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*Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, on Thursday, December 3, 1857.*

*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

Circumstances have recently arisen connected with the Commercial Interests of the Country, which have induced Me to call Parliament together before the usual time.

The failure of certain Joint-stock Banks and of some Commercial Firms produced such an extent of distrust as led Me to authorise My Ministers to recommend to the Directors of the Bank of England the adoption of a course of proceeding which appeared necessary for allaying the prevalent alarm. As that course has involved a departure from the existing law, a bill for indemnifying those who advised, and those who adopted it, will be submitted for your consideration.

I have observed with great regret that the disturbed state of commercial transactions in general has occasioned a diminution of employment in the manufacturing districts, which, I fear, cannot fail to be attended with much local distress. I trust, however, that this evil may not be of long duration; and the abundant harvest with which it has graciously pleased Divine Providence to bless this land will, I hope, in some degree mitigate the sufferings which this state of things must unavoidably produce.

While I deeply deplore the severe suffering to which many of My subjects in India have been exposed, and while I grieve for the extensive bereavements and sorrow which it has caused, I have derived the greatest satisfaction from the distinguished successes which have attended the heroic exertions of the comparatively small forces which have been opposed to greatly superior numbers, without the aid of the powerful reinforcements despatched from this Country to their assistance.

The arrival of those reinforcements will, I trust, speedily complete the suppression of this widely spread revolt.

The gallantry of the troops employed against the mutineers, their courage in action, their endurance under privation, fatigue, and the effects of climate; the high spirit and self-devotion of the officers, the ability, skill, and persevering energy of the commanders, have excited My warmest admiration; and I have observed with equal gratification that many civilians, placed in extreme difficulty and danger, have displayed the highest qualities,

including, in some instances, those that would do honour to veteran soldiers.

It is satisfactory to know that the general mass of the population of India had taken no part in the rebellion, whilst the most considerable of the Native Princes have acted in the most friendly manner, and have rendered important services.

I have given directions that papers relating to these matters shall be laid before you.

The affairs of My East Indian dominions will require your serious consideration, and I recommend them to your earnest attention.

The Nations of Europe are in the enjoyment of the blessings of peace, which nothing seems likely to disturb.

The stipulations of the Treaty which I concluded with the Shah of Persia have been faithfully carried into execution, and the Persian forces have evacuated the territory of Herat.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

I have given directions that the Estimates for the next year shall be prepared, for the purpose of being laid before you. They will be framed with a careful regard to the exigencies of the Public Service.

*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

Your attention will be called to the laws which regulate the Representation of the People in Parliament, with a view to consider what amendments may be safely and beneficially made therein.

Measures will be submitted for your consideration for simplifying and amending the laws relating to Real Property; and also for consolidating and amending several important branches of the Criminal Law.

I confidently commit to your wisdom the great interests of My Empire; and I fervently pray that the blessings of Almighty God may attend your counsels, and may guide your deliberations to those ends which are dearest to My heart,—the happiness and prosperity of My loyal and faithful people.

FOREIGN-OFFICE, November 30, 1857.

The Queen has been pleased to appoint M. Alphonse Marion as French Consul-General at Bathurst.

The Queen has also been pleased to appoint Don Alexandro Pisani as Vice-Consul at Gibraltar for the Mexican Republic.

