

WELLINGTON.

(From our own Correspondent.)

June 25, 1892.

THERE is a great peal of excitement here amongst the Prohibitionist party in consequence of the action of the Government in withdrawing its veto on the sale of drink in the King Country. It appears that years ago the Government of the day issued a proclamation, at the express wish of Wakanui and other prominent chiefs, that no sale of intoxicating drinks should be permitted within the King Country. It is a well-known fact that at Rotorua and other places where hotels abound the Native race become regular slaves to drink, and bring ruin and degradation on themselves and their families. Now, the petition against the sale of drink some years ago, on which the proclamation of the Government was based, was signed by 1400 persons. Lately, however, a petition, signed by all the chiefs who signed the former one, and about 30 other persons, was presented to the Native Minister, requesting that the veto might be taken off an acre of land at Otoranga, on which is situated an accommodation house, which the petitioners pray may be licensed. They contend that this is necessary for the convenience of tourists and others, who will be induced to visit the district if sufficient accommodation is provided. The Government accorded to the request of the chiefs, and gave the required permission. *Hinc ille lacryma.* A deputation waited on the Premier during the week in order to urge the Government against granting them permission, and although the deputationists had reason and logic on their side, I very much fear that, although the Premier was exceedingly courteous, the granting of a license and opening of a hotel in the district will be a *fait accompli* in a short time. It was pointed out at the time that the leading chiefs are anxious to bring about the change because it will tend to increase the value of the land, and also that the majority of the people were opposed to the establishment of a hotel in the place. Still the chiefs wielded so much power that the plebs dare not disobey, and the Government, in order to secure the support of the former, sacrifice their conscience on the altar of expediency.

There is a little bitch between the Ministry and the Governor. The trouble is about the number of members to be called to the Upper Chamber. The Government want a goodly number, and the Governor will not budge. Although I do not believe much in the custom of swamping any House of nominees of the Government of the day, yet I think that it will not tend to make us any more loyal in this colony to find that the wishes of the people may be set at naught by the action of a gentleman whose acquaintance with the ways of popular legislation is of the flimsiest nature. Lord Glasgow has had little or no experience in politics at Home; he has been an officer in the Navy some twenty years ago, when the lives and liberty of every individual, save the officers on board a man-o'-war, was in the hands of the commander. Bad training that for a democratic colony. Perhaps the Government are only too glad of the objection, as it relieves them from the unpleasant position of having to ignore the claims of their most devoted, although somewhat indiscreet, friends amongst the working classes. Of course, if the "Lord's" reject the Bills sent up—especially those of a vital character—and the Governor still persists in his objection to increasing the members of the Council, then the Government will have no option but to appeal to the country. I would not be at all surprised from present appearances that we have a general election before the winter is over.

Parliament opened on Thursday: The day is rarely propitious but it turned out a very nice afternoon and, consequently the fashion and *deletante* of Wellington turned out in their hundreds to witness the ceremony. Long before the hour (2.30 p.m.) the narrow galleries of the Legislative Chamber were packed like sardines in a tin with the fair sex of this city. A public function such as this has a very democratic effect on the community, for all sense of superior position in society is lost in the race for preference, and it only resolves itself into a contest of the survival of the fittest. Dainty ladies, buxom maids, aristocratic dames, tradesmen's wives, ministers' better halves, and sinners' partners elbowed and scrambled for position in a promiscuous and motley crowd. About a dozen old, and some of them very sleeping-looking, bald headed old gentlemen occupy the high-backed seats. These, my informant in the Press gallery tells me, are the councillors. I look with awe on those venerable props of the constitution. Conservative they are in most cases, did you say? Yes. What else could you expect? Why, the very air of the Chamber is enough to influence the most outlandish Radical in a couple of years and turn him into a Tory of the old school. Lady Glasgow comes in leaning on the arm of Sir Harry Atkinson, the Speaker; not the Harry Atkinson that I knew years ago as Premier of the Colony, the fighting leader of the Opposition, or the defier of an organised, howling mob at an election meeting. A bell rings, guns are fired, all is expectation and curiosity when a fierce-looking soldier stalks in and in a stentorian voice, which frightens the ladies out of a year's growth, says, "Make way for His Excellency the Governor," and immediately after there enters the central personage in the drama.

