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Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners to both Houses of Parliament, on Friday, August 13, 1875.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I AM happy to be enabled to release you from your attendance in Parliament.

The relations between myself and all foreign powers continue to be cordial, and I look forward with hope and confidence to the uninterrupted maintenance of European peace.

The visit paid to this country, on the invitation of my Government, by the Ruler of Zanzibar, has led to the conclusion of a supplementary convention, which, I trust, may be efficacious for the more complete suppression of East African slave trade.

I have learnt with deep regret that the expedition despatched by my Indian Government from Burmah, with a view to open communications with the Western Provinces of China, has been treacherously attacked by an armed force while on Chinese territory. This outrage, unhappily involving the death of a young and promising member of my Consular Service, is the subject of careful inquiry; and no effort shall be spared to secure the punishment of those by whom it was instigated and committed.

The condition of my Colonial Empire is generally prosperous. Progress has been made in the settlement of questions affecting the Constitution and Government of Natal, and I confidently look for important and valuable results from the proposal for a conference of the South African Colonies and States.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I thank you for the liberal supplies which you have voted for the Public Service.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

It is gratifying to me to find that the lengthened consideration you have given to the various statutes which have, from time to time, been passed for the preservation of peace in Ireland has resulted in a measure which, while relaxing the stringency of former enactments, is calculated to maintain the tranquillity of that country.

I have, with pleasure, given my assent to an Act for facilitating the Improvement of the Dwellings of the Working Classes in large towns, which will, I trust, lead to the decrease of many of

the principal causes of disease, misery, and crime. I feel sure that this legislation, together with that relating to the consolidation and amendment of the Sanitary Laws, and of the Laws relating to Friendly Societies, will greatly promote the moral and physical welfare of my people.

It has afforded me much satisfaction to give my assent to two important statutes for the amendment of the Acts relating to Master and Servant and Trade Offences, and of the Law of Conspiracy as connected with these offences—statutes which will, I trust, place the relations of employers and employed on a just and equal footing, and add to the contentment and good-will of large classes of my subjects.

Among the enactments which you have passed for the improvement of the law, I am well pleased to observe that a comprehensive measure for simplifying the title and facilitating the Transfer of Land in England has taken its place in the Statute Book; that an Act has been passed for the amendment of the Law of Entail in Scotland; and that you have made provision, by amending the Judicature Act of 1873, for bringing the great changes in my Civil Courts, and their procedure which it inaugurated, into immediate and practical effect.

The state of public business and the differences of opinion naturally arising on a varied and comprehensive scheme, have unfortunately prevented you from completing the consideration of the Merchant Shipping Bill, but I rejoice that you have been able, by a temporary enactment, to diminish considerably the dangers to which my seafaring subjects are exposed.

By the Agricultural Holdings Act you have greatly and beneficially enlarged the powers of owners, limited in interest, to offer to their tenants a sufficient security for judicious outlay upon the farms they occupy, and, while maintaining absolute freedom of contract, you have raised a presumption of rights, under which a new inducement will be given to expend capital upon the improvement of land.

I have every reason to hope that the progress of the Revenue which has marked recent years will be fully sustained in the present. The arrangements which you have made with respect to the reduction of the National Debt, and those for the better regulation of Loans for Public Works, will lead to valuable improvements in our system of Imperial and local finance.

The enactment for a Registration of Trade marks will supply a deficiency that has for some time been felt in our commercial system.