

the vacant lands of this Province, and made the further statement that he would challenge me to show him any quarter section from the eastern boundary of the Province to the coast along the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in which it was possible for any person to acquire a homestead area.

LAND OPENING AT McBRIDE

"I have told you in a general way what the situation is in that belt, and in addition to that I want to draw your attention to an incident that occurred last Spring. We had completed our examination of a portion of this railway belt with reference to timber lands and completed our surveys in that area. We selected a portion of the agricultural lands, divided them into quarter sections, and advertised that these sections would be open at a certain date. The matter received full publicity in the newspapers for three months. A special office was opened in the town of McBride for the convenience of the public. There was a total of 537 full-sized pre-emptions offered in this portion of the belt, and of these only 133 were taken up. The net balance is 400, and I will say that each one of these 400 quarter sections constitutes an answer to the challenge of Mr. Duncan Ross. In these belts the amount of land that still remains is approximately half the area, which is available to the homesteader and is not available for purchase.

THE P.G.E. BELT

"The Pacific Great Eastern Railway is 371 miles long. Taking this railway belt at six miles wide makes a total of 1,400,000 acres. This includes part of the oldest sections of this Province, yet all the alienations total 221,000 acres, and I say this comparatively small sale has resulted from the policy adopted by the Government of creating reserves against the purchaser. In this connection I would refer you to the Gazette of April and October, 1911, withdrawing from sale every foot of land in that area from Howe Sound to Fort George, except by way of pre-emption.

"Surveys have been continuously prosecuted in this belt against the completion of the railways. An aggregate of 560,000 acres in this belt constitutes a very respectable percentage of the total area; 835 pre-emptions have been issued, and the amount of surveyed land still available is 65,000 acres, and of that remaining unsurveyed, 860,000 acres. So, when this area is developed further, there will be room for several thousand more pre-emptors, giving them 160 acres each.

THE C.N.P. BELT

"The Canadian Northern Pacific Railway runs 173 miles, and the six-mile belt would give 660,000 acres of land. The total land