

thing, you see by deduction that the automobile companies cannot suffer to any greater extent than being put out of business. Is not that a fine spirit! And this member is the supposed missing link of unity between east and west. I have heard the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Mullins) describe the western wheat grower as "the sowless, cowless, chickenless farmer." I am going to add another word of description to these soil robbers—I would call them the soulless, sowless, cowless, chickenless farmers.

Apart from the tragic reduction in automobiles and parts the budget amounts to very little. The reductions made are mostly removals of taxes which were imposed by this government. The government's method of giving relief to the country in this respect reminds me of the story of a man who threw a boy into the river and after jumping in and saving him coolly demanded a medal for life-saving. The income tax in regard to dividends from stocks and interest bonds will certainly tend to discourage capital from being invested in Canada. But the people of Canada will be delighted to hear of the reduction of one of the ingredients of the insidious cocktail, angostura bitters. Now I am going to show how inconsistent the ministers are and how they blow hot and cold in the same breath. The Minister of Railways while discussing the diversion of grain to American ports instead of to Halifax and St. John said that it was a very delicate thing to discuss this question inasmuch as there had been a royal commission appointed to look into the matter. I think his point was well taken. Now, Sir, when the same argument in regard to the tariff board is brought forward by members of this House, the Minister of Railways has nothing to say and is willing to swallow his own contention and to vote against his own convictions.

Speaking of the tariff board, I believe that the Prime Minister promised to appoint a lady to act on that body. The only member of the board with whom I am acquainted is the Right Hon. George P. Graham, and I am certain he has all the qualifications entitling him to wear male attire, and do not think that either of the other two gentlemen would look well with a permanent wave and a short skirt. I would call the attention of the hon. member for Southeast Grey (Miss Macphail) to the Prime Minister's promise to the gentler sex, a promise which he has failed to fulfil.

I notice that the budget has little to say about agriculture. This is a most important subject and I want to speak for a few minutes on the sugar beet situation in Kent county.

[Mr. A. D. Chaplin.]

I am surprised and I regret exceedingly that this government has attacked the sugar beet industry in Canada three times in as many years, thus vitally affecting western Ontario and particularly the county of Kent which I have the honour to represent. In 1922 the government put an excise duty of forty-nine cents per 100 pounds on beet sugar. This tax would be equivalent to a tax of ten cents a bushel on Canadian wheat. The opposition showed that this was a ridiculous tax, and it was reduced to twenty-four or twenty-five cents, and before its effects became felt, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Fielding, was prevailed upon to wipe it out altogether. Then in 1923, apparently still believing that a tax should be placed against the Canadian beet sugar industry, he came at them in another way by reducing the duty on raw sugar coming into Canada, which meant to the sugar beet growers a reduction of fifty cents per ton on their beet crop, or about \$150,000. Let me tell this House something about the size of the beet growing industry and what it means to the farmers of this country. A few years ago, before this government tinkered with the tariff, we had under cultivation 40,000 acres from which the farmers received the sum of \$4,000,000, and in the production of sugar from these beets another \$2,000,000 was expended in labour, making a total of \$6,000,000 distributed to farmers and workmen in Kent county. Since the alterations in the tariff, we find that last year this acreage was reduced to 30,000 acres and I am in a position to know that since last year's crop was by no means a profitable one, the acreage this year will be further reduced to about 20,000 acres, which proves my contention. The farmers of my district are being rapidly squeezed out of a branch of agriculture which at one time was profitable. And as if this were not enough discouragement to the farmer who, in spite of all these setbacks, still wishes to remain in the beet business, we now find this House asked to ratify a treaty with the West Indies which will, to adopt a favourite phrase of the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Stewart, Edmonton) prove the death knell of the sugar beet industry through the concessions given to the raw sugar industry. It seems to me that the farmers of this country are being discriminated against. They are being compelled to enter into an unfair competition with the cheapest kind of labour in the world. The West Indian labourer buys one pair of overalls perhaps once in three years, and this constitutes all of his clothes outside of a rope thrown over his shoulders to keep them up, and the optimistic ones do not even wear the