissipated. I think we can put the coal operator, or the coal locator, in exactly the same position that we put the land speculator They would be delighted to have their money back. Take the last ten years, we have Crown granted 143,113 acres of coal; we have leased 310,790; we have licenced 568,960, or a grand total of 1,022,863 acres, of which only 143,113 acres have been Crown granted. Does that look as if we had dissipated the coal lands? Now, what receipts have we got for all this: For the purchase price, $875,192; rentals, $285,-250; licence fees, $1,056,620, or a total of $2,199,063. We have received from coal speculators $2,199,063, and have only Crown granted 143,000 acres. (Applause.) Every licence does not mean a coal mine. I wish it did. It would build up thriving populations like Fernie, like Anyox, and other places throughout the Province. In these ten years, in the ten-year period while we have been in power, we have issued 9,090 licences, and today their equivalent in either licence or lease has dropped to 1,400, showing the so-called profits that has been in coal, and showing the drop in speculation as well. If these claims are ultimately acquired by the locators, it will bring into the treasury $10,000,000.

Mr. Cotsworth takes up the Ground Hog Basin, which is some three hundred miles from Prince Rupert, and in a straight line, about 160 miles from the Coast—a very expensive railway proposition it will be in order to develop and bring coal out of that area.

There may be wonderful beds of coal in there, but in this time of using oil for fuel it will be difficult to say how many years will pass before the Ground Hog Basin will be developed. He refers to the case of Kobes and Beaton in connection with the Ground Hog, where, he says, we have given away our public assets in coal. He says they are from Chicago. It sounds better to have them come from Chicago. (Laughter.) If they go into it deep enough they will probably suggest there is some German blood in Kobes and Beaton. But Kobes and Beaton are old pioneers, well known to many in this Province, as they lived for years in the Lardeau country. What do they say: "We substantiate every statement made. We have made the strictest investigation possible ourselves." (Laughter.) But still, they say that these men come from Chicago. You must know that Chicago is put in there with an ulterior purpose. Now, what do we find? Mr. Cotsworth, or the Ministerial Union, say that these men held 92,800 acres; but, as a matter of fact, their holdings were 60,000 acres—a mere detail of 32,800 acres against the Government. They say that they paid $10 an acre for the land. As a matter of fact, if they ever buy it they will pay $20; but $10 an acre is nothing to our Ministerial friends. (Laughter.) "We have spared no pains to verify the statements made." Then what do we find in connection with these holdings? Mr. Cotsworth figures out that if they spend ten millions they will make three millions a year profit. Now, I want to tell you something: Sir Donald Mann, being interested in this northern country in his first railroading, took an option on this property, and after investigating it, dropped his option, and the money he put into it. Our friend Sir Donald, according to Cotsworth, dropped a cool three millions a year (laughter). Now, whose version, or judgment would you take on this coal mining venture, Sir Donald Mann or the members of the Ministerial Union? (Laughter.)

Now, as to the marvellous coal wealth of the Ground Hog Basin, which they say that we have completely dissipated and given away, let me give you some figures. We have issued in the Ground Hog Basin 871 coal licenses; the first year, 347 of these were dropped; the second year, 102 were dropped (they don't tell you that in the pamphlet), leaving only 422 in existence out of 871. More than half of the licences in the Ground Hog Basin, which they say we gave away, have been abandoned. Thirty-eight only of these 422 have been advanced to the lease stage, and not a single Crown Grant of coal has been issued in the Ground Hog Basin, not one single Crown Grant. The property is still in the Province, although we have collected $200,000 on account of license and lease fees. (Applause.) They say we have dissipated—and I am quoting their own language—we have dissipated the coal resources of the Prov-

