THE EDMONTON BULLETIN

SEMI-WEEKLY.

Published every Monday and Thursday by The Bulletin Company, Ltd., at the office, Bulletin Bldg., 318 Jasper Ave. East.

SUBSCRIPTION.

One year to Canadian or British Post Office address	$1.00
Six months to Canadian or British Post Office address	.50
One year U.S. Post Office address.	2.00
Six months U.S. Post Office address	1.00

All subscriptions are payable in advance.

Classified advertising one cent per word; four insertions for price of three, and six insertions for price of four.

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C. F. HAYES,
Business Manager.

MONDAY, APRIL 11, 1910.

MR. BORDEN AND MR. FOSTER.

According to Ottawa despatches Mr. Borden has decided to get rid of some of his lieutenants before meeting the representatives of the party in convention. There is other evidence to indicate that the despatches are correct. The Toronto News, which seems to have been adopted by Mr. Borden or to have adopted Mr. Borden, has been tendering him advice in this direction fofr some time. It demanded with some vigor and persistence the excommunication of Mr. Foster, and more recently has been assailing Mr. Monk as not only useless but as being a menace to Mr. Borden's position and peace of mind. The Toronto World, too, which is understood to speak for Mr. W. F. Maclean, M.P., comes out boldly with the assertion that half the members in the House have decided to get rid of Mr. Borden. The counsels of his friends and the warnings of some dissatisfied members are therefore to the effect that if Mr. Borden values his position he would do well to eliminate certain of his Parliamentary colleagues from positions of influence in the party before the braves gather in council. Most, if not all of these undesired lieutenants Mr. Borden inherited from the era of disruption which followed the passing of Sir John Macdonald. Like the generals of Napoleon, the chief was no sooner gone than the marshals began a struggle for mastery among themselves. Mr. Borden was brought in, it is understood, by Sir Charles Tupper, in hope that under a new leader the warring elements might coalesce, or at least act with the harmony and co-operation necessary to present a tolerable front to the foe. The result has scarcely justified the hope. Whether the fault lie with Mr. Borden or with the others there has been neither coalescence nor harmony. Having failed to fuse the discordant elements Mr. Borden seems now to have made up his mind to get rid of them and to replace them in the sub-leaderships with men more loyal to himself and more willing to co-operate for the good of the party.

Most notable among those slated for retirement is Hon. G. W. Foster. Mr. Foster has grown grey in the wars. He came into Parliament in the days of Sir John. He was taken into the cabinet and given control of one of the most important departments of the public service. He was perhaps justified in expecting that when the leader passed he would be next in line. But other factions were too powerful for him. After a succession of failures had held the office of prime minister the party went out of power. Since then Mr. Foster has been at once the ablest man on the opposition side and the greatest menace to its solidarity. His debating talent is proverbial. Without it indeed the Opposition has even yet no chance of holding its own in a hard-fought scrimmage in the House. For hard fighting day after day Canada has perhaps not produced the equal of the member for North Toronto. He is absolutely tireless, though unfortunately for himself he does not always remember that his audiences are not similarly constructed. His ambition has fully matched his ability. No one doubts that during the whole journey in the wilderness Mr. Foster has been in a measure sulking in his tent and awaiting his opportunity, an opportunity which he could not perhaps understand could never come. Of this there has been ample evidence. Mr. Foster has spoken even more often than his leader, and not frequently it seemed that he chose the time and the manner of speaking which best brought out the contrast between his own ability and the comparatively small debating talent of Mr. Borden. Then, time after time when the absence of Mr. Borden left Mr. Foster in the position of temporary leader situations have been created which seemed to have been designed to discredit Mr. Borden rather than to gain an advantage for the party.

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Mr. Foster is no novice in Parliament and the regularity with which the absence of Mr. Borden resulted in a conflict between the members most loyal to him and the group of the old guard who stood with Mr. Foster could hardly have been the result of accident or of inexperience. In these and other ways it has seemed to be the purpose of Mr. Foster to scatter thorns in the way of Mr. Borden, with the hope of driving him from the leadership. That in such event the vacant position could never go to Mr. Foster that gentleman himself may be forgiven for not understanding. One is not a good judge of his own limitations, especially one who has gained so much distinction as Mr. Foster.

