

examination of the revenue returns, which was first given him in 1887, and which required, I am told, the services of four additional clerks. Now this reference to the Auditor General grew out of Mr. Tilton's case, in 1887. I believe that it was a proper thing; the audit is a necessary audit. It is an administrative audit, it is true, it is a matter which concerns the Government; but in the prevention of frauds upon the Government in the administration of the departments, there is also a prevention of fraud upon the public treasury. Then the bank accounts and the currency accounts were given in charge to the Auditor General in 1887, and the store accounts were given him in 1894. Now, these are all administrative audits, but they have all added very largely to the work of the department, and they have all served to swell the volume which the Auditor General annually is required to lay upon our Table under the provisions of the Act. Now, the Auditor General requires examinations for promotion in his department precisely the same as in the other departments. Of course, they are of a somewhat different character, and of a higher order than the majority of the examinations required. What the Auditor General has complained of in his petition is that he has not enough money to pay the extra clerks required; that enough money is not voted to enable him to fill up the classes, and to promote men who are eligible for promotion in the public service in his department. The theoretical organization of that department stands as follows:—Chief clerks, three; first-class clerks, four; second-class clerks, five; or twelve of the three classes. The present organization is: Three chief clerks, one first-class clerk; and six second-class clerks. So it will be seen that the Auditor General's Department is kept below its theoretical organization, in the standing of those in the public service, as well as in numbers, and that the Auditor General is denied the right which is exercised by the head of every other department of the Government. It is complained that the Auditor General's Report is a work for the benefit of the Opposition. Now, whether it be so or not, depends largely upon the manner in which the Government discharge their duties, and the strictness with which they conform to the law. The Auditor General, in so far as his work comes in contact with the administrative work of the Government, is necessarily a criticism on the action of Government. It is intended to be so. It does not matter who may be the Auditor General, or who may be the Government; that is the necessary relation between them, that is the necessary consequence of a proper audit; and unless it can be shown that the audit is dishonest; that the facts are perverted; that they are intended to convey an erroneous impression; then it seems to me there is nothing of which a Govern-

ment have to complain in the audit of the public accounts. The public accounts in England show how closely the auditors and controller criticise the work of Government in the payment of public moneys. This department began in our Government in 1878, there was none in this country before. There can hardly be any complaints of want of economy in the audit office. There is no superannuation, I believe, at the present time in that office. There is not a single party charged against the superannuation fund who has served in the Auditor General's Department. I do not know why the Minister of Finance has dealt with the Auditor General's Department in the way he has done; whether he thinks he is doing too much, or whether he thinks he is doing too little; whether he thinks that the persons in the public service in that department are less severely taxed with work than they are elsewhere, or whether they are more severely taxed. I think it is impossible to look at the Auditor General's report and observe the number of items there reported, to bear in mind the fact that everything there reported is taken from the original documents—nothing is copied from any book or report made by any Minister's department—I say it is impossible to look at these facts without seeing that a great amount of work is performed in that department. Now, it seems to me that it is the business of this House to pay some regard to the petition which the Auditor General has addressed to this House. I am perfectly sure it never would have been submitted here if there was any hope or expectation that that department would be dealt with by the Government in the same way as others, that it would have meted out to it the same consideration that is extended to other departments of Government. Sir, this House has only to look at the facts I have mentioned, at the number of chief clerks, at the number of first-class clerks, at the percentage which they constitute of the number of clerks in the service, as compared with every other department of the public service, to see that this is a marked department, that it has been marked out for the expression of the displeasure of the Administration. It is impossible to look at the average salary of the clerks in that department, and compare them with the average salary in the Department of Justice, in the Department of Inland Revenue, in the Geological Branch, in the Department of Finance, without seeing that it has been a marked department, and that it is stamped with the expression of the displeasure of the Government. If the Government had anything to complain of, they should have come down and frankly stated what it was. But nothing of that sort has been done. I will not trouble the House with making a comparison as between all the departments of the Government, but if hon. members will take the

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