ince. Let us see, when we came into power in 1903 a coal licence cost $50. In 1903, the first year that we were in power, we increased the licence fee from $50 to $100, and we also increased the purchase price of coal lands from $5 to $10 an acre. In 1911 we again increased it to $15 an acre, and $5 for surface rights—an advance of 100 per cent. since we took over the handling of your affairs in 1903. All licences in Ground Hog Basin, except the first 57, will pay $20 an acre, when they are purchased. Now, you see the statements they have made, and the statements I make tonight: "As moral leaders of the Province we are in duty bound to make known the truth irrespective of the consequences." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, "Timber Resources and Timber Reserves," another conglomeration of figures and deductions. They say we have given away this asset to the exploiter (they will soon exhaust all the extreme definitions in the dictionary). Not a single stick of timber covered by special licence has been given away, only the right to cut. The rentals for each licence west of the Cascades are $140 a year; the rentals east of the Cascades are $100 a year. When cut, a royalty ranging from 50 cents to 80 cents per M. board measure and subject to increase when the price of lumber is over $18 per M. We have simply made the timber revenue-producing in this Province. In the last 10 years our timber revenue has been $19,230,833, yielding an annual income to the Province of two millions a year. Does that look as if we had dissipated the timber resources of the Province?

We appointed a Royal Commission, composed of Mr. Fulton, then Minister of Lands; Mr. Goodeve, at present railway commissioner in Ottawa, and Mr. Flumerfelt, one of the ablest financial men in the Province. It was on their report that we based our legislation, after they and we had gone into the matter thoroughly. We made the licences transferable, and renewable, to which Mr. Cotsworth objects, in order to give title to the timber-holder which he might use with his banker. The Minister of Lands instituted a most modern and up-to-date fire protection service. The timber-holder paying half and the Government the other half. Timber is growing faster today under our system of preservation than it will ever be cut. Standing commercial timber in this Province today is conservatively estimated at 400 billion feet; therefore, a perpetual asset, and when cut and sold will yield to the Government between four hundred and five hundred million dollars. That is the way we have dissipated the timber resources of this Province. (Applause.) It is the most up-to-date and advanced legislation on this continent. Just permit me for a moment to refer to what Dr.

Grice says about the British Columbia timber resources. Prof. J. Watson Grice, Doctor of Science, London, F.R.E.S., in a review of the timber resources appearing in the "United Empire," referring to the second interim report of the Royal Commission on the natural resources of the Overseas Dominions, pays this tribute to British Columbia's timber, and to the policy which we have carried out here: "The outlook is specially favorable for this Province, inasmuch as she enjoys special advantages. She has profited by American experience, and undertaken forest supervision before her magnificent resources have been to any great extent dissipated. She has close at hand a profitable outlet in the Prairie Provinces, which must become more and more dependent on her for timber for agricultural homes and pursuits. The opening of the Panama Canal will bring her commercially, nearly 6,000 miles, nearer to the Mother Country, and an enlightened policy has been pursued (and quite recently extended by raising royalties and rentals) for the protection of public interests in the natural resources of the Province. Fortunately, for Canada, as a whole, she (British Columbia) has avoided the disastrous policy (which has prevailed in the United States) of selling forest lands outright, and of levying local taxation in such a manner as to lay a premium on reckless cutting for sale and wholesale destruction of the timber." That is by Professor Grice in "The United Empire." I might also refer you to the very favorable reports which have been given by Prof. Furnow, of Toronto University; Henry S. Graves, Chief Forester of the United States, who speak in the highest terms of the timber policy introduced by the Honorable Mr. Ross, Minister of Lands; and I must not overlook Sir Clifford Sifton, President of the Canadian Commission on Conservation. (Applause.)

Now, at page 16 of the pamphlet they go on to state that the civil service have also been brought into this robbery of Dominion Lands, and this is the heading: "Government Officials Share in the Plunder"; and they refer to a poor old fellow named Scott, a very old man, now mining recorder at Nakusp, who is in receipt of the very large sum of fifteen per cent. commission on the mining record fees he collected at Nakusp. During the last five years he has received by way of fees $285, a little over $100 a year; but that is enough for the ministers, that is enough for our friend Cotsworth to make the heading "Government Officials Share in the Plunder." Mr. Cotsworth wrote to Mr. Scott, and suggested that he was a capitalist who wanted to buy Mr. Scott's timber licences, and as a result he received a letter back from this old man, who didn't know Cotsworth, however, as well as I know him (laughter), telling him he would sell his timber land, and perforce that is sufficient to lay the charge that Government officials share in the plunder. Why

