

As a matter of fact, Mr. Foster should be deeply grateful to the Commission for letting him off so easily. While they probed into his devious ways with persistence that could not be blocked, and while they made clear to the most casual reader the indefensible conduct of which Mr. Foster had been guilty, they did so without bitterness of spirit and without severity of language. To score Mr. Foster was not the business of the Commission; they refrained admirably from anything of the kind, and that under circumstances which must have offered very strong temptation to give that gentleman a few badly needed instructions in the elementary principles of commercial honesty Mr. Foster's arraignment is in the array of facts acknowledged by himself, not in the language in which those facts are recorded.

That Mr. Foster should revile the Commission was about what might have been expected. Judicial bodies have been denounced before by those whose conduct they investigated. A police magistrate is not overpoweringly popular with all elements of the community. If he were so, the time would be ripe for a new appointments. A judge is not without enemies. Jurymen are not admired by the losing litigate. This is as it should be. The malediction of the wrong-doer is the highest tribute to the judge. If Mr. Foster reviles the commission, he simply adds his testimony to their faithful discharge of duty. They too had been wrong-doers, if they had trimmed their investigation to suit Mr. Foster.

The conduct and the report of the Commissioners are the more commendable that they discharged their duty in the knowledge of the penalty. When before them, Mr. Foster threatened that body that he would bring the matter up again in another place, where he would be at liberty to say what he pleased about them and their doings. The Commissioners knew, therefore, that if they persisted in the investigation, they would be subjected to all the abuse the copious vocabulary of Mr. Foster could devise. His threats were unavailing. The investigation proceeded, and the findings were recorded without malice, but also without fear.

His assaults on the Commission landed Mr. Foster in a worse position than he had occupied before. He had previously been condemned out of his own mouth; his assaults were simply a confession that he could not clear himself on any single count. All his ingenuity could not explain away the rake-offs he pocketed while handing out Union Trust Funds; nor his dual position as manager of a loan company and member of a syndicate borrowing money from that loan company; nor the bagging of the 337½ bonus stock from the Foresters. Nor could the invectives he launched against the Commission becloud the fact that on these essential matters he had no valid explanation to offer. He tried to defend the indefensible, and his last condition was worse than his first.

Another body has pronounced on Mr. Foster's doings, and one against which he can launch no accusation of political bias—the Independent Order of Foresters. Did they approve of his management of their funds? Did they gratefully pocket the dividends of which he boasts and retain his brilliant services? Not at all. They relieved him of the burdens of office very promptly when the nature of his dealings became known.

Mr. Foster has been thrice condemned, twice by himself — in the witness box and in the House of Commons — and once by the Independent Order of Foresters. Will he charge each accuser with malice or bias?

According to Mr. Foster it is impossible to "separate altogether private character and public position," and having laid down this standard for the measurement of another man he should have no objection to its being applied to himself.

We are invited thus to see in the motives and purposes of his private life the aims and ends toward which Mr. Foster works in public life. And in the rules of action that have governed the conduct of his private business we are invited