

sponsibilities to the Empire, that amount will be furnished by this Parliament without regard to party or to any differences of opinion on political matters in Canada. And I was pleased that the Prime Minister very frankly said that the House and the country were entitled to the fullest possible information with regard to the expenditures already made. I should regard it as most unfortunate if anything should occur in the administration of the country's funds in connection with the war which would in any way tend to lower the high ideals which we would like to see maintained by every Canadian from one end of this land to the other. Nothing would so retard the recruiting of men for the war and lessen the enthusiasm of our people as the knowledge that there was partisanship in the awarding of contracts or improprieties in the purchase of supplies. If Canada has the high ideals on this question which, I am sure, every one of us would like to see her entertain, could anything be more debasing, could anything more surely bring down the tone of our people in this serious juncture in our history, than the knowledge that partisanship was dominating the public expenditure instead of the governing motive being the considerations of the country's best interest and our duty to the common cause? I trust that hon. gentlemen on the treasury benches who have the responsibility for this matter will see that its importance is impressed upon the subordinates in the various departments.

My hon. friend and leader referred to the expenses in connection with the purchase of boots for the soldiers, and repeated the assertions which have been made in that regard in the public press of the country. I should like to call my right hon. friend's attention to the circumstances in connection with the purchase of horses. It is asserted broadly throughout the country that horses which were procured in the Maritime provinces and taken to Valcartier were found unsuitable and unfit for service; so much so that many were turned loose in the fields and were not taken on board the vessels and shipped to the other side. If that assertion is true, the country should know of it. As it is, the facts in regard to the purchase of horses and of boots are of the greatest possible importance, and I trust that the fullest information in regard to them will be brought down. I make this reference not in any partisan sense, but merely for the purpose of calling the attention of the Government to the assertions

which are being made throughout the country in regard to these matters.

There is another matter to which I wish particularly to call the attention of the Government. In addition to the expenditures which are being made directly by the Government in this country, it is well understood that a very large amount of money is being spent among the various industries of Canada in the purchase of war supplies of different kinds. It is said that these purchases are being made under the direction of a special committee of council, under whose control the whole matter is placed. As a matter of fact, large orders for supplies and munitions of war have been given to various industries in Canada and are being manufactured here, and orders amounting to millions of dollars have been placed in the United States. It is well understood that the prices paid for these articles are not parsimonious prices. It is well understood that the Government—whether the home Government or the foreign governments who desired these munitions—have not quibbled about the actual cost of the articles so long as they obtained them. In all contracts let by the Canadian Government for supplies required to be manufactured, there is, under our law, what is known as the "fair wage" clause, which controls the wages paid to the men who construct or manufacture these articles or supplies. But in regard to a great many of the articles which are being manufactured for the old land and for other governments—I refer more particularly to those which have been purchased for the British Government, such as munitions of war—there is a necessity for the Government's taking steps, if the conditions which exist in connection with several industries in the Maritime provinces are any indication of the situation in other portions of the country, to see that the fair wage clause is imposed upon contractors at the time the contracts are let. I should like to call the attention of the House to a resolution which is the basis of what is known as the fair wage clause in Government contracts. It was passed in the year 1900 on the motion of Sir William Mulock, then Postmaster General, and is as follows:

That it be resolved, that all Government contracts should contain such additions as will prevent abuses which may arise from the subletting of such contracts, and that every effort should be made to secure the payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen in the district where the work is carried out, and that this House cordially concurs in such policy, and