shouldn't the old mining recorder stake timber if he wanted to, as well as you? But he is not a civil servant in any sense of the term. And what do we find is Mr. Scott's actual financial condition? He has paid to the Government $33,046 for his timber licences, which he still holds, and which he cannot sell. He pays $2,500 a year to the Government to hold his timber licences, and because he saw fit to invest his hard-earned money in timber licences the ministers say that "Government officials share in the plunder." Now, the next is "Pulp Leases and Mills. Pulp legislation was on the statute books when we took power. The legislation was passed in 1901. It was in order to encourage the establishment of pulp industries and pulp mills in this Province. We only have one or two today that are really in operation, and they are a credit to the Province, and to the people who have invested the money, such as the Powell River Mills, and we would be only too glad to see scores of other mills in the same way. Unfortunately, from various causes, such mills as Swanson Bay and Ocean Falls were a failure, and we apparently are to blame for these failures, according to the document. Now, Fleishhacker Bros. of San Francisco have come in. They have been very successful pulp men in the United States, and they have bought from the liquidator of the Ocean Falls, their property, with the idea of establishing a very large industry there. The name is good, "Fleishhacker." It is a name to conjure with; it appeals to the ministers; it appeals to Cotsworth, and he states in his pamphlet, "Germans dictate the B. C. law," "Germans capture Ocean Falls." I have taken pains to find out what the nationality of these men is. I have a letter from Mr. Mortimer Fleishhacker, who is president of the Anglo California Trust Company, in which he wishes to thank Mr. Norman Lang, of the Powell River Pulp Company, who sent him a copy of the Sun of April 8th, with an article in it in reference to the "Crisis":

"I note from this article that there seems to be some impression that the Company in which my brother and I are interested have some German affiliations.

Inasmuch as there are absolutely no Germans connected with our Company in any way, shape or form, I imagine this impression was obtained from the fact that my name happens to be a German one. As you very well know, my brother and I were born in San Francisco and are American citizens with no German connections of any kind whatsoever.

On the contrary, our business associations and dealings, wherever they have been of a foreign nature, have connected us with French and London banking firms; our principal foreign connection being Lazard Freres of Paris and London.

You know very well that neither my brother nor myself are any more German or have any more German connections than you or Mr. Johnson, which practically tells the whole story."

"We have made the strictest investigation possible ourselves." (Laughter and applause.)

Now it is not necessary for me to go into all the ramifications of the Ocean Falls, which was an unfortunate investment, but the Government are not to blame. They are to be congratulated on having done their share in order to encourage these people to come and open up this great industry, and we have the approval of the public in this regard. I hold in my hand a copy of an order made by Mr. Justice Morrison of the Supreme Court, approving the sale from the liquidator of the Ocean Falls Company to the Fleishhacker people of San Francisco. Represented on that hearing was Sir Charles Tupper, K.C., counsel for the Western Canada Trust Company; Mr. G. Herbert Head, counsel for Sydney Allen; Mr. Douglas Armour, for Neville Forth O'Brien and the Ocean Falls Co.; Mr. Lawson, for the following creditors, namely: McLennan & McFeely, Saddler & Haworth, Columbia Flouring Mills Company, Vancouver Portland Cement Company, Chicago Belting Company, and Pacific Coast Pipe Company; Mr. S. S. Taylor, K.C., counsel for B. F. Sturtevent & Co., the parties served; Mr. Arnold, counsel for the Crane Company. All these people were served, their counsel appeared, and they all approved the transfer of the Ocean Falls property and leases to Fleishhacker, and an Order of the Court had to be obtained from Mr. Justice Morrison approving of the sale. Now we are blamed, and they state that Germans dictate the laws. They are speaking about an amendment to the Water Act. In 1901 there was an Act known as the "Wood Pulp Act, 1901," allowing those who had taken up pulp leases and were going to build, complete and operate pulp mills in this Province, to have certain privileges under the Water Act. The Powell River people proceeded and erected their mill, and started to operate it. In the meantime, the fees under the general Water Act had been raised. It was never intended that it should be raised on these people, because they had their rights under the Act of 1901; and after advice from the Attorney-General's department, the Minister of Lands, openly and above board, brought down an amendment in the House which the Minister of Lands explained, and stated that it was necessary to bring in this amendment so that the Powell River people could have their water records on the old rates called for in the "Wood Pulp Act, 1901." We also made it applicable to other Pulp Companies as well, including Fleishhacker; and having done this, for encouraging the operation of the Ocean Falls mill, which for months

had been lying idle, the charge was made by the Ministerial Union that we allowed Germans to dictate B. C.'s laws.

