

RECEPTION AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

BRILLIANT VICE-REGAL FUNCTION.

Every thoughtful person must fully understand and warmly sympathise with the motives which inspired the Governor and the Countess of Ranfurly in substituting an evening reception for the large ball they usually give during their stay in Auckland. Though we all rejoice—and properly—over the splendid victories gained by our troops under Lord Roberts and other brave leaders, we also think of the many homes to which the war has brought sorrow and desolation, and all must have felt that a semi-State ball—such as Government House balls are—would have been just at the present time somewhat unsympathetic and slightly out of place. Such was evidently the feeling of Lord and Lady Ranfurly, and it was, as we have said, thoroughly appreciated in Auckland. The reception last week, though necessarily of a somewhat staid and formal character, must be pronounced a brilliant social success, and was perhaps the most numerous attended of any evening function ever given at Government House. It has been stated that some 750 invitations were issued, and so far as it is possible to judge of numbers in suites of rooms, it would certainly seem as if few indeed of the invited had been prevented from accepting the hospitality of the Earl and Countess. Shortly before half-past nine—for which hour the guests were bidden—the carriages began to roll past the Government House lodge at a few minutes to the half-hour the line extended right down to St. Andrew's Church on the one side, and far up Princes-street on the other. Owing, however, to the excellence of the arrangements with regard to carriages, there was little delay, the "line" moving forward briskly, each carriage, after depositing its occupants, driving off by the Symonds-street egress. The guests, after relinquishing their wraps, moved along the broad corridor to the central hall, which, under the present regime, has been turned into another reception room, and were here received by the Countess of Ranfurly, His Excellency the Governor and Lady Constance Knox. The Hon. Hill Trevor, A.D.C., announced the names of the guests. The Countess of Ranfurly looked exceedingly handsome in a rich black satin trained robe, with encrustations of chenille embroidery. A coronet of diamonds completed this handsome toilette. Lady Constance Knox was prettily frocked in white silk and lace. Miss Richmond wore a lovely white silk, with a floral design of pink roses and trimmed with myosotis blue, a lover's knot in her coiffure. The Governor was in ordinary evening dress, but wore the decorations of several of the orders with which he is invested, namely, the K.C.M.G., the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and the Queen's Jubilee medal.

The guests having paid their "devoirs," passed into one or other of the drawing rooms, and thence back into the corridors, the crush being everywhere somewhat prejudicial to getting a really comprehensive view of the gathering. The dining room, which had also been turned into a reception room for the nonce, was equally well filled, and the whole had been arranged with the idea of affording the maximum of open space without entirely destroying the usual pretty effect of the various rooms. The Countess of Ranfurly has made for herself a reputation for excellent taste in the matter of decoration and internal arrangements, unequalled in the annals of Government House, and last evening that reputation was fully upheld. The drawing rooms, with palms, casels, pictures, flowers, bric-a-brac and curios, looked exceedingly pretty, an effect not easy to obtain when it is remembered that all the furniture must have had to be rearranged in order to economise space. The dresses worn were, in the main, very handsome, though lacking, of course, the elaborateness and variety of colour to be seen at a Government House dance. The sight was, however, not one to be easily forgotten, more especially in the ballroom, where supper was served shortly after ten o'clock. The tables had been arranged in the form of a St. Andrew's cross, and the room was beautifully festooned with lycopodium, the effect being graceful in the extreme. Looking down from the dais, the picture was indeed very striking, the

novel form of the supper tables being admirably calculated to show off to the fullest advantage the many-hued dresses of the fair sex; the sober attire of the sterner sex being relieved here and there by naval and military uniforms, and the khaki-attired officers of the Countess of Ranfurly's Own. The excellent music of Eady's band, stationed in the music gallery, which was beautifully decorated with pot plants and palms, rose above, but did not drown, the hum of conversation, the "frou frou" of silk, and an occasional ripple of laughter.

The supper itself was of the most elaborate description, and the champagne was "fraped" to exactly the right temperature. In fact, in every particular it was evident the noble host and hostess had thought out every detail that might add to the comfort and enjoyment of their numerous guests. The supper was served in relays, thus avoiding a crush in the room. The Governor took in Mrs. J. Banks (wife of Colonel Banks), the Countess of Ranfurly being escorted by Mr. A. Kidd (Acting-Mayor). The usual rule of Government House—no toast and no speeches—was, on this occasion, broken. In proposing the health of Lord Roberts, which was drunk after that of the Queen, His Excellency said he did not think that night it would be right for them not to drink the health of the most successful general, he believed, England had ever had. He proposed Lord Roberts' health, and expressed the wish, "might he live long." The toast was drunk with enthusiasm, to the strains of "Rule Britannia."

