

the hon. member for Welland (Mr. German) has offered to this clause, and in respect of some remarks he made in presenting that amendment to the committee. My hon. friend seems to be under the impression that the principles of constitutional government are in some way being outraged by this Bill, and that a wonderful departure is being made in this regard. He went back to the year 1837, but he did not penetrate the past to the same extent as did hon. gentlemen opposite, some of whom went back, I think, to the time of Oliver Cromwell, and one, at least, to the days of Magna Charta. My hon. friend, with great self-restraint, contented himself with going back to 1837. I would like to assure him that there is not any violation of the principles of constitutional government at all. He seemed to be greatly disturbed because the expenditure of this money is placed under the control of the Governor in Council. I would point out to him that year after year, ever since Confederation, we have been placing very large sums under the control, not of the Governor in Council, but of individual ministers, and there are greater safeguards in this Bill, so far as the expenditure of public money is concerned, than in the ordinary case where a very large sum of money, \$25,000,000 or \$30,000,000 or even \$40,000,000 are placed at the disposal of a single minister of the Crown for administrative purposes. In the present case the expenditure of the money is not confided to a single minister but is to be placed under the control of the Governor in Council in every respect, subject to all the safeguards that are incident to the expenditure of any sum of money that is voted in the estimates and placed under the control of a minister of the Crown. My hon. friend found fault with the fact that this Bill is not restricted to any one single fiscal year but that the money to be provided by this Bill could be expended not only in the present fiscal year but in subsequent fiscal years. That does not in the least alter the control which is exercised under the Audit Act and the general constitutional safeguard of the law of this country with regard to the expenditure of money. As a matter of fact, when a similar proposal was laid before Parliament at the present session by the Minister of Agriculture, hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House did not see fit to divide the House on that question, but permitted the Bill to pass without any vote of the House. There is no distinction in principle between the one case and the other. As far as this Bill is concerned, we propose to observe all the constitutional safeguards and I would like to say, in order that my hon. friend may be reassured, that we propose to add a clause to this Bill providing that a detailed statement of sums expended under the

Mr. BORDEN.

authority of this Act within the last preceding fiscal year shall be placed before the Canadian House of Commons during the first fifteen days of each session of Parliament until the whole sum shall have been expended. That is not in the Bill at the present time, I am not aware that the omission has been alluded to by any hon. gentleman opposite, but it is thought proper that it should be included in order that a statement may be made to the House annually of all the money that has been expended, in the same manner as a statement is made to the House under the appropriation Acts for each year. I trust that in that way I have made it clear to my right hon. friend that there is no departure and no intention to make any departure in this Bill from the ordinary safeguards over public expenditure. The fact that this money is to be expended, not under the control of any individual minister but under the control of the Governor in Council, is not a departure, according to my interpretation; but if it is a departure, it is a departure in the direction of a greater safeguard and not in the direction of a lesser safeguard.

Mr. GERMAN: My right hon. friend starts out with the assertion that the public money is perfectly safeguarded by the terms of the Bill as it was introduced and he winds up his statement by saying that they are now beginning to safeguard it by adding a clause to the Bill. I cannot quite appreciate my right hon. friend's argument in saying that the public expenditure is perfectly safeguarded in the Bill when he himself admits that in order to safeguard public money he must add another clause to it providing for itemized statements of expenditure from year to year, to be presented to Parliament after the money is gone. I feel very emphatic on this point that there is no safeguarding of public expenditure in this Bill as it stands at present and there will not be sufficient safeguarding of public expenditure by the amendment which my right hon. friend proposes to add. What safeguard is there in handing to this Parliament an itemized statement of expenditure from year to year when Parliament has nothing whatever to do with the expenditure from the beginning to the end? It is all to be done by the Governor in Council. When this money is voted, if it is voted, and there is placed in the hands of the Governor in Council the sum of \$35,000,000, Parliament is functus officio; its control over that money and over that expenditure is ended. We may criticise the Government afterwards for their expenditure but, in so far as any control of Parliament over that expenditure is concerned, from that hour that control ceases and I say that is not in accordance with the sys-