

tion to any other voucher or certificate which is required in that behalf, the officer under whose special charge such part of the public service is, certifies that such work has been performed, or such material supplied, as the case may be, and that the price charged is according to contract, or, if not covered by a contract, is fair and just.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. But there is nothing about putting it in the report.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) I want to show that every expenditure is to be examined by the Auditor General, and the requirements of this section have to be examined into by him to see that they have been complied with. Now, I want to say that every expenditure has to be examined by the Auditor General according to the requirements of this section, and he has to see that they are complied with, and to see that the charges are just and fair. Very well, if these are his duties, and he has to see that these charges are just and fair, in what better manner can he discharge that duty than by publishing the prices which the Government pay for these articles in his annual report? I submit to the Government that this ought not to be a matter of political recrimination at all; I submit that when the Auditor General publishes his report, containing the items, and the amounts paid for the particular services, he is, in that way, offering the best audit that could possibly be offered. And why? Because his report goes throughout the length and breadth of Canada, and the taxpayers themselves and their representatives here are then enabled to judge whether impositions are being practiced upon the Government. I say, in that regard, that the Auditor General's hands should be strengthened. I repeat what my hon. friends from this side have already said, that the general public receive his report with the greatest possible satisfaction. Before that report was published, the people of this Dominion were in almost absolute ignorance of what took place with regard to the expenditure of public money. The hon. gentleman says that the Auditor General has made the most unfair representations that can be made, on page after page, of his report; but the hon. gentleman failed to support that reckless assertion with any proof whatever. The hon. gentleman made the assertion, but I did not see him take up the report and give one single instance that an unfair representation was made by the Auditor General.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. I gave one instance.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) The hon. gentleman said that the Auditor General had an ulterior design in probing the accounts. I think it was an ungenerous assertion for the Minister to make; nevertheless, it was cheered by the hon. member for Annapolis (Mr. Mills). It was an ungenerous asser-

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.)

tion to make, and one that is not based upon a tittle of evidence. So far as my intercourse with the Auditor General has gone during the time I have sat in this House. I have found him most scrupulously careful to keep himself absolutely within the terms of his duty, and not to give the slightest word or hint to any member of the Opposition, beyond the information derived from his printed report. He is a man who has conducted himself in a way that deserves commendation at the hands of members of Parliament upon both sides; and I heard with extreme pain and regret members of the Government, and the Minister of Justice, especially, trying to throw a doubt upon the probity, and the honour, and the integrity of that official. Sir, the hon. gentleman ventured to give a most unfortunate illustration in respect to the criticism which the Auditor General has passed upon money spent for newspapers. What do I find in that particular? The hon. member treats that as if it was a two-penny-ha'-penny matter of a few dollars. As a matter of fact, during the last ten years, I find that the Government have spent no less than \$37,000 on newspapers for the several departments alone. While the hon. gentleman may not think that is a matter deserving of any comment or criticism by the Auditor General, I think the general tax-payer will thank the Auditor General every time his attention is called to that extravagant expenditure.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. How much could we have saved if we had paid them in advance?

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) I do not know what you would have saved, but I know that if you do pay an unfair price for newspapers, the Auditor General is bound by the statutes to examine into it and point it out; and if the hon. gentleman thinks he should not do it because the amount is only a trivial \$37,000, I venture to differ with him, and I think the House and the country will differ with him. It is just the same in the matter of cab hire. They tried to laugh it down at the time, but, as a matter of fact, the expenditure in that regard has been so enormous for the past few years that it has properly challenged the direct attention of the Auditor General. And so through all the Auditor General's Report. Now, the Minister of Justice says that suspicion in the mind of the reader is formed by publicity. I venture to say that if the Auditor General's report was not published, and was not circulated throughout this land, the suspicion would be intensified tenfold, because the public would never understand how these people can have managed to run up the expenditure from \$24,000,000 to \$40,000,000, as they have done. But the Auditor General's Report is calculated to allay suspicion, and, in all respects where the expenditure is defensible, the defence