Miss Kelly, florist to His Excellency, is to be complimented on the success with which she carried out the designs of the ballroom decoration submitted by the Countess.

The orchestra (under the conductorship of Mr. A. Eady) occupied the bandstand of the supper-room, and performed the following selections during the evening:—"Fair Melicia," from "Henry VIII.," overture, "Oliver Twist" (Robbs); "The Alabama Patrol" (Stahl); selection, "Sea Song" (Voll); "The Blue Bird" (Wallace); overture, "The Spring Song" (Mendelssohn); overture, "Pirates of San Domingo" (Isenmann); concert piece, "Husaren" (Spindler); selection, "Maidens" (Wallace); overture, "Monsieur Chouffeur" (Offenbach); capriccio, "Fair Vassar" (Tobiani); selection, "La Violette" (Auber); morceau, "L'ender and l'uge" (Mozart); selection, "Highway" (Dr. Korral); paraphrase, "Loreley" (Neradhal); march, "The Tiger" (Gleed).

THE DRESSES.

Admirable taste was the characteristic of most of the ladies' dresses; eyesores were very few and far between—a somewhat rare state of things as such a vast assemblage. Owing to the crush it was absolutely impossible to gain any clear idea of the many pretty dresses worn. We only managed to see about half who were present. The Countess of Ranfurly was very much admired in a handsome dress of black satin, richly embroidered with chenille and choux of chenille at back, diamond brooches and pendants on corsage, the shoulder straps were of black velvet, the decolletage was cut round, and the costume was en traine; black tiara in coiffure, studded with diamonds. Lady Constance Knox looked charming in a white Irish poplin silk, with transparent yoke veiled in lace; white sash; string of pearls round throat. Miss Richmond was attired in a white pompadour silk, with pink floral design, and trimmed with turquoise blue. His Excellency wore evening dress, with the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and the Queen's Jubilee medal. Mrs. Atkinson, black satin, finished with white lace applique; Miss Atkinson, pale green satin, with sash and streamers, relieved with white lace and pink roses; Miss Aubrey, bright rose silk of the Chinese peonies colour, the bodice was made with tucks, and the decolletage was finished with folded check of white and pink silk, the waist was swathed with check sash and finished with streamers at the back; Mrs. (Colonel) Banks, very handsome white satin veiled in black Spanish lace; Mrs. Baldwin, black silk veiled in chenille net; Miss Brigham looked daintily in ivory silk finished with salmon pink flowers on decolletage; Mrs. L. Benjamin, black brocaded satin with jet finishings; Miss Biss looked distingue in a white silk with a profusion of billowy lace, and scarlet flower on shoulder, white ornament in coiffure; Mrs. Harry Read Bloomfield wore a prettily costume of white outline, the decolletage was swathed with folded bella donna pink velvet; Mrs. Lucas Read Bloomfield, black silk veiled in black lace, decolletage outlined with pink tulle and flowers; Mrs. George Read Bloomfield, white brocaded silk encrusted with lace; Mrs. Rosewater, black silk, with