Is it necessary for me to keep up this harrowing tale in reference to the mis-statements in this document? I could speak here for hours on the statements that they have made, showing what reckless statements they have launched, that they have made no attempt to find out whether they were true or false; but, occupying the high position that they did, they have gone through this country with their printed document, distributed it free where people will not purchase it, and then they have also their speakers going from one part of the Province to the other, reiterating the mis-statements to which I have already referred.

Now the next point that I wish to refer to is the fact that they state, on page 8 of the document, that there was an attempt to stop the work of the Commission, of which Mr. Cotsworth was Chairman. Mr. Cotsworth was Chairman of the Commission, a Royal Commission to regrade our civil service, "to supervise the grading and regrading of the members of the public service," and these poor, deluded brethren of the church state that there was an attempt by the Government to stop the work of the Commission because he (Cotsworth) had reported to us as Chairman of the Commission some reference to our policy which we were following under the Land Act. What on earth had he to do with the policy of the Land Act? He might as well come to my office, and tell me how to prosecute cases at the criminal assizes. He was to regrade the salaries of the civil service, but he was a very meddlesome old man who wanted to place himself upon the throne as the Pooh Bah of the civil service of this Province, and we came to the conclusion that, unless we wanted to paralyse the work of the civil service, the sooner we ejected that man from the Government buildings, the better. He had been there entirely too long, and we wrote him a letter, but we had virtually to eject him from the building; but his feelings were alleviated by the fact that he carried away with him a check for $8,500, and had incidentally been able to get a few acres of land while acting as civil service Commissioner. Now, it appears to me that that was the real crisis in British Columbia. (Laughter and applause.)

A Voice—That is the Crisis, all right.

Mr. Bowser—Now that accounts, as the gentleman says, for the "milk in the cocoanut." (Laughter.)

Now, they complain that we have not published the report of the Royal Commission. Nobody knows better than Mr. Cotsworth (I don't say his ministerial friends know, because I am afraid I have shown you tonight that they know nothing) but I say that nobody

knows better than he that that report was a confidential report to the Lieutenant-Governor, and would therefore not be published under any circumstances, and he blames us for not publishing the report in which some reference was made to our land policy. Do you know what the reference was? He said he didn't think that pre-emptions should be taken up until they were surveyed, and that lands should not be sold until surveyed; and I just want to point out that all the lands that he captured at Quatsino was surveyed land; (laughter) which did not interfere, as you can see, with his arrangements at all in reference to our public lands.

Now, I have shown you exactly what his position was, and I have shown you when he came to the conclusion that there was a Crisis in B. C. He apparently came to the conclusion two years ago that there was a Crisis, and that is the reason that he entered into this fraudulent purchase of lands for Daisy and Kezia as agents. (Laughter.) But I want to tell you that notwithstanding the fact that he knew we were a corrupt Government, and that we could be imposed upon, and that we were selling lands fraudulently, he made another proposition to us last year (I will not bother reading his original offer), he wanted to change the Westminster Almanak. He wanted to make thirteen months in the year instead of twelve; when the Liberals come into power, and he is placed upon the throne as the Pooh Bah of the Civil Service, he will have another month in each year in which to eject pre-emptors more than he has at the present time. (Laughter.) He wanted to change the Westminster Almanak; and notwithstanding the corrupt Government that we were, notwithstanding the fact that we were giving away and dissipating our public lands, and coal licences, he tried to obtain a thousand dollars from us towards printing his Almanak. (Laughter.) We refused. "Second Crisis in British Columbia." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, his ministerial friends are very much agitated because we ordered him out of the Parliament Buildings, and told him that his services were no longer required, and they say this about him: "The documents published herewith and his refusal to be paid off before completing his work on the Civil Service Commission, or to become a party to the system of land-grabbing (he did not tell them about what he had grabbed at Quatsino) (laughter) prove his moral integrity, and efforts to promote the permanent welfare of the people of British Columbia." (Laughter.) I might say that although Moses received $8,500, Mr. J. A. Mara, formerly member of the Federal House and one of his colleagues on the Commission, only received $1,500 for his services, and Mr. Sampson, the other member, only $1,050.

