

per ton per mile, which is a larger amount than the Canadian Pacific Railway charges for the transport of wheat from Winnipeg to Montreal, and we know by experience that coal can be carried on our railroads at a much cheaper rate than wheat, in the proportion of three to five. It will cost \$3 for the same weight of coal and \$5 for the same weight of wheat. Thus, allowing a profit of not less than 25 per cent. to every one handling it, and more than that in many cases, coal could be sold in Toronto for \$1 per ton, while to-day the price is not less than \$7 a ton, and I believe more. Some have said that a scarcity of coal occurs, but such is not the case, because the coal miners have to shut down three months out of the twelve in the year, so that the production shall not be too great, so that the supply of coal on hand shall not be too large. They work nine months in the year to produce all the coal necessary for the wants of the United States, Canada and their other markets. I regard these combinations, applied not only to the manufacturers but to the dealers, as being of the most dangerous kind, and I think the Parliament of Canada should deal with and examine into them, as I propose this committee shall do, and report to Parliament in regard to the matter. We hear that there are combinations not only in sugar and in coal, but in many other articles. A combine is in existence to-day for oatmeal, for biscuits, for confectionery, for coal oil; and the financial success which has attended the operations of the combine and trusts already formed will naturally encourage other manufacturers and producers to go into this sort of arrangement from which there seems to be so much profit. We know further that many articles produced in England, which are not produced in this country, or not to any extent, or not of the same quality as those produced in the old country, are sold in Canada according to prices regulated in England. The manufacturer in England sells at a certain price, and he compels the Canadian dealer to sell those articles at not less than a certain figure. I think it should be the duty of this committee, if it should be the wish of the House to appoint it, to investigate these matters also. Some persons have said that the remedy for this state of affairs is to abolish the duties on these articles. I see that some newspapers have taken the ground that the remedy for the sugar combine is to abolish the duties on sugar. I do not agree with that proposition. I think the National Policy is calculated to stand on its own merits. I think that this country can abolish and destroy the combines without destroying the efficacy of the National Policy. Last year, the duty on coal was abolished, but, instead of the combine ceasing to have its influence and power, though we have free coal in Canada, of the kind commonly consumed in our houses, that combine is more powerful to-day than it was last year when there was a duty upon it, showing that the effect of the National Policy, the effect of the duties, has nothing to do with the combines which are formed. I would prefer to have the duty on an article, because we would control, if we can control, and I think we can, those matters more effectively in our own hands, in regard to articles produced in this country. We have precedents for the course we propose to be taken. In the United States, where those trusts and combines are more powerful than they are in Canada, we find that, in the State Legislature at Albany, they have introduced a Bill for the suppression of those combines. I have a copy of that Bill, and it deals most effectively with this question. After the House of Commons have investigated this matter, if necessary, if we cannot accomplish our purpose in any other way—and perhaps we cannot—we can follow the example set by the United States in this matter by bringing in a Bill which will have the effect of destroying and making illegal all these combines, which not only raise the prices to the people of

Canada; but interfere with the trade of the country and are an excrescence on the National Policy.

Mr. EDGAR. If the House and the country required any evidence of the evil nature of combines, I think they will find it in the rather painful effort made by the mover of this resolution, to combine in one speech and in one motion a defence of the policy of protection with an attack upon combines. Now, Sir, when I saw this motion upon the paper I certainly thought a new era was dawning for this country, and that hon. gentlemen opposite, who have so long supported the policy of protection in all its features, had begun to see some new light upon the subject, and were yielding to the influence of public opinion, and were going, themselves, to strike the first blow against the policy of protection.

Mr. WALLACE. Oh, no.

Mr. EDGAR. Well, so far as the hon. gentleman's attack upon combines among trades went, I entirely agree with him and I entirely agree with his motion, so far as it goes; but, surely, he is not going as far as the country will require, when he leaves out of his motion combines among the manufacturers. Certainly we want to investigate the results of combines among importers and people who buy and sell. They may be all right—I do not say whether they are right or wrong; but certainly affairs have come to a pass when an investigation should take place as to whether they are right or wrong, and if wrong, some remedy should be found. When I saw this motion, I concluded that we had arrived at the third and last stage of the system of protection. The first stage, we know, was very pleasant for the manufacturers, at least. They had the market to themselves, and they made money, of course, at the expense of the consumers. Well, that lasted a while, until it became apparent to people who had money to invest that there were splendid opportunities for making money by going into some of these protected industries. Then everybody rushed in who could get a chance, and what the result was before long, in this country, is a matter of history. These highly protected industries were nearly all overdone, and the manufacturers in their turn suffered loss. Well, for a short time the consumers reaped the benefit of that, and the advocates of a high tariff told the country: "There you see, you are getting competition; that is what we promised you, you are getting competition, and you are getting cheap goods." As a result of this competition among the manufacturers the third stage of the protective system at last came on, namely, combines among manufacturers to protect themselves against the public. A great deal too much capital had been thrown into these protected industries, they were being worked at a loss, and the third stage has now arrived, that is to say, combines among the manufacturers against the people. Now, we see that exactly the same thing has occurred in the United States. It is true that it took a longer time to manifest itself there, the country being so large that it was more difficult to form combinations of all the persons engaged in the different industries. The new Morrill Tariff came into force in April, 1865, and it was not until the last year or two that these combines have been formed. It took more than 20 years for the interests who were suffering from the competition that naturally came about, to protect themselves by combines. But in Canada, being a much smaller country, we have reached the third stage much more rapidly, and we have caught up to the United States, although we have only been eight or nine years under a high protective tariff. Now, having met here to-day, we ought to try, in a statesmanlike manner, to find a remedy for the evils that exist. Not only at Albany, in the Legislature of the State of New York, as the hon. gentleman says, but in the