

Mr. ELLIOTT: I do not think that system prevails there; most of them have been there for many years as gardeners, butlers and so on, and I do not think the patronage system prevails to any extent.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: The minister has an item of \$50,000 here, and he has only given us items totalling \$16,000. What about the remainder?

Mr. ELLIOTT: We have not the details.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Is there an estimate?

Mr. ELLIOTT: Yes; for the general repairs and improvements which will be required, it is estimated that the additional amount will be necessary. Our experience in the past leads us to believe that this is quite within the mark.

Mr. ROBB: Before the item passes—

Mr. CHAPLIN: It is not going to pass just yet.

Mr. ROBB: Then before my hon. friend speaks on it I should like briefly review the situation as it appears to the Department of Finance and to the treasury board. My colleague the Minister of Public Works has reminded the committee that during the war period this property was very much neglected, and that is only one side of the question. During the war period, when there was a great patriotic move throughout the country, there was no place in the capital where people gathered more frequently to consider ways and means of helping out in the war than at government house. Government house was visited from time to time not only by Canadians interested in war work but by visitors from other countries, and during that period the household furnishings were pretty well worn. I confess that when my colleague first brought to the attention of the treasury board this amount necessary to restore this property to a condition of which Canadians would not be ashamed, we did think it was a considerable sum, but we were asked to go down to government house ourselves and look it over. When we did so, as Canadians we were humiliated to find that when guests were expected from other countries, or when representative Canadians from all the provinces gathered there, the people at government house were compelled to go frequently to the Chateau Laurier or to the Rideau Club to borrow chinaware, glassware and even the forks and spoons used on the table. That was the condition which existed, and we found that the rugs throughout the house and the furniture generally was in a very shabby

condition. I would not feel proud to invite visitors from other countries even to my own humble home if it were in the condition in which we found government house. Their Excellencies were reasonable; they said, "We can get along with it if Canada can," but they submitted to us that it was not a good advertisement for this country. Every person knows that at government house they entertain from time to time not only Canadians who come there, not only members of parliament, but persons from other countries. Just at the moment I remember that this year they entertained representatives of the crown, the Prime Minister of the motherland, the Prime Minister of the Irish Free State, representatives from Australia, from New Zealand, from South Africa and from the United States who came to Canada. Would any member of this parliament desire to have these visitors leave Ottawa with the impression that Canada was down at the heels? We determined that the finances were in such a condition that we might very properly put this property in such a state of repair that Canadians would not be ashamed of it.

When I look over the amounts being spent by the Dominion in restoring this property and compare them with the amounts which the present occupant of that office must pay out of his own pocket, I do not think we stand in a very good position in criticizing these votes. I heard an hon. gentleman say a moment ago that he hoped the day would come soon when a Canadian might occupy that position. I do not take any great exception to that statement, but if a Canadian is to carry on in this position at the pace which has been maintained recently, it will cost him a lot of money; it costs the present occupant of that office a good deal of money to keep up his end in addition to what the government does. While hon. members of this house imagine they are preaching economy it does not appeal to the Minister of Finance in that way, because I have observed that almost every hon. member who has spoken has found fault because we are not spending some money in his own constituency. I have only to look across the floor or at some of my friends on this side of the house to see hon. members who have urged me to give consideration to a particular public work in the constituencies which they represent. I do not find any fault with that; probably as time goes along, and perhaps sooner than they imagine, we may be able to meet their requests, but I submit to the house that if Canadians are to maintain a government house it should be done right.