Now, the next point that my political enemies will take up, and they have already taken it up in their public speeches, is that Cotsworth is not the issue. I have shown you by their sworn evidence that they depend entirely on Cotsworth, they depend absolutely on him. Now, they say he is not the issue. That is quite true. It is the Government that is on trial in these charges. It is quite true that he is not the issue, but in taking into consideration the information laid in any case, you also take into consideration the character of the informant, and you endeavor to discover as to whether he is moved by a high sense of duty to the public, or by an every-day natural spirit of revenge. Take Mr. Cotsworth's record: We find that he has written libellous documents before. The pamphlet says that the Government, after he had left our service, appointed him as Government Auditor of Municipalities. I will tell you how that happened: Under a section of the Municipal Act, in order to make the audit in a municiplaity more complete, we have power to appoint anyone as an auditor. Mr. Cotsworth was employed by the City of New Westminster to audit their books, and they had pretty nearly as hard a time getting rid of him as we had at the Government building. (Laughter.) He wrote and asked us to appoint him under this section of the Municipal Act, and, following the ordinary practice regarding auditors in the Province, we appointed him. Now, that is quoted by the Ministerial Union as being evidence of how much the Government thought of him. Later on, after Westminster ejected him, he got into Burnaby Municipality. Mr. Weart, the Liberal candidate in South Vancouver, was then Reeve of Burnaby, and we appointed Cotsworth at his own suggestion under this section in the Municipal Act. Mr. Weart came to Victoria, and perhaps thinking that I had some reputation in the way of ejecting people, because it was I who ejected Moses from the building, (laughter) asked me how on earth they were going to get rid of him at Burnaby. (Laughter.) I suggested that some time when he was out they should put a new padlock on the door (laughter), but I venture to say he would likely crawl into the window when he came back. But, not satisfied with that, he tries his pen again, and he writes this article in a report to the Municipal Council of Burnaby: "During the next few years Burnaby taxpayers will deplore the heavy burdens which designing men temporarily placed in power are placing upon their life, through efforts to get rich quick at the settler's expense. It is because the truth I stand for impedes that design that they have thus combined to hide the truth." Mr. Weart had had considerable to do with the financial affairs of Burnaby, because he had been Reeve for two or three years, and he instantly, when he saw this report, consulted his

solicitor, and sued Moses for libel (laughter), and I have in my possession here a most abject apology to Mr. Weart which Mr. Cotsworth wrote on September 13th, 1911, and he refers to this paragraph, and says: "I now desire to say that I did not in any manner refer to you in the above quoted paragraph, or intend to call into question, or reflect upon your honor or loyalty to the best interests of Burnaby Municipality. As to the whole letter, I without qualification absolve you from any charge of dishonesty or unfaithfulness to the interests of the Municipality, and I did not intend to cast any slur upon you." That is the author of the Crisis document, who is now in court on another libel action caused through this document. (Applause.)

Now, I hope I have not tonight been too strong in my criticism in reference to the brethren of the clerical profession who have been so deceived as to sign this document. "There are preachers and preachers," and a great many in this Province are strong personal friends, I am glad to say, of myself. I have been working hand in hand with them since I have been in the Department in doing what I could in the way of legislation to raise the moral standard of the Province, and the ministers of the different congregations, and different creeds, have been only too glad to state publicly their appreciation of my efforts. I have tried to do what I could, and in order to show that perhaps these ministers of the Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland may have been deceived by this designing man, I want to read a short editorial from the Western Methodist Recorder, dealing with the question of this document: "Whether the charges are substantially true or false, we are not in a position to say. If they are true, the guilty parties should not escape the penalty of public humiliation; and we hope now that the actual facts will be disclosed. On the face of it, however, the attack looks too bitter to be sincere, and suggests that the ministers have been used to accomplish the personal designs of the author of the pamphlet, and perhaps the party politicians. We ministers are supposed to be rather susceptible in such matters; and if it is true that some have already admitted that they had not personally inquired into the facts (notwithstanding the 'Foreword' of the pamphlet), but had accepted simply the statement of Mr. Cotsworth, the crusade will have little effect upon public opinion."

