

on the two together, I see, amounts close on to \$1,000.

Mr. FOSTER. Some older men have died out, and younger men are going in at less salaries.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Then, if you are able to cut him down on the main Estimates, it is all the better reason for giving him the little paltry assistance he asked for on the minor ones. I do not mean to say that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) had a special grudge against the Auditor General. I am inclined to think that if he understands his business, he would know that the Auditor General is a very valuable buffer between himself and his colleagues, particularly those in the spending departments. But, I strongly suspect that the Finance Minister—and the whole of these Estimates look like it—that the hon. gentleman wherever he could, and wherever he dared, made reductions without much consideration of what the consequences would be. Where he stumbled against some refractory colleagues, he was not able to cut much, but as the Auditor General was not a colleague, he was able to make a cut there, and he did it accordingly. We know exactly what these contingencies amount to and how they are managed. We know perfectly well that at a future time it is the easiest thing in the world to “supplementarise” in favour of these other departments, if they happen to require to expend a little more than is given them. Therefore, it would be a perfectly safe thing, if he wanted to make a show, to do as his predecessors and himself have done before, and cut down in some cases, knowing that it did not amount to anything, for if there were no Supplementary Estimates this year, there would be Supplementary Estimates next year, and they could all be replaced without inconvenience to anybody. This, however, does not apply to the case of the Auditor General. I dare say, as the Finance Minister made very clear, it is not altogether pleasant to have all these details paraded. There is no doubt whatever that they do supply a good deal of food for thought and meditation to persons who cannot for the life of them understand, no more than I can, how it comes to pass that we require nearly forty million dollars a year to run the Government of this country. I have no doubt that the various details that we find in the report of the Auditor General, do give occasion to a great many persons to reflect rather gravely on the way in which Canada is governed to-day, and, therefore, I can quite understand that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) does not find it pleasant to have all these things extended. But the Finance Minister says, that if the Auditor General goes into these details he should go into them a great

deal more fully. Sir, I cannot agree with him there. I think the Auditor General does his duty very fully as it is, and I am not disposed to advise him, even at the suggestion of the Finance Minister, to go into very much more minutiae than he now does. I would rather recommend that this House, and particularly the members of the House who support the Government, should take the report as it stands, and read it, and digest it thoroughly, and come to a clear understanding as to how the money goes. If they do that, I am perfectly certain they will become, for once in their lives—that is to say, the great majority of them I hope—will become for once in their lives real earnest supporters of the Minister (Mr. Foster) in that policy of economy which he has so often proclaimed, and which up to this time, even with the assistance of the Auditor General—and it has been very valuable aid to him—he has found it so utterly impossible for him to put in practice.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The point that has been raised has at any rate not produced the issue which the hon. gentleman (Sir Richard Cartwright) has suggested, and that was : whether the Government was in favour of an audit or against an audit, or whether the Government was in favour of a thorough and complete audit or a partial and incomplete one. That is not the question at all. The Government and the Conservative party have been loyal to the intentions of Parliament in their regard for the Audit Act of 1878, and the amendments made to that Act since. They have proven that by never having suggested any departure in the slightest particular, from the legislation to secure that most desirable object. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we have greater respect for the office of the Auditor General than has the hon. gentleman (Sir Richard Cartwright), because the great benefit that the Auditor General seems to be in his eye to any Government (and perhaps that was the reason for his creation) is that he is a buffer—whether an old buffer or otherwise he did not say—but at any rate the great purpose of this officer, as the hon. gentleman (Sir Richard Cartwright) suggested, was to act as a buffer. Now, political history has shown us that there is much in that observation dropped by the way, because it fell to the lot of the late Alex. Mackenzie, Premier of the Liberal Government, to publish, after the defeat of his Government a very good and substantial reason for some sort of buffer. That hon. gentleman told us in unmistakable terms that it was almost an impossible task for him to guard the public treasury, and that he had to rest on his arms day and night to protect that treasury. It then apparently devolved upon the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) to introduce into this legislature, a Bill for the creation of this grand buffer, and to assist