

went up to \$850 by increase, and was promoted directly to \$1,100. Mr. Stevenson went in at \$600, was raised from \$900 to \$1,100. Mr. Hayes went in at \$650 from the Post-office Department, went up from \$850 to \$1,100. Mr. Moore came in at \$700, went to \$800 by accretion, and was then advanced to \$1,100. The others seem to have gone in at \$400 to \$500. This shows that in the Auditor General's Department, not only have the clerks been in a great many cases taken in at larger salaries than the minimum but they have been rapidly advanced. If you will take the history of the department, it will show that there has been no disposition to prevent the Auditor General having full scope for his plea, which he made time and again, that he was anxious to get university graduates and that to get those he would have to offer them special inducements to accept office. I allowed that plea, and in case after case they went in at a larger salary than the minimum. There were other points mentioned by my hon. friend, but I think I have touched on the main points. With reference to the petition, as my hon. friend has introduced the matter of correspondence having passed between us, he knows as well as the Auditor General that these are busy times. They are busy times for me and for the Council. I received a notification from the Auditor General asking that this provision should be made and desiring me to get the determination of the Council upon it. I took it to the Council, but you cannot always get before Council, on a day's and sometimes a week's notice matters which are not very important or urgent. After I took it to the Council and waited an answer it had been there a few days, I received another communication—short but to the point—saying that if an answer were not given by the Council in a day or two, he would appeal to Parliament. I laid that letter under the cover of my blotter, and it has remained there until the present. Seeing that the House has this petition before it, I may say frankly that I think the fairest way for the Auditor General to have proceeded, as he is an officer in the Civil Service, would have been to discuss the matter with the Government, to lay his grievance before the Government, and taken the reasons why the Government were not prepared to give him the increases he required this year and all the clerks he asked. Are we to be told that the efficiency of the department and its working is to be impaired because, forsooth, two second class clerks are not to have the promotion or the increase which the Auditor General desires? Are we to be told that the work of the department cannot go on satisfactorily and that the whole department is to be crippled because we do not convert two second-class clerks into first-class clerks? Cannot the work be done as well by second-class clerks as by first-class clerks? I do not mean to say that an

Mr. FOSTER.

opening should not exist for a laudable ambition to rise, but I say this, that of the two clerks whose promotion the Auditor General asks, one has long got to the maximum of the class and the other has very lately come to the maximum. If these men had been year after year at the head of their class waiting for promotion and not getting it, I could see that their ambition would be somewhat nipped and they might more listlessly do their work. But that is not the case. I do not think it is the strongest of reasons for the Auditor General to say: The whole efficiency of my department is crippled, and I have to bring my case before Parliament and ask for a solemn investigation because two second-class clerks, at or near the maximum of their class, desired promotion and must be promoted this year. I do not think that is a reason for bringing this matter up here. I think we might have settled it if the Auditor General had simply preferred his request to the Government, consulted with them through me, and allowed a little time for consideration. My hon. friend drew an argument by inference from an unfortunate expression in this petition. It is not directly stated that the First Ministers, since the late Sir John Macdonald, have oppressed the Auditor General; but it is certainly an inference which my hon. friend was quick to take, that while Sir John Macdonald stood at the back of the Auditor General, the Premiers since then have rather oppressed him. There is an assertion made in this petition which I think I must notice. The Auditor General leaves it to be inferred that probably objections have been made because the promotions are not in the hands of the Government. He says:

It is possible that one of the objections to promotions here is that, when the money provision is made for a promotion, your petitioner makes the promotion, excluding from consideration everything but the claims which the candidates have made good by effective service in the Audit Office.

I am bound to say, in all fairness and frankness, that the Auditor General might better have left that out. I cited the case in which Sir John Thompson, as Minister of Justice and leader of the Government, and I took steps speedily to replace the power of promotion in the hands of the Auditor General when, by inadvertence, it had been taken away by the consent—the passive consent, at least—of the House. If we had wished to treat him unfairly, we would have allowed the Revised Statutes to remain as they were. The inference to be drawn from the Auditor General's statement is a wrong inference, and I would rather that statement had been left out. Another statement is made in this petition. The Auditor General pledges himself that, whatever party is in power, he will see that the finances are administered rightly, and, if he cannot have them administered rightly, he will let the tax-payer