

read at the Table on behalf of the Auditor General. This petition shows that the Auditor General feels that in his present position and with the resources at his command he will not be able to properly discharge those duties which Parliament has imposed upon him. There is a strong sense of duty and a keen sense of unfair treatment pervading this petition. It is of special consequence to the House of Commons that this petition should receive very full consideration. From it, it is clear that he holds he is denied the necessary strength to enable him to efficiently discharge the duties that pertain to his office as Auditor General, that he is denied the ability to reward honest service, in the same way that persons at the head of other branches of the public service are permitted to do, and that he is denied the necessary means to secure the highest efficiency in the public interest in the department over which he presides. From that petition we gather that he has made representations to the Minister, with whom, by the law which created his department, he is authorized to officially communicate, and that those representations have not been heeded, that the communications which he has addressed to the Minister earnestly setting forth the duties of the office, the amount of labour involved, the interests which it is intended to protect, have not been answered. This office, beyond any other office in the public service, is one in which this House has special interest, and the officer is rather the officer of this House, than an officer of the Government. He states in the communication which he has addressed to the House, that so long as Sir John Macdonald lived, he had his cordial support in the discharge of his duties, but that during the past two years his relations to the Government in the discharge of the duties as Auditor General have been less satisfactory than before. The importance of the case is brought before us by the statement of the fact that there is \$40,000,000 of expenditure made annually, which requires to be properly audited, and it is his duty to see that every dollar is used for the purpose for which it is voted, if used at all, and for no other purpose. The importance of the office has been recognized long since in England, and those who have studied the public ac-

counts of the expenditure of Canada during its earlier history, and since the creation of the office here, can have no doubt whatever that the office of Auditor General, and the discharge of the duties of that office in an efficient and satisfactory manner, are of the highest consequence to the good government of the country. It is true, the Auditor General has certain duties to discharge in connection with the administrative work of the Government; but, as an auditor of appropriations, he is not an officer of the executive at all, but an officer of this House. He was intended by the law to be placed under the protection of this House; and, if he is dealt with vexatiously, if he is subjected to embarrassments and difficulties by being denied either the aid or the pecuniary resources necessary to the carrying on of the work of his office, it is proper for him to bring that matter under the attention of this House; and it is proper for this House to afford to him the necessary protection and relief. It would be a most improper thing were he at the end of the next year unable to make a proper report, unable to give to the House the information which it requires, and were he to assign as an excuse for the failure to conform to the law, that the necessary means were not placed at his disposal for that purpose. This House is entitled to know what are the relations between its Auditor and the Government; and if the Government withholds from him that pecuniary support necessary to the proper discharge of his duties, it is his business to report that fact to this House. There was a time in the history of the English Government when the chief function of the House of Commons was to vote subsidies, when the redress of grievances and the work of legislation were solely under the control of the Crown and when the House of Commons sought to secure the redress of its grievances by petition to the Crown, asking that the Crown should legislate in a particular way. These petitions generally related to encroachments on the part of the Crown on the customary law of the country, and nearly all the legislation carried on by Parliament for centuries was nothing more than the restraint of the Crown from such encroachments and the restoration of the ancient usage. The great function of the House of