

ed. Had he undergone examination the fact of the disappearance of the ballots would have then transpired. The whole of the irregularities would have been fully investigated had the trial proceeded, but the petition was dropped.

Government Not Gainers.

The Government had nothing to gain by the burning of the ballots. Had they stooped to such a transaction they would have merited the most serious condemnation. He could not conceive of any Government under the British system proving so recreant to their trust as to stoop to the commission of such a tremendous charge as was brought by implication against this Government. In due time the commission's report on the West Elgin irregularities would be laid before the Government, and it would be for them then to determine what action they should take, further than had already been resolved upon. Mr. Ross advanced the proposition that it was the bounden duty of both parties in the House to deal with the question of corrupt practices in the most determined and heroic manner, no matter what the consequences to individuals might be. If by increasing or extending the scope of the present penalties a check could be placed upon corrupt practices he was willing to assist hon. gentlemen opposite, and he hoped they would be willing to assist him to the utmost of their power.

Judicial Help Asked.

The Attorney-General had already been in communication with the Judges who had presided at recent election trials, with a view of ascertaining what, in their opinion, was the best way of strengthening or improving the law in regard to corrupt practices, and the Government would not be slow to accept suggestions from the Opposition in the same direction. Mr. Whitney had suggested that on account of the irregularities the Government should dissolve the House and appeal to the country. The Government could not suggest any such course in view of the fact that it had a majority of eight. Mr. Ross believed that if the lives of himself and colleagues were spared, and they were enabled to carry out the policy which had been enunciated by himself, there would be very few Conservative members left after the general election of 1902. (Loud Ministerial applause.)

Mr. Marter moved the adjournment of the debate, and the House adjourned at 9.50.

To Abolish Mining Royalties.

Among the bills shortly to be presented to the House is one to amend the mining act. The details of this have not yet been divulged, but it is known that to this subject the Commissioner of Crown Lands has recently given a good deal of consideration. During the Commissioner's late visit to Sudbury there were many objections made to the royalty imposed on certain mineral lands, which, although very slight, made a noticeable difference when such lands are offered for sale. The feeling of the people was

that if a tax of any kind were necessary it should be in the form of a mineral tax on the output of every mine, without discrimination.

It is suggested on good authority that when the present bill is introduced it will contain provisions which may go as far as to abolish at once the obnoxious royalty, and provide that whenever it may seem advisable, the Government may impose a mineral tax, which will have the effect of equalizing the lands and putting all on a fair basis.

Want a Dairy Building.

The much mooted question of a Government grant of \$5,000 in aid of the construction and equipment of a dairy building at the Toronto Industrial Exhibition was again urged upon the attention of the Provincial Executive yesterday morning by an influential deputation representing the Exhibition Association and City Council and various Provincial live stock and dairy associations. Among those in the deputation were:—R. M. Ballantyne, President of the Western Dairymen's Association; E. Kidd, Carleton County, representing the Eastern Dairymen's Association; John I. Hobson, Guelph, President of the Short-horn Breeders' Association; J. J. Withrow, President Toronto Industrial, and Henry Wade. The proposed building will cost \$20,000, and, in addition to affording accommodation for dairy products, space will be reserved for mineral and other exhibits, and a permanent Government office provided. The Government promised to see what could be done to meet the deputation's views.

Forest Fire Prevention.

Hon. Mr. Davis has given notice of a bill to amend the act to preserve the forests from destruction by fire. The provisions of the bill are an extension of the facilities for protecting the forests from fire at present provided for.