That is a very fair statement from the Methodist Recorder.

The Methodist Conference, shortly after this pamphlet was issued, held their Annual Conference in the City of New Westminster. Mr. Moses Cotsworth was there, busy as could be, around the door, (laughter) trying to sell the "Crisis" document; and you

would have thought that as Mr. Stillman, a prominent member of the Methodist Conference, had given his name to this document, and authenticated it, that naturally, if such a condition had arisen in the public affairs of this Province, that that great body of Methodist people, both clerical and laymen, would have taken some cognizance of it in their deliberations. But did they do that? Not a word; but there was one humble individual to whom they thought it was necessary and proper to make some reference, and this resolution was unanimously passed in reference to myself:

"We would express our gratification to the Provincial authorities for their action in the matter of the censorship of moving picture shows, also for the enactment of legislation which will prevent holders of liquor licences becoming members of Municipal Councils, and that the Attorney-General has insisted upon the enforcement of the law which requires all holders of licences to furnish meals and lodgings, and that the licences of a number of clubs have recently been cancelled because of infractions of the law." (Applause.)

Now, the next point to which I wish to refer, and then I am through, is at the end of the document, in which they state that there is no way of settling the "Crisis" unless a thorough investigation is ordered. "A thorough investigation needed"—really the crux of the document. This is the language: "Only the most thorough and impartial investigation by absolutely reliable and highly trained investigators into the whole course of public affairs for years past can lay bare the data for the complete story." Let me refer to it again: "A thorough and impartial investigation by absolutely reliable and highly trained investigators"—I smell Cotsworth. (Laughter.) "Absolutely reliable and highly trained investigators"—"the voice is that of Jacob, but the hands are those of Esau." (Laughter.) "Absolutely reliable and highly trained investigators"—my nasal faculties are again brought into play. This time I smell Cooke. (Laughter.) I wonder if the little congregation at Kitsilano could be induced to extend Mr. Cooke's holiday in order to give him time to act upon this Royal Commission. (Laughter.)

Now, they say that they want a public investigation, a Royal Commission appointed by the Imperial authorities, or by Ottawa. Why, under our constitution that is perfect nonsense. What has the Imperial Government, or the Dominion Government at Ottawa, to do with our domestic affairs? Those questions are settled at the poll by the electors of the country. (Hear, hear, and applause.) It is the right of the Ministerial Association, it is the right of Mr. Cotsworth as a voter in this country to offer any criticism he sees fit of our Government. As public servants we must make the

best effort we can to meet those criticisms, and satisfy the public. If we do not do so, then we are placed in oblivion, and other people take our places. That has been the constitutional remedy under our system of responsible Government, and for the last twelve years we have not appealed to the electors in vain; and I think I am safe in saying that when the time comes, whether it be soon or late, we can appeal with the same confidence for a favorable verdict, as we have in the past twelve years. (Hear, hear, and prolonged applause.)

Let me lead you a little further along that thought, and I will show you how foolish it is. The Conservative party are in the minority in the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta; what do you think the Liberals of those great Provinces, what would the Liberals of all Canada say if Sir Robert Borden was to order a Royal Commission at the suggestion of the Conservative minority in the House in Alberta, or in Saskatchewan? You would then hear constitutional law, and constitutional government, quoted by our Liberal friends, who would say it was an outrage on the majority of the electors in Alberta and Saskatchewan that Sir Robert Borden, because he happened to be leading the party opposed to them politically, should, at the behest of his own party in these Provinces, order a Royal Commission to investigate their local and domestic affairs? Why, it is absurd on the face of it. It has only to be brought to your attention to show at once the foolishness of the whole suggestion. Now, there is one question that I would like to ask before going away from this matter, and that is this: Is there, in your opinion, any partisan feeling in this whole document? (Laughter.) They start out by telling us that there is not. Why all this extreme language; why such language as "theft," "exploiters," "looters," and scores of others that I might refer to? "Our appeal," they say, "is to the conscience of the people, irrespective of party." Let us go a little deeper into history. Would you be surprised to know that Mr. Moses B. Cotsworth is a prominent Liberal in this Province? Would you be surprised to know that in the last local election in the City of Westminster in 1912, that he was a candidate for the Liberal nomination in their Convention, and, to the discredit of the Liberal party in the City of New Westminster, there were nine people in that Convention who actually voted for him? (Laughter.) Now, do you wonder that I make the charge that this is a political document from start to finish? Here is a Liberal candidate who is the author of it. Do you want any further evidence than that?

