

# PARS ON POLITICS.

A lengthy discussion took place in the House of Representatives on Tuesday last on the motion for setting up an education committee. A number of members attacked the Premier as the cause of the backward trend of education matters. Mr Hardy considered that the Premier was turning the Department into a voting machine, whilst Mr Bedford believed that the Premier had the cause of education sincerely at heart, but that he was too heavily loaded with other work. Mr Jas. Allen urged that a change should be made. During the past three years the sum of £41,000 had been voted for schools in newly-settled districts, and only £25,000 had been spent. The House was willing to vote the money, but the Government would not spend it. Other members spoke in a similar strain. In reply Mr Seddon said that when members said there was dissatisfaction regarding the Education Department, they were making statements that had no foundation in fact. He knew the cause of this new-born zeal for the education question on the floor of the House. It was because of the approaching general elections. An endeavour was being made to make the boards of education political machines, and the Opposition were trying to capture the boards. They had an instance of this in the speeches of Messrs Buchanan, Hardy and Jas. Allen. The first duty of the Minister was to see to the education of the children of the colony; then to see to the teachers; and then to see that the necessary accommodation was made for the teachers. The training system of education has been vastly improved during the last three years, and since he had been Minister for Education the expenditure of money on education had increased by half-a-million sterling. The Education Department, above all others, had had full time devoted to it by him. In conclusion he said that if, after all the Government proposed, the country was not satisfied, they could take it from him that this was the last session they would have him as Minister for Education, for there was no one in the country who desired the welfare of teachers and children more than the present Minister for Education. The motion for the setting up of an Education Committee was then agreed to.

who has been regarded as the most silent Mr Hardy, the member for Selwyn, member of the House, and who spoke only once last session, astonished his fellow legislators recently by making a vigorous speech in connection with the motion to set up an Education Committee. On rising, he made the frank avowal that he had been told that if he did not talk more his constituents would not send him back. His reply to this, he said, was that if he talked too little, another Canterbury member "Tommy Taylor," talked too much. "Mr Taylor likes talking here, but I like working, and do not care about talking," he declared, amidst the unanimous "hear, hears" of the House. Mr Hardy, who addressed himself chiefly to a Canterbury grievance, spoke of the political influence which was being brought to bear on the administration of the Department as "a shame and a scandal."

Mr Field, M.H.R., is protesting to the Government against the recent defence regulations, which have the effect of withdrawing the railway passes to attend shooting competitions to which Government rifle clubmen have up to the present been entitled, but which have now been stopped as to all competitions, except the annual championship meetings.

The appointment of a Speaker of the Legislative Council took place on Tuesday afternoon, and resulted in the election of the Hon. C. C. Bowen. There were no less than six aspirants for the position, but the only two who were at all in the running were Mr Bowen and the Hon. G. McLean. The other candidates were the Hons. Feldwick, T. Kelly, Reeves, and Sir Maurice O'Rorke. The election was decided by four ballots. The first ballot resulted in fourteen votes being cast for Mr Bowen, eleven for Mr McLean, five for Mr Reeves, three for Mr Feldwick, two for Mr Kelly, and one for Sir Maurice O'Rorke. On the second ballot seventeen votes were given to Mr Bowen, fourteen to Mr McLean, two each to Mr Feldwick and Mr Reeves, and one to Mr Kelly. The third ballot gave Mr Bowen 17, Mr McLean 16, and Mr Feldwick and Mr Reeves one each. The final result was: Bowen 21, McLean 14, and Feldwick 1, no votes being cast for the other candidates. Mr Bowen was warmly congratulated on his election, which is a very popular one.

Sir Maurice O'Rorke has given notice to introduce a Bill to enable the University of New Zealand to grant degrees in divinity.

Interest in political affairs in Christchurch has reached such a stage that, even during the session, the work of organisation will be carried on by the Opposition party in preparation for the struggle in November. It is a foregone conclusion that the elections will create more excitement than on any previous occasion for the last fifteen years, and it is quite on the cards that more than one Government supporter will lose his seat.