Lord Glasgow, grey-bearded, tall, erect, dignified, dressed in the uniform of a captain in H.M. Navy, bedecked and bejewelled, bowing in a most courtly fashion to the right and left in the most approved style as if he had spent a lifetime at the profession of Governor. After him come half a dozen consuls, some in uniform, some wearing medals, then some ladies and gentlemen of the vice-regal household who are accommodated with seats near the Speaker's chair. After a short delay the "faithful Commons" are summoned and immediately troop in like a flock of sheep following their leader, the leader being in this case the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Speaker bows and takes a seat in the centre of the Chamber, the sergeant of the House stands on his left with the mace—an unwieldy-looking, club-like affair—on his shoulders. The Ministers and Members of the House stand whilst the address is being read. Lord Glasgow reads in a clear, distinct, and matter-of-fact style, which can be heard all over the Chamber. The address is long, but contains nothing very original or alarmingly revolutionary. The reading is finished, some of the Members of the Legislative Council who have been dozing suddenly wake up, the Members on the floor of the House make a lane, and as His Excellency passes through he hands the Speaker the address, and the function is over. The M.H.E.'s troop off to their Chamber, so do the Press men and the general public, or at least as many of them as can get in. The Speaker takes the chair, and after some preliminary business he reads communications which he has viewed during the recess, among others being a reply from the Russian Government to an address presented from the House of Representatives last year, against the persecution of the Jews. The reply is in French; it is as brief as such a document could be; it is as offensive, it is as brutal in its curtness. "We do not permit strangers, sir, to meddle in the affairs of Central Russia." Such is it in a nutshell. Then compliments are interchanged, the dead are regretted, the reports of returning officers from electoral districts where elections have taken place during the recess, are considered. Messrs McLean, Sandford and Lane take the oaths, shake hands with the speaker and go back to their seats. Then petitions and notices of motion come like falling leaves in autumn time. The first man in the House is the erstwhile Member for Sydenham. His white locks and white hat and black band are land marks, which the House would, sadly miss. His hat is before him; it is full of papers. He is nearly the first to catch the speaker's eye. "Taylor," says the Major, "I have a petition, sir, from Mrs — a widow." He wants to present another, but the Speaker will have only one at a time. Then comes another petition from another widow, and after a while another, and still another, until the House becomes amused at the rôle of patron of the widow and orphan which Mr R. M. Taylor assumes. But before he gets to the end of the little list of petition, he gives notice of motion. Then he will ask the Government to appoint some competent persons to examine the pupils attending Roman Catholic schools so that they may be placed on the same equality with the boys attending the Government institutions when applying for positions in the Civil Service. Then question and petition and notice of motion follow each other in quick succession until the adjournment hour comes, when the members retire to prepare for the banquet to the Colonial Secretary.

The banquet to the Colonial Secretary, Sir Patrick Buckley, on Thursday evening was one of the most successful of its kind held here for some time. There were pretty close on 200 persons present—men differing in creed, nationality and political feeling, either testified by speech or by their presence to the great respect in which the genial leader of the Government in the Upper House is held by all kinds and conditions of men. In consequence of the death of Lady Bell, the Mayor was unavoidably absent, his place being filled by Mr McCarthy, chairman of the Manawatu Railway Company, the vice-chairs being filled by Captain Baldwin and Mr M. Kennedy. The speeches were limited in number by arrangement, and were principally devoted to recounting the many good works with which Sir Patrick was connected during his residence of many years in Wellington. Apologies for absence were received from several persons, and a telegram from Mr H. J. Finn, of Gisborne, asking to be permitted on behalf of the Franco-Belgians to join in doing honour to Sir Patrick, late of the famous Irish Brigade. Sir Patrick fought at Castledardo and Ancona, and was the first of his company at the latter place to mount its ramparts. Amongst those present were His Grace the Archbishop, Captain Bourke (Ringarooma) and Major Seaward.

The Very Rev Father Devoy was sworn in at St Mary's Cathedral on Sunday last as Vicar-General of the diocese.

A mission for children was commenced in the Buckle street church on last Sunday, and will conclude to-morrow. Addresses were delivered every evening during the week, and the attendance was very good. His Grace the Archbishop will preach at the closing services to-morrow.

A preliminary meeting was held during the week for the purpose of making arrangements for a general diocesan meeting on 6th July, to take into consideration the best means of procuring sufficient funds for enlarging the cathedral, and making it more worthy of such a large and important archdiocese as Wellington. It is intended to