

ladder. The Friar Laurence of Mr Keogh was a most creditable performance, his make up being so genuine as to deceive many as to his identity. Mr. Steele as Mercutio looked the character to the life, and in the scene where he imitates Peter's attentions to Juliet's nurse was warmly applauded. The other characters call for no especial mention, if we except Mr. Musgrave, whose grotesque attitudes were provocative of much merriment.

On Tuesday evening Mr. and Mrs. Darrell appeared as Pauline and Claud in Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons," a piece in which it was expected both would show to much advantage. Mrs. Darrell's impersonation of the haughty and imperious beauty was a finished piece of acting throughout, her love for the Prince being depicted with a winning grace and tenderness as bewitching as her storm of invective was scathing on discovering her betrayer's duplicity. The character has been undertaken by other ladies at the same theatre on recent occasions, but, judged by comparison, Mrs. Darrell's conception and rendering of the vain but true-hearted Pauline was unmeasurably superior to those who have preceded her. Of Mr. Darrell we are unable to speak in the like unmeasured terms of commendation, for although in many parts he exhibited abilities of the highest class, at times he was faulty, and his performance as a whole was not such as we had given him credit for after witnessing his performance on the opening night. Were we asked to point out one particular part to which we take exception, it is more than possible that we would be unable to do so, and our reply should be that the defects were those rather of omission than commission. One cannot see Mr. Darrell on the stage without becoming sensible that he is possessed of high histrionic abilities; but, paradoxically, his Claude Melnotte of Tuesday evening, while serving to confirm that idea, also left the impression that a something was wanting to make it a success. The beautiful description of the Palace of Como, which Bulwer puts into the mouth of the hero, was delivered in a manner which should more atone for the shortcomings to which we have alluded. Low, distinct, and telling every syllable of this magnificent piece of word-painting fell upon the ears of the audience with an effect which was observable in the breathless silence with which it was received. It may be that in the remarks we have made we may be deemed hypercritical, but we disclaim all intention to be so. Mr. Darrell has many, very many excellencies, but he has also some defects, and as those defects in a great measure lie within his power of correction, we deem it our duty to point to them. It is always more pleasing to bestow praise than censure, and in writing of both Mr. and Mrs. Darrell, the balance of labor is sure to lie on the pleasurable side.

"Leah, the Forsaken" was the piece selected for presentation on Wednesday, and although the same play has been produced during the engagement of Mr. Hoskins, the cast was materially different on the two occasions. The Nathan of Mr. Booth was far preferable to that of Mr. Clinton; Mr. Saville was a bad substitute for Mr. Hoskins as the doctor; and the selection of Mr. Huntley for Mr. Keogh, as the old blind Jew, was anything but an improvement. The Leah of Mrs. Darrell is decidedly the character in which she has appeared to most advantage, the scene in the fourth act in which she hurls maledictions on the head of Rudolph being given with an intensity and awe-inspiring vigor which causes a thrill of horror to pervade those who witness it. Mr. Darrell's Rudolph is infinitely superior to his Claude Melnotte, but we feel sure that he has not been seen at his best yet. It has been announced that through the entire engagement no piece will be produced a second time. This, while giving the public plenty of opportunity of judging of the versatility of Mr. and Mrs. Darrell, must be a great strain on the other members of the company, and should be a weighty reason why any shortcomings on their part should be very leniently dealt with.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

WELLINGTON, July 20.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR opened Parliament at 2 o'clock to-day, with the usual ceremonies.

The following is his inaugural speech:—

"HONOURABLE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

"I have great pleasure in now, for the first time, meeting the Parliament of New Zealand; and I trust that your deliberations during the present session may tend to advance the well-being and good government of the Colony.

"Since my assumption of the government, I have visited the four great centres of population, and have become personally acquainted with some portions of the Middle Island; and I must congratulate you upon the great energy which has been evidenced, and the rapid strides which have been made towards the development of the resources of this rich and fertile country. The reception which I have everywhere received as Her Majesty's Representative has been most cordial. I observed with the utmost satisfaction the progress which is being made in the construction of those great public works which have been undertaken by the Government under your authority, and I trust the time is not far distant when the industry of the country will receive a fresh impetus by their completion.

"The debt incurred in the formation of railways has indeed been large, but, at the same time, the returns received from those sections already opened are very encouraging, and tend greatly to prove the wisdom of the policy adopted by you.

