

Trade policy, and were real merchants; they bought in the lands where they could purchase cheapest, and were thus enabled to sell in their own markets at reasonable figures. That is all done away with; the West India Trade of our country is done away with; we have no more foreign importations and protection is the policy of the country. I bow to the will of the people: I do not see that I have a right to set up my view against the judgment of the majority. Twice the people of this country, by a large majority, have sustained the protective policy at the polls, and I believe they will sustain it again at the next election. Therefore, I think we have a right to bow to the will of the people and carry out their views. Looking at matters in that light, I feel, though my principles are those of Free Trade, that I have a right to sustain our present policy until there is a change in public sentiment. I have some idea of going into commerce again, and if I were to do so I would feel at a loss to know what to do. I would not feel disposed to purchase goods from local sources. I know that one or two of the last transactions that I had, when I was a merchant, were very unsatisfactory. When I was in the trade it was my habit to import tobacco from abroad, perhaps four or five hundred boxes at a time. On that tobacco we had a very fair profit, because we bought in the proper market. I have known others engaged in that trade to import large quantities of tobacco, and after paying our local duties and getting a fair profit, they were able to sell those goods again to other countries. All that is now done away with. We have to go to one or two manufacturers in this country who, no doubt, are combined to sell tobacco at a certain price. One hon. gentleman who is in trade, and who ought to desire to have freedom to import from abroad, advocated a continuation of the present system. He knows very well that he could not get permission to purchase abroad; he would have to go to one or two manufacturers of tobacco and pay their price, and that would prevent him from getting anything more than a mere commission on the transaction, because his customers, to whom he formerly sold, would have the same privilege of going to those manufacturers and making their purchases direct. Consequently,

though a merchant may do an extensive business and have a large capital invested, he cannot do better than those small traders, and has to bring down his business to meet the changed condition of affairs. So it is with the salt trade. In former times the salt trade with Liverpool was an extensive one. It gave ballast to our ships, and we imported and sold it to our fishermen at a moderate price. We cannot do that now; our ships are deprived of the ballast and also of the freight. These are matters that you, who are engaged in manufactures, ought to consider. You are prospering, but I hope that in your prosperity you will see that there is another class, a very valuable element of our population—the mercantile community, the importing class, who built our cities by the seaboard—are declining. These men were trained to find out the best markets in the world, and they imported goods on such terms and conditions that they were enabled to sell at moderate prices. In those days sugar was imported very extensively, giving freight to our ships. It is different now; it is more profitable to the manufacturer than to the importer. As the hon. gentleman from Toronto said, the importer makes very little profit now, but he did not seem to see the reason of it. It is that they are merely retailers, and are not merchants at all; they have to buy from the local manufacturers and are at their mercy. I think it is well known to all commercial men that, though our present policy is beneficial to manufacturers, it is unsatisfactory to very many of those who are engaged in trade. However, having voted for the legislation of last year, I will sustain it now. We criticised those words last year and had the opinion of the best legal authority in the House that they were the most fitting words for the purpose we had in view. I have not changed my opinion yet, and therefore I shall vote to sustain the legislation of last year.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—I voted against the introduction of the words “unduly” and “unreasonably” into the Combines Bill last year, because I considered that the spirit and the intent of the legislation was that men should not unduly or unreasonably combine to enhance the price of any commodity; that it was not intended that combines should be deemed unlawful if