

rough one, but still a reasonably fair one, it would appear that there had been, since 1892, a period of four years, making allowance for that officer I spoke of, a total increase of \$1,200, all told, in the Auditor General's Department; while the ordinary statutory increases of \$50 for twenty-six men would have amounted to about \$1,300 for one year; so that the increase in that way has been about one-fourth, apparently, of the ordinary increase which could have been expected to take place. Now, there may be a sufficient explanation for that; I do not know whether there is or not; but I do say that *prima facie* the fact that the Auditor General's Department merely received an increase of \$250 or \$300 a year for four years, does look a little like no very rapid promotion, no very particular recognition of the services which his officers may have rendered. I see, too, that in 1892—and in 1891, for that matter—there was just the same staff, apparently, of chief clerks, and first and second-class clerks, that there is now. In 1892 there were three chief clerks, one first-class clerk, and five second-class clerks. The number of third-class clerks appears to have been the same. As I have said, there may be a sufficient reason, but it is perfectly apparent that the annual increment in that office has been very considerably below that which has taken place in several of the other offices. I did not hear the Finance Minister state that there had been any great number of removals, or that there had been any great number of officials placed on the superannuation list from the Auditor General's Department.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). None at all.

Mr. FOSTER. Yes; there were several officers placed on the superannuation list, but, unfortunately for the comparison, they have all died, while the Finance men have lived.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. They have been worked to death, in fact. But I will let that go. Now, I am rather inclined to think that it would be in the interest of the Minister of Finance to deal a little more liberally with the Auditor General. The Minister of Finance himself stands, to a certain extent, in the same relation that the Auditor General does to the public expenditure; and although his good intentions have been vastly in excess of his performances, and although he has tried, at times, with very poor success, indeed, to curb the extravagances of his colleagues, I think for the purpose of keeping his colleagues in order, there is no better or valuable official than the Auditor General. The Auditor General, and here I take issue with some statements made by the Finance Minister, by displaying in the fashion he has done all the details of expenditures which have taken place in the public departments, places a

most wholesome check on the natural extravagance in which all the departments will indulge unless very strictly curbed.

Mr. FOSTER. I should like the hon. gentleman's opinion as to that being a good audit.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I say it is a very valuable service to the country, and is highly appreciated. There is no blue-book issued by this House for which I have received such an immense number of applications as for that of the Auditor General.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I say there is no blue-book issued by this House, which, if hon. gentlemen will take the trouble to read the newspapers carefully, furnishes so many good and useful texts and so many illustrations of the extravagance which has led us to our present pass, because I have no hesitation whatever in saying to the hon. gentleman that however much or little he may hold himself personally responsible for it, the position of Canada to-day, with its estimated expenditure of \$39,225,000 is in itself a proof, especially in view of the fact that we have a population of barely 5,000,000, that it has been most extravagantly governed; and I have not the slightest doubt if it had not been for the Auditor General and the display made from time to time of the way in which the people's money goes, that expenditure would have far exceeded even that enormous figure. It is perfectly clear that when Parliament created the office of Auditor General and gave to the occupant of the office a tenure similar to that of the judges, it intended him to be in a particular sense an officer of Parliament and independent of the Government of the day. That was the evident intention with which that Act was passed, and to a very considerable extent, and to the credit of the late Prime Minister, be it said, that was always recognized by Sir John Macdonald at least. But it is equally clear to every hon. member on both sides of the House that it is utterly and entirely impossible for the Auditor General to discharge his functions properly unless he is allowed reasonable latitude in the matter of having a proper staff. It would be utterly and entirely absurd for us in one breath to say that this shall be an independent officer, the Government shall not have power to dismiss him at their pleasure and shall not have power to compel him to do this or that, although in certain ways, provided by statute, they may override him, leaving him however the right of appealing to Parliament and stating the grounds of the difference between himself and the Government, and in another breath to refuse to such official a reasonable staff to enable him to discharge his duties. In his petition before us the Auditor General makes a statement which should not be disregarded.