It has long been apparent that Mr. Borden would be better off without Mr. Foster, great as the loss of his debating talent would be. But that he has chosen either a fitting time or a just occasion on which to abandon the old veteran is doubtful. Mr. Foster is a sick man. For the time at least he is unable to defend himself either in the House or to the members of the party. It certainly proves nothing either as to Mr. Borden's courage or his chivalry that he selects such an occasion to notify Mr. Foster of his reduction to the ranks. Nor is there any apparent reason why the reduction should be made now rather than at an earlier time or at a later time. There has been nothing in the conduct of Mr. Foster during the present session more dangerous to the leader than that of previous sessions. Had it been otherwise, the humiliation might still have been postponed a few weeks in hope that Mr. Foster would have been in better health of body and mind. All reports to the contrary, too, the country understands thoroughly the real cause of Mr. Foster's abandonment. The report of the Royal Commission made it impossible for him to again become finance minister of Canada. But Mr. Borden refused to retire Mr. Foster from the forefront of the party in consequence of that report. He defended him in the House and in the country. He fought through an election campaign with Mr. Foster as his alternative to Mr. Fielding. All that he could do to reinstate Mr. Foster in the treasury department was done. He cannot be abandoning him now because of the conduct for which he formerly defended him. He can only be doing so because Mr. Borden recognizes he cannot make progress with Mr. Foster in the front rank. The veteran falls, therefore, not for what he has done, but because of what his leader cannot do. Whatever Mr. Foster deserves he does not deserve this. Had his retirement been demanded when the report of the Commission made his conduct plain, and when in the full enjoyment of health and strength of mind and body he was in position to take care of himself, he could have had little complaint to make. But that was not done. Instead, he was defended through thick and thin by the leader who now demands his retirement. Mr. Borden was entirely willing to defend Mr. Foster while Mr. Foster was able to speak. It is only when he is broken in health that the bitter news of his humiliation is announced. Mr. Borden must show that this act of unnecessary cruelty has other than a personal motive if he expects it to improve his standing with the public. Until he does so he must be suspected of striking a fallen comrade merely in revenge or in hope of making his own position the more secure.

Fruit growers in the Niagara district of Ontario protest against fruit from the United States being allowed to enter the West free of duty. This does not necessarily mean that these men sell much fruit in the West. In this part of it at least they certainly sell comparatively little. But tariff is not now demanded for the protection of the Canadian producer only. It is demanded as well on what is not produced in Canada at all. Witness the outery against the reductions agreed to in the negotiations with Washington. In that case the object seems to be not to protect the Canadian producer but to inflict hardship on the Canadian consumer without protecting or benefitting anybody. This aside, what right in morals or economy can a few hundred men in Ontario have to compel the million or so people living on the prairies to buy their fruit at prices they see fit to fix or to go without fruit? Our products are sold in competition with the world. If the Niagara fruit-growers cannot do the same they had better go out of the fruit business. Certainly we owe them nothing that we should be taxed to make them prosperous in spite of the laws of production and trade.

The superintendent of the Lacombe experimental farm has found out that it pays to winter feed cattle on grain. Hitherto little feeding for the spring market has been done in this Province. In consequence, though beef may be plentiful in fall and of good quality, the supply of good beef in spring is limited. It has been found profitable even in the Eastern Provinces to feed cattle through the winter for the higher prices which prevail in the spring market. The margin of profit should be higher here where grain has farther to travel to the seaboard, and is consequently worth less money. Farmers with suitable buildings should be able to make something by turning their rough grain into beef for the local markets in late winter, spring and early summer.

A suffragette hid in a hot air shaft in the British House of Commons. Strange to say she did not find it congenial.

THE REPORT.

(Thursday's Daily.)

The report of Mr. Francis is not very complimentary, nor very pleasant reading. Clearly it is not designed to tickle our pride with flattery about the way our civic affairs have been run. About the only ground for congratulation in it is that no taint of official dishonesty was found and that some officials have been doing good work under very trying circumstances. Beyond this, chagrin rather than satisfaction is the sentiment it must provide. He tells us in effect that the power house must be torn down and rebuilt before it will be safe; that in it we have a "Museum of machinery" comprising "A monument to the enterprise of manufacturers' agents" which must be reconstructed—whatever that may mean in work and expense; that we have been "goldbricked" in the purchase of supplies for operating the plant; and that the whole commissioner system as operated here must be overhauled if we are to escape a spectacular and disastrous break-down of the municipal ownership policy.