white let in front, pink opera cape; Miss Rosewater looked chic in white silk with bead trimming and pink flowers on decolletage, white ostrich aigrette in coiffure; Mrs. Brabant, black silk with violet silk vest and panel veiled in black net; Mrs. Brigham, black velvet; Miss Brett, pretty canary silk with violets on corsage, and finished with white bebe ribbon; Mrs. Alfred Buckland, black silk, finished with lace; Miss Phoebe Buckland, very striking black costume, the bodice was veiled in white lace applique, the skirt was trimmed with the same lace applique; Mrs. C. F. Buddie, Italian brocade finished at corsage with chiffon, and relieved with spray of anemyllis red flowers; Miss Ivy Buddie, navy blue velvet profusely trimmed with iridescent passementerie; Mrs. Bedford, black silk, relieved with pink at neck; Miss Wyld-Brown, pink silk, finished with pink tulle, pink flower in coiffure; Mrs. Creagh, black silk, relieved with black lace; Miss Creagh, white silk, with edgings of white fur; Mrs. William Coleman, very handsome chrysantha columbine yellow brocade finished with lace; Mrs. L. Corbett, black costume, relieved with scarlet flowers; scarlet flowers in coiffure; Mrs. Chamberlain looked extremely well in mauve brocade; Miss Conolly, pretty blue satin, finished with lace encrustations, the bodice was tucked and finished on shoulder with pink roses; Mrs. Hugh Campbell, black silk veiled in net with silver encrustations; Mrs. J. Campbell, pink brocaded silk finished with lace; Mrs. Caro, black silk, relieved with pink shirred tulle; Mrs. Caro, white silk, finished with scarlet flowers at corsage; Mrs. R. Anthony-Carr, black costume, finished with white; Miss Nora Carr, the palest of lettuce green silks; Mrs. J. M. Chambers, dome blue brocade, handsomely finished with lace and yellow chrysanthemums on each shoulder; Mrs. Cheeseman, electric green costume, trimmed with black lace; Miss Coates, white silk, finished with violets on decolletage; Mrs. R. Coates, black silk, relieved with pink; Miss Cuff, white; Mrs. W. H. Colbeck, white silk; Miss Cooper, Italian silk; Mrs. Dacre, black lace over electric blue silk; Miss Dacre, white silk, with ostrich plumes on decolletage, white ostrich tips in coiffure; Mrs. Daveney, black; Mrs. Moss Davis, oyster grey brocade trimmed with bead passementerie; Misses Moss Davis (3) were studies in white; Miss May Dawson, white trained silk; Mrs. Devereux, black, finished with white applique; Miss Devereux, canary brocade polonaise over white silk and pleated white tulle; Mrs. Dudley, black silk with fichu of white lace; Miss Dudley, white silk; Mrs. W. Duffau, black silk relieved with pink; Mrs. Draper wore a white silk; Mrs. (Col.) Dawson, brown plaid silk with velvet trimmings; Miss Donald, lemon-coloured silk trimmed with violets; Mrs. (Dr.) Erson, black velvet; Miss Firth, blue and white miterale striped silk, the bodice was finished with black; Mrs. A. P. Friend, white silk, finished with sash; Miss Frosham, black; Mrs. Thorne George, new shade of heliotrope brocade, finished with soft tulle trimmings; Miss Thorne George, sweet pea pink silk, en traine; Mrs. Nelson George, purple silk veiled in black; Mrs. Gillies, Sultan red silk, finished with white lace; Miss Gillies wore a bright pink satin with panel of white in front of skirt; her sister wore a salmon pink silk veiled in white lace; Mrs. Gorrie, black; Miss Mary Gorrie, pink silk; Mrs. H. T. Gorrie, white silk, finished with lace; Miss Blanche Gorrie looked well in a white surah; Miss Griffiths (Sydney), white silk with turquoise blue velvet at waist and corsage; Mrs. Goodall, black velvet; Mrs. Goodhue, claret silk skirt, claret velvet bodice; Miss Gill, white silk; Mrs. Glenlynn, black; Mrs. T. Hutchison, black lace; Miss Hutchison, new grenat silk; Mrs. R. R. Hunt, pretty columbine pink silk; Miss Huallin, black; Mrs. J. B. Day, black silk; Miss Hay wore white; Mrs. J. C. Hardie, black costume trimmed with royal blue and finished with iridescent beads; Miss Hesketh, white silk, finished with lace and flowers; Mrs. J. L. Hanna, black; Miss Hanua, pink; Mrs. Hansen, rich black Louis velvet en costume, finished with point lace; Mrs. Heather, very striking white satin veiled in black plaid grenadine polonaise, finished with fringe, the costume was en traine; Mrs. Holland, black silk; Miss Holland, canary silk; her sister wore white; Mrs. Hooper, black silk, finished with white lace applique; Miss Hooper, pretty combination of black and white; Misses Horne (2) were studies in black; Miss Howard, pink silk; Miss Hull looked