Referring to the policy foreshadowed in the Governor's speech re the branding of New Zealand goods, a dry goods merchant has given it out as his opinion that while goods manufactured locally are genuine and first-class in quality, there is a noted prejudice against them, and if in future they are to be branded as being a New Zealand manufacture the result will be that our industries will languish, and the bulk of our manufactures will diminish. Sold as imported goods, however, they give every satisfaction.

In the course of his remarks on the Shops and Offices Bill in Parliament, the Premier, referring to the non-enforcement of the Act, said that the Act was imperfect and unworkable, and that the people who had been fined for infringing it need not have been fined had they been aware of the fact. He also asserted that there were other laws on our Statute Books which were in the same position, and which no Government dare attempt to enforce.

"Tell us the names of one or two," interjected Mr. Jas. Allen.

"I am not a walking encyclopaedia," retorted Mr. Seddon. "I refer you to your Attorney-General, the member for Mount Ida (Mr. Herdman). You go to your Attorney-General, and I will go to mine."

Mr. Allen: "Is the Liquor Act one of them?"

"No, it is not," snapped the Premier.

The Old Age Pensions Bill, introduced by the Premier, provides that the amount of the pension shall be increased to 10s a week, and that it shall be diminished by £1 for every complete pound of income shown above £26, and also by £1 for every complete £10 of the net capital value of all accumulated property.



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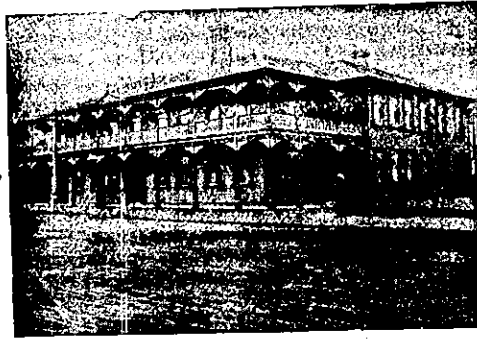
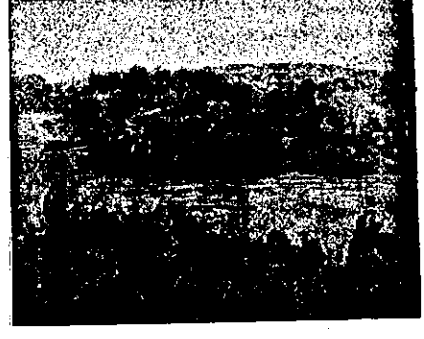
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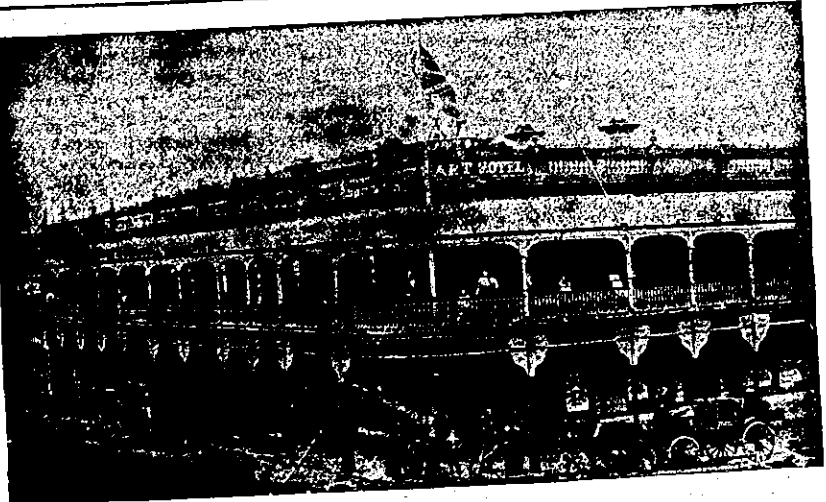
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