Now, let me read you from Mr. Cooke's speech in the Dominion Hall, when he first launched this document, and I will ask you if

you think it is language that should carry very much weight before an intelligent audience like this:

"Why, there is not a prophet of God, from Moses to Malachi, (laughter) who shrank from their public duty (laughter) or refused to teach kings and rulers their duty to God and to man. Moses, Elijah and Jeremiah bearded kings in their throne-room on behalf of the people. Amos denounced the corruption of Israel's rulers, Ecclesiastes cried out against the 'violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province,' Micah with burning words exposed the guilty affairs of the public trust, so Paul refused to yield his political rights, James denounced the corruption of the wealthy grafters of his day, Luther faced the assembled Princes of Europe, and John Knox preached the duties of men and of kings from the pulpit of St. Giles. Were all these men 'political parsons' who had forgotten the Gospel? Had Christ himself forgotten his mission when he set out to destroy the works of the devil, and exposed the corrupt practices of the national leaders of Judah? Was he talking nonsense when he told us to work and pray for the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth? My work for the church is only a part of my work for the Kingdom of God, and my duty to the State is just as sacred, just as God-given as my duty to my church or my family. If I see a burglar enter my neighbor's house and carry off everything of value, from the family plate down to the baby's feeding bottle, I am simply compounding the crime if I do not give warning and inform the police. And when I have the strongest reason to believe that this whole Province of ours has been looted of its richest resources and its people robbed of their rightful heritage, don't let anyone imagine for a moment that I, or my brethren in the ministry, are going to be scared into silence by the bluster or threats of any man, or body of men who have had a hand in the crime."

He is comparing himself to St. Paul, Moses, John Knox and Luther. (Laughter.) Again, he speaks at Kelowna and uses this language: "The politics of the Ministerial Union to which he belonged were purely the politics of the Kingdom of God, and their platform for their campaign was the platform of righteousness. The house of the people was being robbed of its treasures, of its merchandise, and its products, and it was therefore the duty of the ministers of the Association, and of the ministers of God, to expose those who were rifling it. I appeal in the name of justice, righteousness, the Kingdom of God, and in the name of God, and demand that inquiry be made, that the birthright of our people be restored, that the facts be set forth, and that justice be meted without fear or favor to every offender, that the reproach of corruption be forever

lifted from the fair name of this Province, and to you, people of British Columbia, I look for help to sustain that appeal." Very high sounding language, but very extreme, and many will probably say totally unjustified; but apparently as a man of righteousness, he feels that he must do his duty in placing before the public the facts as he sees them. If he had done it on some other occasions, perhaps then we might have had more confidence in his sincerity, and not have doubted his honesty. From 1896 to 1911 the Liberal Party was in power in the Dominion of Canada, and the Rev. Mr. Cooke was residing in Elkhorn, Manitoba; and it would appear to me that if he was affected by such conscientious principles then as he is now, he might possibly have heard of the "Arctic" scandal, to which he might have given some public notice; the "Merwin contracts," the "Marine buoys," the "Saskatchewan land deal," the "timber limit scandals," the "Indian land scandals," the "Moncton station site" scandals, the "Halifax station" scandals, the "Winnipeg station site" scandals, "dredging rake-offs," the "Transcontinental Railway investigation," the "North Atlantic Transport" scandals, the "Yukon" scandals, and the "sawdust wharf" of Richibuctoo, my own native town. (Laughter and applause.) Now, where was our friend Cooke, where was he on those occasions?

A Voice—At the North Pole. (Laughter.)

Mr. Bowser—Where was he? My friend says he was at the North Pole. (Laughter.) That was Dr. Cooke, No. 1. (Laughter and applause.) I think we might well term this gentleman Dr. Cooke No. 2. He has been an explorer; he has gone forth into the Cotsworth Barren Lands and has discovered a mare's nest. (Laughter.)

