

provinces at the very time when the farmers should begin to feed them, and when they should become most profitable to them, they will be sold on the farm, because of the higher price which will be offered for them, and it will be as it was a few years ago, when we had the freedom of that market for our young cattle. Our young cattle were bought up by thousands, taken over to the United States and fattened by these western people, because they had a plentiful corn crop with which to feed them. In a few years, I believe we will have a great shortage, and I am afraid that instead of the Canadian farmer finishing his product upon his own farm and returning the required nourishment to the soil the young cattle will be taken away, the farms will be impoverished and our farmers will be going around during a portion of the year doing very little on account of it.

We are told that this is going to be a most valuable thing for the farmers of the northwest. The hon. Minister of Finance said: Look at the large deputation we had down from that country, and what were their wants? One of the great wants was the freedom of the American market in order to enable them to sell their cattle and grain. It may be a very attractive prospect to the western farmer to-day to get a few cents more a bushel for his grain for a short time, or a few dollars a head more for his cattle, but I say that in doing that he is sowing the wind and is bound to reap the whirlwind. The system of farming—if I may say so, and I think I know something about farming—that they carry on in the country to-day is not the best kind of farming for the progress of the country, or for the future. What is their system of farming to-day? Having broken up some virgin soil on the prairie, rich, strong and fruitful, they go upon the land in the spring of the year, put in their crop, allow it to remain for a few months, harvest it, thresh it, put their grain into the elevator, and get their elevator receipts. It is all done in a few months in the year, commencing about March or April and ending about the following September or October. What does the farmer do after that? He does a little ploughing in the fall, but he has got the full return of a year's labour by working only a few months and that suits him very well, because human nature is always ready, in a few months, to take the wage of a year's work if circumstances will permit. You have the full return of a year's work in a few months when you get your warehouse receipts. Having obtained their warehouse receipts, what do they do? Three or four farmers will employ one man to stay on the homesteads and look after the stock of all of them while these farmers come down to Ontario and the east and go around

visiting in the country until next spring. This is inculcating, not industrious habits, but indolent and unthrifty habits, because these men are away from their farms. When a farmer leaves the farm generally everything is going to the bad. He should be on his farm in winter as well as in summer. He should be carrying on mixed farming, he should have enough stock to keep the boys employed in the winter time feeding the coarse grains from his own farm that he has in such plentiful supply and return to the soil by that system the nourishment which it needs instead of the system of farming which is carried on now. He is impoverishing that rich virgin soil, with the result that it will yield him less every year. It will bring him to the same condition as that which is found in the States, where they have carried on the same kind of farming until to-day they are receiving a return of only eight or ten bushels to the acre, whereas it ought to be 25, 30, 35, or 40, as we find it in Ontario to-day. Is that healthy farming? It may please the western farmer to get the returns from what ought to be a year's labour in a few months. But that is not the kind of farming that will pay in the future. It reminds me of what an old Scotch woman said to her boys who were rather given to running around all winter and doing nothing. She said in my presence: It is all right for you to have a good time now, and it will be very well if there is no hereafter, but if there is you will have a fearful reckoning.

A day of fearful reckoning will come, but I fear it will be when the land is impoverished and the soil no longer able to continue giving the large crops it yielded when first brought under cultivation. The system of farming now pursued will not ensure to their benefit and it will do incalculable damage to the land. They should remain on the farms during winter, feed and grow the animals on the soil just as the Ontario farmer does, instead of denuding the land of its fertility. The Ontario farmer has learned by experience that it requires a different system of farming from that to bring him a suitable return, and no doubt the time will come when the western farmers will see the errors of their present system. This reciprocity agreement will tend to build up the cities of the United States and to impoverish Canadian cities. Our lake port towns on Lake Superior, at the Sault, on the Georgian bay, instead of being on the great highway of commerce as they are to-day, will be side-tracked, and the trade of the country will go by them instead of through them. This reciprocity arrangement will decrease the business of the railways which is looked to to pay the dividends to the stockholders. Winnipeg, Port