

ELECTORAL COMPETITION.

£10 10s. IN PRIZES.

WHO WILL BE THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE ?

The proprietors of FAIR PLAY have decided to inaugurate a series of prize competitions on matters of local and colonial interest. There will be no entrance fee or charge for anyone joining in the competition. All that will be necessary will be to cut out the coupon which will appear in each number and forward it to FAIR PLAY Office, 6 Customhouse Quay, Wellington, the word "Competition" to be written on the top left-hand corner of envelope. Two prizes of £5 5s. each will be given in the introductory competition, which will be conducted as follows: First, to the one who nearest to the total number of votes cast in the colony; second, to the competitor who places the three successful candidates for the City of Wellington in their proper order, and gives the nearest approach to the number of votes recorded for the one who heads the poll.

To give competitors an idea as to the possible results the following figures, compiled from the last general elections in 1890, are published:—Total number of names on the electoral rolls, 183,171; total number of votes recorded 150,025; total population of New Zealand at last census, 573,557; total number of names on the roll in Wellington, 8786; total number of votes recorded for the eight candidates, 15,816. The three successful candidates, in their proper order, were as follows:—George Fisher, 2,828; J. Duthie, 2,779; and T. K. Macdonald, 2,482. The granting of the franchise to the women of New Zealand will make a considerable difference in the number of electors, but as no official figures have been published as yet, intending competitors will have to draw their own conclusions from the census returns given above.

Fill the following coupons in, cut them out, and post to FAIR PLAY Office.

Each competitor will have a chance for both prizes.

COUPON 1.

I place the Candidates for the City of Wellington in the following order:

- 1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Number of votes polled for leading Candidate.....

Name (written legibly).....

Address.....

COUPON 2.

I give as the total number of votes recorded in the Colony of New Zealand at the coming elections.....

Name.....

Address.....

ANY COMPETITOR MAY SEND IN AS MANY COUPONS AS HE WISHES.

PERSONAL ITEMS.

"O'Dea for Wellington." Oh dear!

The whirligig of time brings many a strange change. It is an instructive sight this, of the Agnostic Stout, ex-editor of the Freethought Echo, ex-president of the Dunedin Lyceum, where on Sunday evenings scoffings at Christ and Christians were interlarded with orchestral selections, putting up at the house of a Presbyterian parson, and going to church on a Sunday morning with an armful of books, and a sour "dour" face as long as the shorter catechism, and that would do credit to a "Glasgie" elder who "wee drappied" it a little unwisely on a Saturday "nicht," and had to look very virtuous the next morning to make up for it—"Guid save us," say the astonished congregation, "here's Rabbie Stout a comin' tae kirk juist far arl the wurld like an elder!" Is it a case of sudden conversion, or are the women's votes the votes of Christian mothers—who do not like freethought and freethinkers, that the ex-president of the Dunedin Lyceum has in his mind? Wellington people will draw their own conclusions. Meanwhile it's "funny, very very funny."

It is so like Stout to be wanting to foist upon New Zealand some blessed new fangled political fad from Switzerland. Stout is a confirmed victim to what one might call the magazine habit. Let some crank called, say, Brown propose some new panacea in the Nineteenth Century, Stout will go into raptures over it, will talk about it, write about it, and end by imagining it is his own idea. A month or two passes and Jones comes on in The Fortnightly Review, and, metaphorically speaking, of course, knocks the stuffing out of Brown. Stout reads Jone's article, chucks Brown's effusion to Tophet and is presently imbued with the idea that after all Brown's ideas were a little crude.

He forthwith set to work and spreads the new gospel—according to Jones—throughout the land, and finds exceeding comfort in the refrain, even if other people are terribly bored, and then, behold, Robinson "weighs in" with an article in the contemporary in which he simply pulverises both Brown and Jones, and sets up an entirely new set of theories of his own. Sir Robert, who has not an original idea in his head, save that he is the only one statesman in the colony, reads Robinson, throws over Jones and Brown, and talks of Theorist Number Three, as one of the "master minds of the age, ladies and gentlemen."—"As unstable as water thou shalt not excel."—Stout is a walking reflex of other people's ideas, and he can't be faithful to any new theory for more than a year.

Sir Robert Stout argues in his election speeches that every political question in New Zealand, in the future, will have to be answered by a policy which will be something between individualism and socialism, and that the exponents of this school will be the future governing power. Exactly; the theory is a pretty one, and we presume that Sir Robert intends to represent the individualistic interest while his supporters provide the socialistic modicum; a poetical idea and one calculated to attract the ladies. Sir Robert, as the knight with the white plume, jousting in the political tournament while ever and anon, as he vanquishes some doughty opponent, he refreshes himself with huge flagons of watery adulation presented to him by temperance vestals selected from the "socialistic element."

It seems a rather curious inconsistency that Mr. H. D. Bell, who at the last general election was supported by the brewers and licensed victuallers, should come out this year as one of the candidates whom the Prohibitionists have advertised they intend to work for.