

spect he is an officer appointed by the Government for the time being, under power conferred upon the Government by an Act of Parliament—the only way by which the Government can appoint an officer whatever. He is subject to the Civil Service Act, but he has certain powers which no other deputy head possesses. My hon. friend says there is evidence of unfair dealing towards that department. In 1886, in the revision of the statutes, the power which he was formerly supposed to possess, of promoting the clerks in his department, was taken from him; and when the Auditor General made that fact clear, first to myself and afterwards to Sir John Thompson, as Minister of Justice, I said to him at once, and Sir John Thompson said to him afterwards: "We will give to you the power which Parliament gave to you at first, and supposes you to have, and which has been taken from you." And, by a special Act, we re-conferred upon him that power, and made him supreme with regard to promotions in his own office. The only thing to which he is amenable in his department is this: that the money required for his clerks has to be voted by Parliament on the recommendation of the Government. My hon. friend says there is some other way of providing the money. Who is to vote it? Can he do it? If he made the attempt the Speaker would rule him out of order, though from the tenor of the argument the hon. gentleman advanced the other day when the Speaker ruled a Bill out of order, I should judge that the hon. gentleman feels himself competent to do almost anything he likes to do in this House. He will find, however, when he comes to canvass the ways and means, that there is no way by which the salaries of the officers of the Auditor General's Department can be voted except by the Government bringing them down in the Estimates, and asking the House to pass upon them. Apart from that, the Auditor General has full powers in his department; he makes rules and regulations for its management; he promotes according to what rules he sees fit himself to lay down. My hon. friend went into a historical disquisition as to audits, which was no doubt correct. He detailed very carefully, and I dare say very accurately, the kind of audit that exists in Great Britain. Our system of audit is modelled almost entirely on that of Great Britain; but I take exception to the statement, which my hon. friend made two or three times, that the Auditor General, in pursuance of his duties, must necessarily criticise the Government. I say that the Auditor General, in the proper discharge of his duties, may never have occasion to criticise the Government. What has he to do? His duties are laid down by the law; my hon. friend can read it, has read it. He has to see, in the first place, that there is a parliamentary authority for every expenditure. Is there any

occasion for a quarrel between him and the Government in that? Must he necessarily criticise the Government when he goes to the Estimates as they were passed in the Supply Bill, and compares the credit he is asked to give with the wording of the vote? Not at all. He has to do more than that: he has to see, where the Government or the Treasury Board makes an appropriation of a certain amount, and in a certain way and under a certain heading, that the limit prescribed is not exceeded. Is there any chance of a quarrel between him and the Government with reference to his oversight of that? He has to see, when a credit is given, and cheques are issued on it, that the cheques and vouchers are placed before him—that sufficient proofs of the expenditure are there. There is no necessity of criticising the Government in that. Sir, if the Auditor General does not busy himself, as he has no business to busy himself, with the policy of the Government and party politics, there is no necessity for him, in the fulfilment of his duties, to criticise the Government. He is to critically examine departmental payments in respect to authority. The only possible chance of the Auditor General and the Government coming into collision—and it is a legal, not a party collision—is where he says he thinks there is no parliamentary authority for an expenditure, while the Minister of Justice, when the question is referred to him, says he thinks there is parliamentary authority. That settles it, and should not that settle it? Are we to have an Auditor General who in a case of that kind is to be superior to the law department of the Government? Not at all. If there arises a question of the legal construction of an appropriation by Parliament, and the Auditor General, a layman, thinks that it is not within the power of a department, according to that appropriation, to make a certain expenditure, the only thing for a Government to do, or the Government would come to standstill, is to have the matter submitted to its law officers, to accept the opinion of those law officers, and to stand on its responsibility. Such cases as that are provided for in the regular course—the report of the Minister of Justice coming back to the Treasury Board, and the Treasury Board passing upon it. These things give no occasion for collision between the Government and the Auditor General. The machinery is easily put into execution; it is plain and clear; it works automatically. In my experience with the Auditor General, I do not know a single instance in which the least friction has arisen with reference to the working of that clause. So I say it is unfair for any one to argue that it is necessary for the Auditor General to criticise the Government; and I take exception to the clauses in this petition in which the Auditor General expresses the opinion that he must necessarily be considered to be antagonistic