"Our relations with that section of the native people of the Colony which has been so long estranged from us continue to improve. The recent meeting of Tawhiao with the Native Minister—a meeting sought for and arranged by Tawhiao himself—gives promise that the isolation in which the immediate adherents of the Maori King have hitherto held themselves is about to terminate. The renewed desire of the natives to provide an English education for their children, as

shown by the large increase in the number of schools in native districts, and the general resumption of industrial pursuits give assurance of the maintenance of peace, and of a desire on their part to participate with the European colonists in the general prosperity.

"A communication has been received by telegraph, intimating that a new contract for a steam mail service to and from San Francisco has been made by Sir Daniel Cooper, as representing the Government of New South Wales, and Mr. Russell, as representing the Government of New Zealand, subject to ratification by the Legislatures of the respective Colonies. The contract and papers will be laid before you when received.

"You will be gratified to learn that a contract has been made by Sir Julius Vogel, acting on behalf of this Government, for the laying of a telegraph cable between New South Wales and New Zealand upon terms much more advantageous than were believed, to be attainable when the undertaking was first authorised, and that the Government of New South Wales has become a party to the contract, and has agreed to contribute one-third (£2,500) of the annual subsidy (£7,500).

"GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

"Estimates of expenditure for the current financial year will be laid before you. Whilst providing for the requirements of the public service, these Estimates have been so framed as to secure the utmost economy found to be consistent with the complete efficiency of the several departments.

"The Immigration and Public Works Loan of four millions, authorised by Act in the last session, has been successfully negotiated. The papers relating to this operation will be laid before you without delay.

"It will afford you satisfaction to be informed that the public revenue continues to increase, and that the actual receipts for the past financial year have been considerably in excess of the official estimate.

"HONOURABLE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

"In accordance with the resolutions adopted by the House of Representatives in the last session, the necessary measures for the abolition of the Provincial form of Government, and for the establishment of a more thorough form of local government in this the North Island, have been prepared, and will be immediately laid before you. You will be invited to decide whether, taking the circumstances of the Colony into consideration, as well as the present financial condition and future prospects of some of the Provincial Governments in the Middle Island, the operation of the proposed measures may not at once, with general advantage, be so extended as to include the whole of the Provinces.

"In view of the proposed Constitutional changes, and of the approaching termination of the existence of the present Parliament, readjustment of the representation of the people to meet the altered circumstances of the electoral divisions has become necessary. Bills will accordingly be submitted for your consideration amending the law relative to the qualification of electors, and for a readjustment of the representation.

"A bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to stamp duties, and a bill to amend the laws relating to insolvency, will also be laid before you.

"I confide to your earnest attention these and other measures to be brought before, in the hope that the Divine Wisdom will guide your efforts faithfully to discharge your onerous duties."—
"Guardian."

CARDINAL CULLEN AND MR. GLADSTONE.

I CLIP the enclosed from a recent Pastoral of Cardinal Cullen. The sentiments it so well expresses have long been familiar to my mind. It is to be hoped every devout Catholic subject of the Queen will act on the Cardinal's suggestion and send up frequent prayers to God for Mr. Gladstone's conversion. Our religious and the priesthood in particular may well remember him specially in their prayers. I for one should not in the least be surprised to see him enter the Church ere he die. He is a most likely subject: "All that I can say is, that gratitude for past services should make us pray to God to open the eyes of this great statesman to make him understand the depth of the abyss into which he has fallen, to enable him to retrace his steps, and to give him grace and courage to make reparation for the unjust and unmerited charges he has been induced to make against the Church and its superior pastor. God must surely have important purposes yet to serve with so good and sincere a Christian and so great a statesman. He must now see that, in opposing the Catholic Church, he is kicking against the good, and had better desist."

L.A.O.

THE COMING COLONIAL EDUCATION BILL.

It will be news to many that the General Government, as you say in your last issue, intend to give the Colony a new Education Bill, in which the claims of denominational schools to Government aid are to be recognised. You add that you have no faith in the honesty of the General Government in this matter. I like not that word. The present General Government is just as honest as any of its predecessors. It is not the Government but the constituency who are to blame for the existence of the present system of godless public education. A popular Government like ours seldom or never acts on the principle of abstract justice, or the eternal fitness of things. They live on popularity. If they have it not, they die. Whatever a popular majority wills the Government will do, be it a good thing or a bad thing in itself. The people of England have a natural dislike to a purely secular education, and to education rates. The consequence is the British Parliament gives a hearty support to religious schools, though to meet the wishes of many they have also established "Board