

missioners will take evidence, they will be able men, careful men, they will listen to the arguments on all sides; every corporation will have an opportunity to be present either through their managers or their lawyers to present their side of the case. This was done, and the commissioners were unanimous that this principle that I just referred to should be at once embodied in legislation and the Government introduced a Bill to that effect; but as I tell you some persons must have come to the Government and got their ear, and got the Government to turn around and change their opinion and to withdraw that Bill. Who would have gone to the Government to change their opinion? None of the legislators, because, as I say, they had unanimously in the Municipal Committee adopted the principle involved. None of the Government supporters, because as I told you the Bill passed a first and second reading, and was sent on to committee. The Government themselves had voted for the second reading of the Bill. Who would have gone to the Government and told them that this had better not be passed into law? Would it be the farmers? Would it be the merchants? Would it be anybody except the people who under that amended law would have to pay more taxes, their fair share of taxes to the municipalities? (Hear, hear.) We do not know. We did not see the telephone companies, and the street railway companies, and the others who go to the Government. But they suddenly changed their mind, without giving any reasons or justification, and they withdrew the Bill. Then the people of this country will draw the inference that these powerful corporations had the ear of the Government, and dictated to the Government, and made them withdraw their own Bill, and made them contradict themselves, and made them get their Spartans behind them contradict themselves, will anybody blame the public for drawing such an inference? (Applause.)

#### THE FINANCIAL QUESTION.

Then I have told you that one of the duties of a Government is to give a plain and simple and explicit statement of the financial condition of the country. Has this Government done that? Is it not known to every person, Conservative and Reformer, that they have done the very opposite of that? Have we not read it in their campaign literature in previous elections that their surplus was five millions of dollars? Did we not hear Mr. Ross in his Whitby speech say it was two millions of dollars? This is the statement of the Minister of Finance to the House, and it shows us that the alleged surplus is made up of funds that have no right to be considered the assets of this province. Five million dollars of surplus that they alleged and went to the country claiming to possess, disappears on their own acknowledgment to a great extent, and is reduced to two millions, and when the public accounts are seen and the surplus is analyzed and considered, it disappears altogether. They do not produce to the country a straightforward, plain, business-like statement of the finances of this province, but they attempt to mislead us, to mislead the voters, and they seek a return to power by claiming that they had gathered together such enormous funds, that they were economical, that they had savings, and that they had this enormous surplus. That fairy tale has disappeared long ago. The public cannot be hoodwinked by that any more, and I say that the two millions that they claimed as a surplus is a myth; that has been shown over and over again, and I think I can recall it to your memories without going very much into detail about it, or worrying you with figures. I think I can explain that part of it very briefly by just recalling to you, with the knowledge you already possess, a few facts. The assets that the Government put down as belonging to this province consist in great part of what are merely trust funds. The Dominion of Canada holds in trust for the Province of Ontario certain funds; Common School Fund, Upper Canada Grammar School Fund, Upper Canada Building Fund, and others that are purely trust funds. The Government do