

MR. FRANK OLIVER THE NEW MINISTER.

Succeeds Mr. Sifton in Department of the Interior.

EDMONTON BYE-ELECTION.

The Conservatives Promise to Put Up a Keen Fight.

Educational Clauses of the Autonomy Bills to be Made the Issue—May 2 Probable Date of Election—Opinions in Winnipeg and Edmonton on the Appointment.

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)
Ottawa, April 9.—Edmonton's member, Mr. Frank Oliver, succeeds Mr. Clifford Sifton as Minister of the Interior. He was sworn into that office at 10 o'clock on Saturday at Rideau Hall, in the presence of the Governor-General and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Earl Grey had barely arrived from Kingston, when he was called upon to welcome an addition to the ranks of his advisers. Mr. Oliver is the first Minister that Earl Grey has called to the Government since his arrival in Canada, and on that account, perhaps, will hereafter be regarded with special interest by his Excellency.

Two hours and forty minutes after becoming a full-fledged Cabinet Minister Mr. Oliver was speeding westward on a C.P.R. express bound for Edmonton, there to make arrangements for the campaign which will result from the vacation of his seat.

Bye-election Will be Keen.

The Opposition will oppose the new Minister with all the strength they can, believing that his defeat would spell disaster for the Government. But Mr. Oliver had a comfortable majority of over 3,000 at the last election, and is not much troubled by any misgivings over the probable result. It would be a great achievement on the part of the Opposition to show from the first election since the introduction of the autonomy bills that the Northwest is against the educational policy of the Government, but here it is considered that they are far from the realization of any such hope.

Probable Date May 2.

No official announcement of the election date in Edmonton has been given out yet, but May 2 is being arranged for, with the nominations a week earlier.

A great many people were prepared to bet that Mr. Walter Scott would be the Government's choice for Minister of the Interior, but Mr. Oliver had claims which could not be passed over. He is a veteran in the service of the Liberal party, and has done much to sustain and uphold its interests in the Northwest. He is a forcible speaker, as well as writer, and the great west has had in him an unwearied and loyal advocate. Mr. Scott's time will come later. He has earned promotion, and deserves well of his party. A little delay will make recognition all the sweeter when it arrives.

The Last Election in Edmonton.

The vote at the last general election in Edmonton was: Oliver 3,555, Secord 1,526; majority for Oliver, 2,009. The contention that Edmonton is dominated by foreigners is not borne out by the facts. The constituency is located in northern Alberta, and, according to the census figures, the total population was 55,000, of which 51,000 were Canadians. The people of foreign birth numbered over 11,000, including some 5,000 odd persons from the United States. Of half-breeds there were only 3,700. In the town of Edmonton the population numbered 2,600 in 1901, of whom about 238 were half-breeds. Since then the population has gained enormously, but additions have come, probably, from the United States. Half-breeds would not gain numerically except by natural increase. Of natives of Austro-Hungary there were not much more than 3,000 in 1901, according to the census figures.

Hon. Mr. Oliver was born in Peel County, Ontario, in 1853, went to the Northwest at an early period in his career, became a member of the Northwest Council in 1883, and was a member of the Legislative Assembly, which succeeded the Council, from 1888 to 1896. In the latter year he was first elected to the House of Commons as an independent, and was re-elected as a Liberal in 1900 at the last election. He resides at Edmonton and is the publisher of The Bulletin at that place.

Pre-eminently Qualified.

Winnipeg, April 9.—(Special.)—The Free Press says:—"The west will regard with approval and satisfaction the succession of Mr. Frank Oliver to Mr. Sifton as western representative in the Dominion Government. In thorough knowledge of western Canada and understanding of western conditions and requirements Mr. Oliver is pre-eminently qualified for the important post of Minister of the Interior. His knowledge and understanding of the west that comes of long experience of living and working in the west. No man could be in closer contact with the life and thought of the people of western Canada. His career in Parliament has made him known to the whole Dominion as an energetic, outspoken representative of this great and important section of the Dominion, whose interests and whose development will be in his special charge as Minister of the Interior. Mr. Sifton, as head of the great department which Mr. Oliver is now called to the head of, has set a high standard of thoroughgoing admin-

istrative efficiency and of progressiveness based upon intimate knowledge of western needs. In Mr. Oliver he will have a worthy successor in whom the west has the fullest confidence. It is not to be doubted that Mr. Oliver, whose record of electoral triumphs attests the complete confidence in which he is held by the great constituency he so worthily represents, will be accorded now a crowning demonstration of that confidence."

Edmonton is Pleased.

Edmonton, N.W.T., April 9.—(Special.)—News of the appointment of Edmonton's member to the vacant portfolio of the Interior was posted early on Saturday night and spread rapidly. It was received with pleasure and gratification. Telegrams of congratulation were forwarded to the new Minister, and suggestions came from many that a public demonstration be held on Mr. Oliver's return to the city. The news was unexpected here, the general impression being that Mr. Sifton would re-enter the Cabinet, and that Mr. Oliver, if he could be induced to leave Dominion politics, might take the leadership of the Alberta Liberals and guide the new Province through the initial stages of its journey. The Liberals are naturally jubilant that the leader under whom they have won so often and so decisively has been called to the highest council of the nation. The old-timers are pleased that one who struggled with them in the old days has climbed well up the ladder, while the Conservatives express appreciation very freely of the honor done the city and district.