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Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners to both Houses of Parliament, on Monday, August 21, 1871.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

THE time has now arrived when I am enabled to release you from your attendance in Parliament, and to commend your unwearied labours for the public good.

I acknowledge with satisfaction the loyal readiness with which you have made provision for my beloved children, Princess Louise and Prince Arthur.

The great events and important changes, which have recently occurred on the Continent of Europe, have not compromised the friendly relations subsisting between the Crown of the United Kingdom and Foreign Powers. Whatever part I may take in those international questions which from time to time may arise, will continue to be taken with no other view than the maintenance of general concord and public right.

The Conference which was sitting in London at the commencement of the Session was joined during its deliberations by a French Plenipotentiary, and it considered and agreed upon a revision of those stipulations of the Treaty of 1856, which concerned the Black Sea and the Bosphorus. I trust that the unanimous decision of the Powers, which has been recorded in a new Treaty, may assist in securing the tranquillity and welfare of the East.

It is with a special satisfaction that I refer on the present occasion to our relations with the United States of America. By the Treaty of Washington, modes of settlement have been fixed for several questions, which had long remained in dispute.

My communications with the American Government have not been without the promise of advantage to other countries. The President has concurred with me in an application of that principle of amicable reference which was proclaimed by the Treaty of Paris, and which I rejoiced to have had an opportunity of recommending by example. And we have also agreed in the adoption of certain rules for guiding the maritime conduct of neutrals which may I trust ere long obtain general recognition and form a valuable addition to the code of International Law.

I place full reliance upon the disposition of the American Government to carry forward with cordiality and zeal the subsidiary arrangements which have been determined on for the execution of the Treaty.

I shall apprise the Parliament of Canada that the provisions which require its consent are, in my view, highly conducive to the interests of the Dominion. On these provisions, however, that Parliament will pass an independent and final judgment.

The Government of France has signified its desire to alter some of the provisions of the Commercial Treaty of 1860, which is now terminable, upon a notice of twelve months, by either of the Contracting States. I am anxious to meet the wishes of a friendly Power, and to give scope for any measures calculated to meet its fiscal exigencies; but I should witness with concern any change of a nature to restrict that commercial intercourse between the two countries which has done so much for their closer union.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I thank you for the liberal supplies which, under the circumstances of the year, I directed my Government to ask from you; and for the sum of money you have voted in order to meet the charge of the compensations required by the abolition of Purchase in the Army.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I observe with concern that you have not been able to bring to a definitive issue the treatment of some of the subjects which were recommended to you in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Session.

But several important laws have been added to the Statute Book.

By the Army Regulation Bill you have made a liberal provision for the Officers of the Army, who will no longer be permitted on retirement to sell their commissions to their successors, and by transferring to the Executive Government powers in respect to the Auxiliary Forces, which have hitherto been vested in the Lords Lieutenants of Counties, you have laid the foundation for measures calculated to effect a closer union among the various Land Forces of the Kingdom.

The Act by which, after a full examination of the facts, you conferred extraordinary powers on the Viceroy of Ireland for the repression of agrarian outrage in Westmeath, has thus far answered its purpose. Elsewhere in that portion of the United Kingdom there is a gratifying immunity from crime, and agriculture and trade are prosperous.

By the measures relating to University Tests, to the repeal of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, and to the laws which affect Trades Unions, you have