The report is that of an expert, not a judge. It says where certain things are wrong and recommends certain general changes which would produce better results. But it does not pronounce judgment, nor even trace out the evidence on which judgment could be pronounced. As to why the conditions found to exist do exist it leaves the Council to ascertain in detail and to take what administrative action may seem to be called for in the individual case. It is clearly intended to provide the Council with a working basis on which to prosecute inquiry into the several points raised rather than as a resume of how the deplorable conditions were brought about. It equips the Council with an authoritative statement of what is, leaving the Council to find out why it is and to take such action as may then seem necessary to prevent a recurrence. Without such action indeed the report would do little good and might do much harm. Its tendency must be to unsettle the public mind and to create suspicion where perhaps none is deserved. Its influence upon the credit of the City, too, is worth thinking about. We must go into the money markets yearly for more capital with which to extend our utilities. We cannot afford to do so with a report of that kind in the hands of the men from whom we hope to get the money, unless we can provide them with proper assurance that the conditions complained of have been remedied and that safeguards have been established against such conditions again coming about. Confidence in the itegrity of our eterprises both at home and abroad can only be re-established by following up the indications of the report promptly and thoroughly. That much must be done in self-defence.

The necessity of overhauling our system of city government has been apparent ever since that system supposedly came into being. In point of fact we have not and never have had the kind of governing system plainly intended in the city charter. The city and the commission system came into being at the same time. Previous to that the town had been governed by the town council system, and from that system we have never succeeded in getting free. Whether the fault lay with the commissioners or with the aldermen, the fact is unquestionable that from the first there has been an indefiniteness as to where the authority and duty of the Commission ended and where that of the Council began. Perhaps the trouble has been that the commissioners were not assertive enough to claim and exercise all the powers the charter seems to have intended them to have. Perhaps aldermen have not properly appreciated the position the charter intended the Commission to occupy in the scheme of city management. Perhaps there has been fault on both sides. Wherever the fault lie, the fact remains that years nominally under a Commission system, the system is still nominal, and we have yet to all intents and purposes the cumbersome order of things which existed before Edmonton became a city. A city cannot be properly governed by such system, however efficient it may be found in towns and villages; certainly not a city owning and operating so many enterprises as Edmonton owns. We must have a permanent board of management whose authority and responsibility is thoroughly recognized and scrupulously respected. The more so because in theory we have such board. Better far if we are to continue the town council system in fact, that the charter should be amended and that system fully and openly re-established. By doing so we would at least abolish all uncertainty as to what body held and should exercise authority on any and every question both of policy and practice, of legislation and administration. It would then be the known and understood duty of the Council to pass upon everything, however trivial; and in consequence the Council would do so. But where there is a doubt as to whose business it is to look after certain matters the chances are that those matters will not be properly looked after by anybody.

For years certain Opposition members of Parliament and certain newspapers have been telling us that the Government was flooding the country with pauper immigrants, men and women who came in without money or the prospect of employment and who soon became a charge on the communities into which they drifted. It has been the practice of the immigration department for some time back to require the new-comer to bring along a sum of money sufficient to pay his way for a reasonable time after reaching the country, in the event of his not being able to find employment immediately upon arrival. It is now proposed to incorporate this practice into the immigration laws. But strangely enough this does not meet with the approval of the critics who have been so loudly and persistently decrying the deluge of the impecunious and denouncing the Government for bringing them hither or allowing them to come. Opposition members have been suddenly touched with a wondrous feeling for the unfortunate who wants to enter the country. When the amending clause came up in the House it was met with a volley of modifying proposals. One wanted an exception made in the case of the new-comer who had relatives in the country who would agree to take care of him. Another wanted an exception made of the new-comer whom some organization in the country promised to look after. Another wanted an exception made of the new-comer to whom anyone was willing to lend the money demanded by the act. Clearly one must lay aside his sense of humor if he desires to regard the Ottawa Opposition seriously.

The report on the public utilities is well worth publishing. The cost of the investigation is understood to be about $4,000. It would cost comparatively little more to make its contents available in full to the public. It would surely be sound policy to make the small extra expense for the sake of getting as much value out of the money spent on the investigation as possible. The ratepayers are entitled to an opportunity to peruse the report at leisure and would no doubt approve the cost of making this possible to them.

Mr. Foster is able to sit up and tell a reporter he is not dead yet, politically or physically, while in that gentleman's absence Mr. Monk's friends speak to the same effect on his behalf. Kicking these gentlemen out of the party they have served longer and with less reward than himself is not the easy task Mr. Borden may have been led to suppose. It is altogether possible that the leader may throw himself off his feet in the attempt.

