

## THE EDMONTON BULLETIN

SEMI-WEEKLY.

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C. F. HAYES,  
Business Manager.

MONDAY, MAY 9, 1910.

## A WAR-LIKE SESSION.

Parliament has closed after a session which might be characterized as unusually war-like. From its opening to its close there were wars or rumors of wars. When the members were not discussing the prospects of having to fight Germany and how best to go about it, the members of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition were carrying on a lively warfare to decide who was to lead the party and how. And though in the matter of preparation to resist foreign invasion a definite course was struck out, the point of dissension among the Opposition members remains unsettled. Mr. Borden for the time remains at the head, but it is significant that he has seen fit to postpone the promised convention of the party from June until October, with no very great certainty that it will not again be postponed to some more remote date. In a kind of unofficial fashion Mr. Foster has been cashed, and Mr. George Taylor, Dr. Spruille and a few other members of the old brigade have taken to understand that their careers of party usefulness are over. But it is one thing to tell a man that he is no longer a member of the party and another thing to get him to believe it and govern himself in accordance with the proprieties of the case. Mr. Foster, Mr. Monk, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Spruille have not been known heretofore as particularly prone to self-effacement and it will be a matter of some surprise if with the merits they think they have, and the weight they certainly carry in certain quarters, they do not turn out to be pretty lively specimens of political corpses. Under the circumstances Mr. Borden has two causes for satisfaction. He is no doubt glad the session is over and the bawling factions removed from so conspicuous a stage. He ought also to be glad that he is Mr. Borden who fixes the date of the convention—or decides whether there is to be any convention.

Better headway was made with the other war-like subject—that of arranging to bear Canada's proper share in the defence of the Empire. For this not much thanks are due to Mr. Borden and his followers. Indeed it would be hard to devise a course better designed to result in nothing at all being done in the matter than the course the Opposition leader mapped out—or allowed himself to be scared into. A year ago when the matter first came up he was with the Government. He favored the creation of a Canadian squadron and the control of the squadron by the Canadian people. He held to this view and expressed it quite emphatically in Halifax so late as August. But when Parliament met a change had come over the opinions of the leader. He no longer considered the building of a Canadian squadron as the best way of contributing to the cause of defence, or even as a good way. The best, and indeed, the only fitting way, he then considered to be the donation of money to Great Britain. For the about-face he offered no substantial reason. In the absence of that it must be concluded that he had no reason other than that he found his previous views ill-taken by certain loud-talking sections of his party. It is fortunate that Parliament was not as prone to change its views as the Opposition leader. Else there would not yet have been any settlement as to what Canada should do or whether she should do anything. That humiliating position has been avoided, but not through fault or virtue of Mr. Borden and his colleagues. The loyalty of these gentlemen is, of course, not questioned; but through want of strong leadership and lack of purpose they drifted into a vacillating course which robs them of any just claim to have promoted the cause of defence, and which had it been generally adopted by the members of Parliament must have resulted in nothing definite being done at all. Incidentally, it is a course which has put them out of harmony with public opinion rather than in line with it. Not only did they abandon one position and take up another

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**NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT.**

A more or less adroit attempt is being made in certain quarters and through certain mediums to represent the interests of the Alberta and Great Waterways transaction as opposed to the opening up of the north country by railway construction. The spokesmen of this notion are to be congratulated for their courage rather than for their candor or their sense of the ridiculous. It certainly requires some hardihood to tell people who have heard and read the criticisms offered to this bargain that the source of that criticism lies in some antagonism to the development of the north land. It certainly requires as much assurance to solemnly tell people who know from whom the criticism has chiefly come, that those offering it have or covet have anything to gain in business or politics by opposing the opening of the north country. Had that criticism come from Southern Alberta solely, or even in the main, then there might have been some excuse for raising the cry that it came from jealousy of the north country of the Province or from fear that the development of that portion would detract from the prosperity of the south. The excuse would even so have been a poor one, but it would have been better than none at all. And under the circumstances there is no excuse at all for raising the cry, and no reason save the hope of attracting attention from arguments which cannot be answered.

Of the members of the Legislature in opposition to the transaction, one sits for Edmonton, one for Sturgeon, one for Pembina, and seven come from constituencies lying north of Red Deer. These are the men who began the criticism, and who stood the brunt of the fight in the House and in the press. Certainly if these men are to be considered as acting from antagonism to the north country they must be supposed to have parted with every vestige of business sense and political sagacity. They represent constituencies which more than any others in the Province stand to profit by the development of the north country. To suppose them as wanting to block the development of that country is to suppose them wanting to strike a blow at the prosperity and the future of the people they represent, and to incur the hostility of the men whose votes not them in office. The Bulletin, too, is honored by being accused of antagonism toward the opening up and peopling of the north land. The history of the Bulletin in respect of the development of that country speaks for itself. That

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asse, the Bulletin, like other newspapers, lives or dies, depends on its circulation, according as people subscribe for it or do not subscribe. The more possible subscribers there are within the district in which it circulates, the better its chances of continuing to live and of prospering. Yet the public are being solemnly told that the Bulletin is opposed to having the north country opened up and peopled; opposed that is, to having subscribers where now there is none and thousands where now there are tens. It is to laugh!

The question before the house is not one of assisting northern development or of not assisting it. If that were the question the Alberta and Great Waterways bargain would be ruled out on the first count, for that bargain proposes to build a railway into the one part of the northern country in which no development has taken place; the one part into which people have not gone and into which they seemingly do not want to go and will not go. But it is not a question of developing the north or of neglecting to develop it. It is a question of how to best and most quickly develop it. Nobody has proposed that the money raised for the building of the road to Fort McMurray should be spent in any other way than in developing the north country by railway construction. But it is contended that roads into the north country should be first built where there are already people to serve, people whose credit is pledged to repay the money with interest. And it is further contended that the bargain as a bargain was a poor one. So far from any attempt being made to hinder northern development, the attempt is to assist northern development by providing the means of development where development seems most likely to take place, where, in fact, it has already taken place to a large extent, and where, despite the lack of railway facilities, it is still taking place. Critics of the bargain hold that the people whose credit is pledged to repay the money for railway building should be provided with railway facilities before they are asked to build roads into a country which is not settled and is not being settled; that where the choice lies between a district in which many people have gone and into which thousands more are going, and a district into which no one has gone and no one is going, that the process of development will be more properly and more surely assisted by meeting the needs of the former district before supplying what is not at the moment a need of the latter district. The friends of Northern Alberta and of its development are those who are demanding that seven millions borrowed on the credit of the Province should have gone to provide an inlet and outlet for that part of the north country which is the most fertile, instead of being put into a road for which there is as yet no necessity, and no sign of any early necessity. The enemies of the development of Northern Alberta are those who, while nothing practical has been done to open that part of the north in which settlement has taken place and in which they are defending the proposal to put seven millions borrowed on the credit of the Province into a part of the northland where there are no settlers and no prospect of there being any settlers in the reasonably near future.

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any impartial review of its work during that period will convince any did and fair-minded persons that it has been an immense boon to the country in the saving of a vast amount of money that would have been spent in industrial strife, in averting serious losses arising from the dislocation of industry and in preventing much suffering among the working classes. Up to the end of March last, eight of the north country opened up and peopled; opposed that is, to having subscribers where now there is none and thousands where now there are tens. It is to laugh!

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