

that the circumstances of this country have outgrown the limited form of audit which we provided years ago. It is true that one of the most able and one of the most capable officers that this country has ever had, not a political friend of this side of the House but appointed by hon. gentlemen opposite, after years of experience, has come to the conclusion, and has told ministers and told parliament that he was unable properly to perform his duties because of the inadequacy of the Act under which he was working. Now can there be anything more important than a proper supervision of the expenditures of this country—all of course within the lines of ministerial responsibility? But within those lines can there be anything more important than having proper control, adequate and thoroughly competent, in order that the old and faithful officers of this parliament and country may see to it that moneys are paid only when they are voted, and that moneys are not paid when they have not been earned.

One point more I will touch upon, and that is with reference to the defence of this great country of ours. We have been told of our wonderful progress. We know our great resources, we have infinite faith in the future of this country. Are we doing what we ought to do in order to put this country in a fair state of defence against eventualities which lie all about us? Have we in this country to-day, with our six millions of people, with our million of happy homes, with all the strong material resources at our disposal, have we taken reasonable and proper precautions even for keeping for this country its inestimable possessions, and defending them if need be against any enemy who may come?

Is there to-day in this country one single port of entry which has guns sufficient to guard it against the marauding gunboat of an enemy? Are there in this country enough rifles to be put into the hands of the strong and adaptable men who are willing to fight for the defence of their country, but who cannot if they have no weapons? Have we to-day in this country, if difficulties should arise, any facilities for manufacturing what would be necessary in the form of ammunition and the implements of warfare necessary for a fair and reasonable defence? Now, it is living in a fool's paradise, surely, if we do not as sensible men, knowing and feeling the worth of our country, knowing the virtue, the ability and the power of our citizens as individuals, place this country in some reasonable form for proper defence and the maintenance of its self-respect as well. I think it is time for this parliament to give this great question full and serious consideration. No one more heartily subscribes than myself to the idea that Canada has not been recreant in the building up of an important and strong part of this empire. Every step we have taken in our Dominion, every material development, every mile of our railways, every step that we have taken in

material progress, has been a step towards strengthening the empire. We have been doing our duty in this respect and in this direction, but I think it is well to consider the question if the time has not come when something more can be done in order to maintain that sense of security, that proper feeling of self-respect which a country like this owes to itself, a country of so many homes and of such rich resources.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize to you and the members of this House, as a new, untried and untrained member, for the length of time I have taken and for my halting speech. By and by, I promise you that when I get more accustomed to the atmosphere of this House, and when I find my bearings a little more, I will probably be in a better shape to voice my ideas more pointedly and may be a little more pungently than I have this afternoon.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). Mr. Speaker, it is with more than usual pleasure that I join my voice with the voice of my hon. friend who has just spoken (Mr. Foster) on behalf of the opposition, to offer my congratulations and the congratulations of this side of the House to the two new colleagues of ours who have presented the address to be submitted by the House to His Excellency the Governor General in answer to the speech with which he has opened this parliament. When my hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) rose to address this House he was not altogether a stranger among us, for, though it was the first time he had spoken on the floor of this parliament, his reputation had preceded him in it, a reputation earned by him in the legislature of a province which, during one hundred years or more, has produced many able men to do service for the state, and which during one hundred years or more has been a bulwark in the cause of Liberal principles, and whose record reached its culmination in the last struggle, in which my hon. friend bore no small a part in the redemption of the hitherto unredeemable county of Pictou. But whilst the reputation of my hon. friend from Pictou has preceded him in this House, it is obvious from the age of my hon. friend from Montmorency (Mr. Parent) that his reputation could not have preceded him. The surprise is that one so young should have achieved a victory so signal as he did. But my hon. friend is a worthy son of a worthy sire, and he has proved once more that blood always tells. Now, perhaps I may be permitted also to offer my very sincere congratulations to the young member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster). I am free to say, however, to my hon. friend and to the House that if the electors of North Toronto, or a majority of them, had been true patriots—patriots in the true sense of the word—they would not have elected my hon. friend, but they would have elected my esteemed friend the present mayor of Toronto (Mr. Urqu-