Mr. Asquith has a majority of 106 in the House of Commons. That probably explains why Opposition papers have been doing all the worrying about the Government being able to hold on.

The promoters have fixed upon 1914 as the date for the Selkirk Centennial. Now all that is lacking is the money.

Tuesday evening's demonstration in the council chamber made clear that there is a sharp cleavage of public opinion and of private interest as well, over the question of whether the market shall be removed to the new site or left where it is. On the one hand were owners of property near the present site, and parties who conduct business in that vicinity. These claimed that the proximity of the market was a powerful factor both in business and in fixing the value of property. To remove it they said would interfere unjustly with their business enterprises and depreciate the value of the property thereabouts. On the other hand it was urged that these arguments should have been advanced last fall when it was proposed to buy the new site; that the proposal to buy the new site was sufficient warning that if bought it would be used, and that the protesting parties have not now any just ground of complaint if they through negligence allowed the purchase to go through, or if they were not numerous enough to prevent it going through. The easiest and fairest way out of the tangle is to go straight ahead; to submit the bylaw for the money necessary to erect the building. If the bylaw carries, then the ratepayers must be supposed to want the market on the First Street site, for it has already been decided by ballot that if a building is erected now it is to be located there. If the bylaw is rejected that will be an indication that they want matters left as they are for the present. The rejection would not, of course, mean that the ratepayers were averse to a building being erected on the present site.

Immigrants from the United States are calculated to bring 125 million dollars into the country this summer. That, of course, is very much more than emigrating Canadians will take to the United States. Yet we hear no one storming about the "adverse balance of trade" on this score. Money, the least useful intrinsically of all commodities, is the one protectionists are willing to have "dumped" upon them. Foodstuffs, clothing, implements—they want none of these from the hands of the foreigner. But money is welcome to them from whatever source. The lure of money is the root of much that is peculiar in economics as well as in morals.

A conference has been held at Ottawa, supposedly for the purpose of settling the much disputed question of the boundary between the authority of the Dominion and that of the Provinces, regarding the incorporation of companies and other matters. Naturally no settlement was reached. Probably none was expected. Probably none was desired by some members of the conference. While it continues to be "good politics" for a Provincial Government to get itself into a quarrel with the Dominion over some fancied grievance, there is not much likelihood of this boundary line being explicitly defined. It is getting pretty nearly time for general elections in some Provinces, and we may expect in those quarters the premonitory symptoms of a fresh outbreak of Federalphobia. More than likely some Provincial delegates to the recent conference went there not to get a settlement but to get an excuse for saying they could not get a settlement.

The Winnipeg Telegram thinks it "cruel and brutal" to require that the immigrant bring along $25 cash to pay his way until he gets work. This language is nearly as warm as that the Telegram's friends have been using for years to prove that some such stipulation should be imposed.

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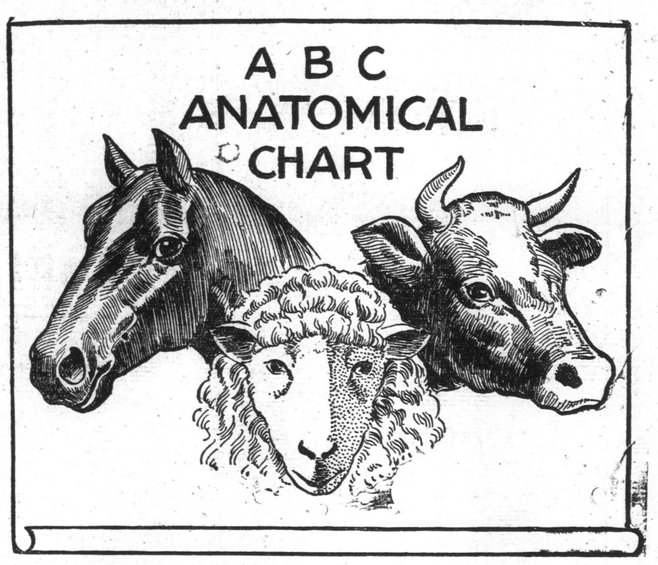

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Austria Favors Monopoly.

London, April 5.—A special dispatch from Vienna states that the Austrian petroleum refineries and firms selling petroleum in tank cars will be obliged henceforth to procure government licenses. It is understood that this is a step in the direction of establishing a monopoly of the oil trade, as the Australian petroleum industry is unable to compete with the Standard Oil Company.