

shown that they were so, and if they were guilty, that proper punishment might be meted out to them.

The Attorney-General replied to the leader of the Opposition in a calm, judicial and able speech. He repudiated at once the insinuation that there was any desire on the part either of his colleagues or himself to screen the persons against whom the charges had been made. But the Government knew nothing of this matter. The hon. member gave no idea what the charges were—he stated them merely in general terms. There had been no specific charges—nothing upon which the House could act. Many such charges, as experience had shown, were entirely invented by parties interested either in one side or the other. There was a great mass of matter before the Legislature, and as the session was advancing it would be impossible, without causing inconvenience, to refer this matter to the Privileges and Elections Committee. Moreover, they had to guard against establishing a precedent which might have an injurious effect hereafter. He was most unwilling to lay down any rule which would have the effect of screening anybody, yet at the same time, in acting judicially, they ought to consider the precedent that the House was asked to make. (Applause.) Here a grave irregularity was alleged upon a most slender basis. "If," observed Mr. Mowat, "my hon. friend can point to a case in which a charge made in this bold way has been acted upon he will be more fortunate than I have been." Having read English precedents, and having read precedents on this side, the hon. gentleman went on, the impression had been forced upon him that in matters brought up in this bold fashion, without any petition, without documents of any kind, it would be a most inexpedient thing to refer them to a Parliamentary committee. His hon. friend had said, and no doubt he believed that what he said was true, that if these parties had been guilty of this they had rendered themselves liable to prosecution. Well, if so, would his hon. friend pretend to say that in that case this House was a tribunal equal in any way to a court? We knew that our courts did not allow political feeling to influence them in these matters. Those of the judges who had any political leaning took care that it did not interfere with their judgment. Why was it that we sent all our election trials to these courts in preference to dealing with them in this House? It was because these committees of the House were not such fit tribunals to consider these matters as the courts. The system was immeasurably superior to the old system, which no one would think of going back to again. Moreover, they had here to do a great deal of business. They had a large number of things to occupy their time—administration, legislation, committees, etc., and there was no comparison between the two tribunals, a committee and a court, for this purpose. There could be no question that in this case the courts had the power to give a better remedy than could be obtained in this House. If he found that on the whole it was consistent with precedent to send this to a committee in spite of the inconvenience attending that course, he would not make the slightest objection to doing so; but he was not prepared to make so great an innovation now. What he had said was with reference to those tribunals which were charged with the jurisdiction on criminal offences generally—not merely election offences—but we had got to legislate beyond this. We had provided a final tribunal of the best possible character for trying matters of this kind. The hon. gentleman cited the 17th section of the Elections Act, which refers to the court for the trial of elections petitions.

Mr. Meredith inquired whether the Attorney-General would issue a special commission to the judges who tried the Hamilton election petition to investigate this case.

The Attorney-General replied that he would be glad to consider the matter. He complained of the action of the leader of the Opposition in this matter in not having afforded any opportunity for the Government ascertaining the facts of the case. He had got some details now that he was not in possession of before, but he thought that some assistance should have been given the Government in making this investigation. He had pointed out the course that he considered best in the interests of the country, but he would move the adjournment of the debate so that he might have a further opportunity of ascertaining the facts by Monday.

Mr. Meredith contended that if the hon. gentleman had not sufficient information he should have obtained it during the two weeks the motion had been on the notice paper.

Hon. Mr. Fraser would not permit such an observation to be made without replying to it, as it was most unfair to the Attorney-General. This House had been in session since early in February, and he might easily have given notice of this matter long ago so that it would have been inquired into. But he waited until a few days ago to bring it before the House, knowing that the House was now fully occupied with other business. He would suggest that his hon. friend allow the Attorney-General an opportunity of seeing the statutory declarations, having regard to the promise Mr. Mowat had made that the matter would be brought up on Monday and it would then precede the other business. If the matter was then referred to the committee there would be more precise statements than the general charges now made.

The adjournment of the debate was then agreed to.

#### Mr. Barr's Appeal.

Mr. Barr made an eloquent appeal to the House on behalf of the daughter of an old Waterloo hero, who, he alleged, had been unjustly deprived of property belonging to her many years ago. It came up on this motion for an "order of the House for a return of copies of all papers respecting the several applications for letters patent of lot No. 24 in the 5th concession of the Township of Mono, in the County of Dufferin, East Hurontario street, and for copies of all correspondence relating thereto, and the names of the several patentees of the lot, and the price (if any) paid by the several parties respectively."

Hon. Mr. Hardy promised to produce all the papers in connection with the case. But this did not satisfy Mr. Barr, who wanted to bring before the country the wrongs that the family of the gallant old soldier, Peter Montgomery, had sustained over a quarter of a century ago. The Commissioner for Crown Lands could hold out little hope of redress, but the motion was agreed to.

One or two other motions having been dealt with, the House rose shortly after 6 o'clock.

#### Shuniah.

The bill respecting the municipality of Shuniah was up before the Private Bills Committee to-day. The law governing Shuniah is a special one and the purpose of the bill was to bring the municipality into line with others in several important respects. Among other changes proposed were the alteration of the municipal year and a plan for confirming the titles to lands bought at tax sales. Solicitor Keefer, Reeve W. L. Bell and Councillors R. Maitland and W. Macfarlane were present in support of the bill, while Messrs. Thomas A. Gorham and Thomas Marks of Port Arthur, Arthur Harvie and John