

which I called the Minister's attention some time ago, as to restoring the power inadvertently taken away from the Auditor General in the compilation of the statutes.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. A Bill will be introduced in a few days to restore the Act to its former position.

Mr. MULOCK. I think it is time to call attention to the abuse in obtaining money on Governor General's warrants. The statute authorizing the issue of Governor General's warrants lays down certain expressed conditions, and there is a laxity growing up in regard to the issuing of those warrants. I very much doubt if all the warrants issued this year are within the spirit of the Act. I am quite aware that last session a number of warrants were obtained in disregard of the Act. The subject had been discussed in Parliament, and, instead of the discussion doing any good, it seems to have resulted in larger warrants being issued this year than were issued last. There can be scarcely any greater violation of the privileges of the people, especially on the eve of Parliament, than the issue of Governor General's warrants, unless they are for purposes which are undoubtedly within the spirit of the Act.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I entirely concur with the observations made by the hon. gentleman. There is no doubt that the practice which has grown up is wholly at variance with the provisions of the Act. The Governor General's warrants ought never to be made use of, except upon some extraordinary emergency, which could not have been foreseen. I see that a large portion of these Estimates have been provided for by Governor General's warrants. Take, for instance, the fortification of St. John's Gate, Quebec. Was there any unforeseen injury occurring to the wall? Was it blown up, or was it only the ordinary decay?

Mr. FOSTER. Would it not be better to discuss these items as they occur, instead of running through the whole of the Supplementary Estimates?

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I am not running through the whole of the Supplementary Estimates, except to illustrate the point I am making. The law authorizes the Governor General's warrants to be used in certain cases. Those are altogether different from the cases in which it has been used here. The hon. gentleman has used the Governor General's warrant to make expenditures which should not have been made, except upon an appropriation asked for in the House. I have looked over the whole of these Supplementary Estimates, and I am referring to these instances in order to show that these items do not at all fall within the rule laid down in the statute for the issue of Governor General's warrants.

Mr. FOSTER. This item I think does fall within that rule. Mr. Martin, a clerk in the office of the Auditor General, resigned his position, and that was entirely unforeseen by the Governor General or the members of the Government. The work had to be done, the salary voted for Mr. Martin was not available, and this extra work had to be paid for. I think there was nothing irregular in that.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I think my hon. friend will see that it would be better to have put this under the head of "Unforeseen Expenses."

I think we vote something like \$50,000 for "unforeseen expenses," and I think this amount should rather have gone under that head than have been paid by a Governor General's warrant. I do not think the amount voted for "unforeseen expenses" has been expended.

Mr. FOSTER. I do not think the vote was so large as \$50,000. I think it was about \$20,000.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I would rather see a vote of \$50,000, as it formerly was, and see it used for these small contingencies that must arise, than I would see the Governor General's warrant used for such purposes. There is no doubt that the power to issue Governor General's warrants has been abused.

Mr. MULOCK. I would call the attention of the Government, and of the Minister of Justice particularly, to this fact: This item is included with a number of others in a statement brought down to the House of the Governor General's warrants and expenditures thereon, in accordance with the Consolidated Revenue and Audit Acts. The item in question is one included in this statement, and it appears that warrants have been issued to the amount of \$1,310,876.38. Those warrants could only be properly issued if there was an urgent demand for the expenditure, and that the urgency was one which, in the public interest, was so strong, that the Government could not wait until Parliament met, that it was an unforeseen demand upon the exchequer, and that the other conditions which the statute lays down were complied with. We find, however, that only \$750,000 of the amount granted under these warrants was spent, so that nearly \$600,000 in excess of what was required was authorized by Governor General's warrants. We want no better proof than that of the laxity with which this power is now used. The Governor General is induced to sanction expenditure to that amount, and yet the expenditure was not wanted, it was not urgent, it was not necessary in the public interest to the extent of nearly three-quarters of a million dollars. I think that if this evil—for it has become an evil now, a perversion of the powers vested in the Government by the statute—if this evil is perpetuated it will have to receive, I think, more emphatic attention than a mere discussion in Supply, which is all it is likely to receive this session.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I will just read the section relating to the use of the Governor's warrant:

"If, when Parliament is not in session, any accident happens to any public work or building which requires an immediate outlay for the repair thereof, or any other occasion arises when any expenditure not foreseen or provided for by Parliament is urgently and immediately required for the public good, then, upon the report of the Minister of Finance and Receiver General that there is no parliamentary provision, and of the Minister having charge of the service in question that the necessity is urgent, the Governor in Council may order a special warrant to be prepared, to be signed by the Governor General, for the issue of the amount estimated to be required, which shall be placed by the Minister of Finance and the Receiver General to a special account, against which cheques may issue from time to time, in the usual form, as they are required."

Now, I think it is perfectly clear from that provision that the hon. gentleman has used the Governor's warrant where it was not warranted by the statute.