

of the government. That is what he is there for. But he must do so within certain limits; and always bearing in mind that while he is responsible to parliament as an official for auditing the accounts, the ministers of the Crown are essentially the men responsible to Parliament for the expenditure of public money. We fear that the Auditor General, a man of the highest character, and for whom everyone has the greatest respect, has been so long in office—a quarter of a century—that he has come to regard himself as the censor of the various officials and of the government itself, and it is this false spirit of supervision and control that has wrought upon his mind by the refusal of the government to amend the Audit Act, and confer on him larger powers. In the discussion in the House the Minister of Justice made the statement, that there had not been even the assertion that a single dollar of public money had been expended for which no value was received on account of the want of power vested in the Auditor General, and he quoted the very case under consideration—the Davis case—to show that in that case the Auditor General summoned engineers before him, and not content with that, employed his own expert engineers, and not content with the opinion of the department of Justice, employed able counsellor at law, and held the most-searching investigation. It is a very serious

question indeed if the government is going to derogate its legitimate functions to a paid official of Parliament. The same article in the *Summerside Journal* concludes by saying that "Mr. McDougall was not to be brow-beaten, and has forced the issue. Will Canada stand by the Auditor General or by the Grafters?" The *Journal* had better ask its readers whether the Hon. John Haggart, Mr. Pringle, and others are grafters, and they might also reproduce the cartoon from the *Toronto News*, which depicts Mr. R. L. Borden, leader of the Conservative party declining to take issue with the government on this question of the Auditor General in the Davis contract. As for a dissatisfied official of the government to go so far as to appeal to the people on some issue which in his own view should be pronounced upon at the polls that is an intolerable thing. The article in question says that "the issue must be decided at the next general election." What issue? The issue of the Davis contract. That contract was entered into by the Conservative government and the statement that it was extended from 21 years to 84 years was shown by the discussion in Parliament to be utterly without foundation. The trouble about many weekly papers is that they are chasing after this "will-o'-the-wisp" long after it has been buried.



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