

whole departments and compare the various salaries paid in the whole of them. taken together, they will find that the average salary is considerable more than the average salary paid to the officers in the Audit Branch. That ought not to be so, for the reasons I have mentioned, for those who are qualified to enter that branch of the public service require, on the whole, a higher degree of attainment than the average clerk in the public service. There are special departments in which the average rank of attainment is higher than in others. I have already mentioned them—the Department of Justice, the Department of Inland Revenue, the Insurance Branch of the Department of Finance, the Geological Branch, and the Department of the Auditor General, and I have shown this House that the Auditor General's Department, as compared with the other departments, gives an average to each clerk of \$1,070, while the average in the other departments is \$1,570, being a difference of \$500 between the average of the one and the other. Can any man in his senses say that is a mere accident, that a department so marked out has been fairly dealt with, or fairly treated, by the Administration? I say, Sir, there can be no two opinions on this subject. I will not trespass further on the indulgence of the House. I call the attention of the House to the work of the Auditor General's Department, to the number of persons employed, and to the fact that they, on the whole, work longer hours than do the clerks in almost every other department, taking the year together, and they are entitled to consideration which they have not received at the hands of the Minister who was intended by law to be the guardian of this department under the House.

Mr. FOSTER. Sir, I will try and not take up as much time as my hon. friend has consumed on this question, and will abridge a little at least by refusing to enter into the long historical disquisition to which he has treated the House as a sort of prelude to his discussion of the subject. With that history I have neither quarrel to make nor anything to say in its commendation: I dare say it is perfectly accurate, and will be found to be a very valuable contribution to the records of the House. However, I think this question is comparatively a simple one. We are dealing with the petition and the allegations made in the petition, and I found, as the hon. gentleman proceeded, that we are to deal with certain allegations not made in the petition. Upon certain private information, which he possesses, he has based his conclusions, and based his charges. My hon. friend was so imbued with information that he forgot its source. He began by saying the petition disclosed certain things. He said that the petition, for instance, disclosed that communications had passed be-

tween the Auditor General and the Finance Minister, and those communications were discourteously treated, and an answer was not deigned to them. I have read over the petition rather carefully, and I cannot find anything of that kind stated in the petition. So I fancy the hon. gentleman has been pumped so full of information that he has mistaken the brief, and he bases charges on information which is not before the House: it is, perhaps, within the cognizance of the hon. gentleman, but is not known to other hon. members. I want to say, in the first place, that the hon. gentleman attempted to give a party bias to this question, as I would have expected him to do, and, so far as the facts of the case are concerned, and so far as I myself am concerned, his charges in connection with the Auditor General's Department are based upon his own imagination, and upon nothing that can be found in fact. The hon. gentleman ended his long disquisition by stating that any man in his senses could not come to any other conclusion than that there was a settled determination to treat the Auditor General's office unfairly and wrongly, as compared with other departments, as could be seen by the history of this case. I tell the hon. gentleman, and I tell him with all frankness, that so far as the Finance Minister is concerned, I do not think there is a Minister in the departments, and I do not know any hon. member on the floor of this House, who is to-day more in sympathy with the work and aim of the Auditor General than I myself am. Now, Sir, I set that explanation, made in all frankness, to the House, and, of course, made truthfully, against the suggestion of my hon. friend. If there has been any unfairness in the treatment of the Auditor General's Department, according to the hon. gentleman's statement, it must be had by inference, but it is not within his power to make the charge against the Finance Minister that he has imported party politics into his treatment of the Auditor General's Department, and that he has done one act against the honest and fair administration of that department, and that he has failed, in any respect, to do his duty to his own department, and to those which come under him. I let that statement go to the House and to the country against the assertion of the hon. gentleman. Surely we can discuss the merits of this case without drifting into party politics.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I said nothing about party politics.

Mr. FOSTER. I will not occupy the time of the House in discussing this question. I leave hon. members to judge from a perusal of "Hansard" as to whether that did not show throughout all the hon. gentleman's remarks, and was explicitly stated in the latter part of his observations. What is the whole trouble? Has the Auditor Gen-