pretty as a debutante in white silk, and carried a lovely bouquet of white flowers; Mrs. Hamner, black; Mrs. Innes, black velvet; Miss Innes, white; Miss Edith Innes, dainty rose coral pink silk; Mrs. Fred Ireland, black silk; Misses Ireland (2), studies in white pompadour silk; Mrs. Keating, grey silk; Miss Keating, canary silk, with drapery round hips, of white silk and white decolletage; her sister wore bright dome blue veiled in black lace; Mr. Harry Keating, white silk, finished with pink roses; Mrs. Keating, black; Miss Keogh, white; Miss Kinsling, pale green; her sister wore white; Mrs. (Dr.) King, black; Mrs. (Dr.) Laine, white silk; Miss Lennox, white silk, finished with blue; Mrs. Howie Lewis, canary brocade; Mrs. (Dr.) de Glive-Lowe, black lace; Miss Luak, pink and yellow shot silk; Mrs. Lusher, white; Mrs. Lyons, handsome English costume of bright pink silk, with autumn leaves and berries on corsage; Miss Fenton, pink; Mrs. Mahoney, bright costume of poppy red and white; Mrs. Marshall, white silk; Mrs. Masfield, black, costume encrusted with silver sequins; Madame de Montalk, black silk; Miss de Montalk, pink Liberty silk; Mrs. R. de Montalk, black velvet, relieved with white; Mrs. Thomas Morrin, black lace costume; Miss Morrin, white silk, finished with violets at corsage; Mrs. Morris, very striking mauve silk with bands of cream silk fringe running horizontally round skirt, which was en traine, white panel of lace down the front of skirt, the bodice was finished with this fringe and large wreath of salmon pink flowers on shoulder; Mrs. Morrow, very handsome fragilis black brocade; Miss Morrow, white silk with ostrich feathers; Miss Moss, white; Miss Mowray, black; Miss Murray, white pompadour silk; Mrs. Len Myer, white satin with fox fur; Misses Myers (2), were studies in white; Mrs. Markham, light coloured evening costume; Mrs. H. R. Morton, black velvet costume, with butterfly on decolletage; Miss Morton, blue silk; Mrs. McCormick, white silk, with silver threaded net over all; Miss McCormick, white silk; Mrs. Alfred Nathan, black, relieved with pink; Miss Julia Nathan, white silk; Mrs. Nelson, black velvet; Miss Nelson, pink silk; Mrs. Nichol, black velvet; Misses O'Neill (2), were studies in columbine blue silk, with silver passementerie; Miss O'Neill, white silk; Mrs. C. J. Parr, black kilted chiffon over robe of gaipure, with applique of palest yellow panne outlined in gold sequins, drapery round corsage of gold threaded lace; Mrs. Froy of Peacocke, grey silk finished with black lace; Miss Peacocke looked well as a debutante in white silk; Misses Peacocke (2), Pansonby, were studies in pink; Mrs. Porevial, bright pink silk, with decolletage and cuffs were relieved with pink diapane; Miss Pierce, blue; Miss Price, white silk; Mrs. Louisa Pitt, black; Miss G. Purchus, black silk, finished with green; Mrs. Rathbone, beautiful ivory brocade, en traine, with bead trimming, the decolletage was finished with soft white chiffon; Mrs. (Dr.) Stuart-Reid, a combination of black and turquoise blue; Mrs. Rice, black, and her daughters (2) wore white; Mrs. Rich, grey silk with pink fobbed velvet on corsage; Miss Rich, black silk; Mrs. Richardson, grey silk trimmed with silver passementerie; Miss Richardson, lovely pink silk; Mrs. J. Roach, very elegant tanney costume of lemon coloured silk, made in tunic style, the decolletage was encrusted with pearls, the underskirt was finished with bands of white; Mrs. Roberts, black lace; Mrs. Robertson, white silk; Mrs. Runciman, black silk; Miss Runciman, white; Mrs. Edward Russell, white lace costume; Mrs. James Russell, black silk; Misses Russell (2), wore very handsome white silks, with lace finishings; Miss Rooke, sky blue silk, en traine; Miss Savage, white; Mrs. Segar, black Louis velvet en costume; Mrs. Dillingham, black, finished with blue; Mrs. Shepherd, black, and her daughter, a debutante, wore white; Mrs. Shepherd, black and white striped costume; Mrs. Smith, black; Miss Smith, black, relieved with white; Mrs. J. M. Shera, cream flowered brocade; Mrs. Von Sturmer, buttercup silk trimmed with violets; Miss Von Sturmer, white; Mrs. Chinnery-Suggate, black relieved with pink; Mrs. H. Stebbing, white silk; Miss Sage, grey costume; Mrs. Seegner, scarlet silk; Mrs. Archdate Taylor, black skirt, canary lace blouse; Mrs. Kerr-Taylor, white satin with gold ornaments; Misses Kerr-Taylor, white silk; Mrs. Tewsley, very beautiful costume of the new Svens-green brocade; Mrs. Tibbs, chrysanthemum coloured pink silk; Mrs. Tims, black empire costume; Mrs. Phillips-Turner, pink