

doubt was then considered. They were told now, in the closing days of the session, there was not time enough to give proper consideration to a bill which was produced at the request of the Government. There was not a human being cognizant of the circumstances who did not believe the reason to be that ever since the bill was introduced the Government had been besieged by representatives of the corporations.

The Premier—No.

Mr. Whitney—I say positively I have personal knowledge of those corporations which have been besieging the Government in regard to these bills. Continuing, he declared the corporations had contributed largely to the general expenses of the party, and had carried the bye-elections in 1899. The Government had postponed the repeal of the scrap-iron assessment last year by appointing a commission. The Government had been threatened by the corporations of the Province.

Hon. Mr. Gibson—That is not true.

Mr. Whitney—I am content to hold my opinion. My hon. friend will find I am not through with all the knowledge that is mine on this question

Should be Burned.

The Premier, he went on, had introduced a bill the other day which ought to have been burned by the common hangman. (Opposition applause.) The Government of the Province had represented to the corporations that the bill was being introduced in their interests, and as a relief to them from the new assessment law being brought down. To the credit of the corporations, they refused to accept it as a measure of relief to themselves. He would enlarge on these statements, which he was not making without proof, on a future occasion. Some gentlemen, connected with those large corporations had informed him that they had told the Government that the measure was not one of relief to them. In order to bring into effect the provisions of the bill they would have to go down into municipalities and take part in the elections, or do worse than that even. Therefore they had opposed it. The withdrawal of the assessment bill, moreover, meant the throwing away of the work of the experts who had expended much time and care, at a cost of many hundreds of dollars, to the Province, to arrive at a conclusion upon which some proper action might be based. The action of the Government showed that they were still under the domination of the corporations.

Not Afraid of Threats.

Mr. Pattullo said the Government were quite well able to take care of themselves, and possessing as they did the confidence of the country, had no fear of Mr. Whitney's threats. He approved of the action of the Government, and he believed that all on the Government side held the same view. A great deal of the agitation had, he thought, been worked up for political purposes, and he did not believe there was that feeling in the country in regard to the matter which the Opposition alleged. Mr. Whitney, his followers and the press which supported

him might shout as loud as they pleased, they could not frighten the Government. This question of the so-called scrap-iron assessment had come up in the municipal elections in Toronto, and the man who had made that cry one of the chief planks in his platform had been beaten. The present Mayor of Toronto had during the campaign taken the statesmanlike view that it would be better to await the full report of the Assessment Commission, and he believed that his Worship still held that opinion. Mr. Pattullo resented the insinuation that the Government had been actuated by any sinister motives. All classes had equal consideration from the Government. The bill was exactly in accord with the principles which Mr. Whitney had expressed when dealing with questions of a similar nature. It was another case of chickens coming home to roost. (Laughter.)

Mr. Whitney—I do not expect the hon. gentleman to withdraw or apologize, but I repeat that it is utterly untrue.

Mr. Pattullo—I am quite accustomed to language of that kind from the hon. gentleman. He then quoted from speeches by Mr. Whitney in support of his contention that the leader of the Opposition had previously supported views he now disclaimed. The hon. gentleman had also, said Mr. Pattullo, voted last session with members on both sides of the House, unfortunately, compelling the City of Toronto, against the wish of the citizens, to exempt a whole class of industries, namely, the soap manufacturing establishments.

Calls it Incapacity.

Mr. Carscallen (East Hamilton) was of opinion that the Government were giving another exhibition of its incapacity to administer the affairs of the Province. They had received a report from a royal commission; had promised to act on it; brought down a bill to that end; introduced another measure to offset the first, and now were withdrawing both.

Unsafe in Welland.

Mr. Gross (Welland) said that Mr. Pattullo's contention that the question of assessment was not of importance to the electorate as a whole had better not be advanced in Welland County. (Laughter.) The people of that county were much aroused owing to the reductions in assessment on the Lewiston and the steel arch bridges, which would not have been made but for the decision in the Bell Telephone case at Hamilton. Previous to that judgment the bridge companies had been content to pay the proper assessment.

Mr. Lucas (Centre Grey) thought that if it was desirable to await the final report of the assessment commission it would be just as fair to leave over the measure just introduced.

Corporations Have Rights.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said that the new bill practically removed the anomalies of the so-called scrap-iron clauses from the assessment act. For his own part he thought that the bill withdrawn, and entitled an act to amend the municipal act, might have been allowed to stand with amendments providing that it should apply to certain smaller municipalities which desired to en-