

these manufacturing establishments. If, by the legislation of this Parliament, those industries should be allowed to go down, those poor people would lose all they have. If I were satisfied that these words in the Act were likely to prove an injury to the country I should certainly vote to have them eliminated from the Statute-book, but until it has been proved that they are an unnecessary appendage to the Act or injurious to the public I shall vote that the words be allowed to remain where they are.

HON. MR. POWER—The hon. gentleman from Murray Harbor began by reproving some of those who have spoken to-day for having drifted away from the subject, and then he informed the House that he proposed to diverge for a little while from the argument before the Senate. So far as I have been able to follow the hon. gentleman's speech, it has been all diverge, because he has not given us any information at all on the question before the House. This is not the time to enter into a general discussion of the question of combines and protection; but with the permission of the House I shall say a very few words about the subject that is before us. The position is this: A couple of years ago, inasmuch as a great deal of dissatisfaction had grown up throughout the country with the system of combines, a committee was appointed in the other House—the House which is directly responsible to the people. They felt that it was necessary that something should be done to meet the popular discontent in connection with these combines. A committee was appointed and evidence was taken; and that evidence was such as to satisfy most people that there were combines in the country which were injurious to the consumer. There was no legislation that year, but last year the members of the House of Commons felt it was their duty to legislate—I do not know whether the members of the House of Commons were individually in favor of the legislation or not, but they were impressed by the popular feeling and were obliged to legislate. They were driven by the popular sentiment to pass the legislation. The Bill came up to our House at a late stage of the session—regrettably late. There was not time to discuss the Bill very thoroughly; and as hon. gentlemen know, in the closing

days of the Session our proceedings are not characterized by the utmost deliberation. When the Bill was in Committee of the Whole House the hon. gentleman from Sarnia, who happens also this year to be the chairman of the committee to whose tender mercies the Bill was unfortunately committed by the hon. gentleman from Monck, moved that these two words “unduly” and “unreasonably” be inserted in certain parts of the Bill, and that motion carried by a pretty large majority. The Bill went back to the House of Commons, and there the gentlemen who had sent the Bill up were very much dissatisfied; and it was a question whether they should take the Bill in its mangled form or refuse assent to our amendments and let the country do without the Bill altogether. I think, myself, they would have been a little wiser to let the Bill go, and not to have accepted our amendments. However, a measure was introduced into the House of Commons this Session for the purpose of replacing that Bill in the same position as it was when it came to us last year. It has been alleged that the Bill passed the other House unanimously. The hon. gentleman from Kennebec division feeling that that was really a very strong argument, undertook to break the force of it by telling us that that may have been so, but it was a sort of snap vote, that the members were not on the *qui vive* and the Bill was practically smuggled through the House. What are the facts? You cannot smuggle a Bill of this consequence through the House of Commons. If there were only one reading I could understand it; but the Bill must be read three times, and it has to go through a Committee of the Whole House. I have been informed that the statement of the hon. gentleman from Kennebec is incorrect in every particular: that there was no snap vote; that there was a speech of some considerable length made on the second reading; that it was early in the evening, about 10 o'clock, when the Bill passed the second reading, and further that at the third reading the Bill was allowed to pass unanimously and was taken up out of its place at the request of the leader of the House of Commons. He said he wished that this Bill should have a chance to get to the Senate. Here is the leader of the House of Commons, the leader of the great protectionist party and presumably as much