Now, I just wish to say this of Mr. Cooke: Does the fact that you were engaged by the Liberal Government in 1904 and 1905 to lecture for them in Ireland, under the Interior Department, affect you to the extent that you did not see it was your righteous duty to expose these Liberal scandals? (Laughter.) He received from the Dominion Government the sum of $1,089.38 for lecturing for the Interior Department in the Old Land; and whom do you suppose was the man that he was working under, and who appointed him? "Preston, of machine fame." (Applause.) Preston, the man who sent the celebrated wire: " Hug the machine for Auld Lang Syne," at the time of the election scandals in Ontario; and Mr. Preston has never been charged in my memory with ever having appointed a Conservative to lecture for him in Ireland, and if you take Mr. Cooke, and tear off the gown, you will find underneath a plain, ordinary Grit. (Laughter and applause.)

He says that he is not a partisan. Why, how could he say anything else? He could not go into the Ministerial Union and say, "I am affiliated with the Liberal Party; I want you as a committee to authenticate and approve this document, which is an attack of a violent nature against the Conservative Government." That would never do. There would be honest Liberals in that Ministerial Union; there would be honest Liberals in his own congregation who would not approve of that, and there would be Conservatives in that Ministerial Union, and in his congregation, that would not approve of it; so Mr. Cooke could only do the one thing, join hands with the defeated candidate in the Liberal Convention in New Westminster, the man with a grievance, and lead his brethren in the church to believe that he was not taking any part in a partisan attack on a Conservative Government.

Now, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I have been much longer than I intended. You have been more than good in listening to my reply to this attack. There are many other sections in the pamphlet to which I could make reference, but the time is not sufficient tonight, and it would be unfair to keep you at any greater length. You have heard the language of the Rev. Mr. Cooke in the Dominion Hall, and you have heard his language in Kelowna, and it has not improved in any of the other portions of the Province in which he has spoken, because I have taken care to see the reports in the different papers, and you see the suggestion he makes, and he calls on high heaven to assist him in hurling this Government from power. And what is to follow? Our good Liberal friends are to come in. Can you imagine any heavenly saint coming down here and entering into a partnership with Ralph Smith and John Oliver? (Laughter and applause.)

No, gentlemen, we may have many failings and shortcomings as a Government, "and do those things which we should not do, and leave undone those things which we should do," but I still have great faith in the majority of the body politic of this country, (Hear, hear) and I am forced to the conclusion that it will take more than attacks from Cooke and Cotsworth to convince the people that this Government should be supplanted in favor of the Liberal leaders, and thus uphold the unholy alliance which has been formed between the Ministerial Union and the Liberal Party of this Province. (Loud applause and cheering.)

APPENDIX

Editorial which was published in Vancouver on the 6th of August in the British Columbia Federationist (the official organ of the Labor Party in British Columbia):

Mr. Bowser, at his meeting last week, seemed to be under the impression that he was uncorking an absolutely new piece of information when he told the audience that the Rev. Cooke, one of the sponsors of the pamphlet, "The Crisis in B. C.," was a Liberal. Perhaps it really was news to the majority of the Conservative voters present. But it was not news to us. Neither do we think it was Mr. Cooke's fault if the fact was not generally known. For as far as our recollection goes he has never hidden his political faith under a bushel. We have had personal acquaintance with him for some time. And certainly to us he has never dissembled or disguised his Liberal opinions.

* * *

Indeed, on the other hand, he has always appeared to derive genuine pride and satisfaction from that fact. Further than that, unless he has changed his views of late, he is convinced that the working class should support Liberal politics. On the occasions of his visits to our office he has sometimes discussed this; and when Vancouver Trades and Labor Council decided to put a ticket of its own into the field at the coming Provincial elections, Mr. Cooke expressed the opinion that the Council would be well-advised to merge its political efforts and aspirations with those of the Liberal Party. That was not the opinion of the Council. Nor was it ours. But it was obviously the firm, if—as we believe—misguided, conviction of the Rev. Cooke. As to the truth or otherwise of the statements contained in "The Crisis in B. C.," that is another matter. But just why Mr. Bowser should think he had made a unique discovery when he learned that Mr. Cooke was a Liberal, is something of a puzzle. We have known it for some time, and we certainly do not think he will feel much put out about all the world knowing he is a Liberal.