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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1857.

Buckingham-Palace, December 3, 1856.

THIS day Her Majesty, accompanied by His Royal Highness The Prince Consort, proceeded in state from Buckingham-Palace to the House of Peers, where she arrived soon after two o'clock; and was received, on alighting from her state coach, by the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Privy Seal, Sir Augustus Clifford, Bart., C.B., Deputy Great Chamberlain (in the absence of the Lord Willoughby de Eresby); and the Treasurer of the Household, Garter King of Arms, and the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, and proceeded to the State Robing-room in the customary manner.

Her Majesty was there robed, and the procession moved into the House in the usual order;—the sword of state was borne by the Earl Granville, K.G., Lord President of the Council, the cap of maintenance by the Marquess of Winchester, and the crown by the Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G.

Her Majesty being seated on the Throne, and His Royal Highness The Prince Consort on a Chair on the left side of the Cloth of Estate, the Great Officers of State and others standing on the right and left, James Pulman, Esq., Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, was sent with a message from Her Majesty to the House of Commons, commanding their immediate attendance in the House of Peers. The Commons being come thither accordingly, Her Majesty was pleased to deliver the following most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament:

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 have taken no part in the rebellion, while 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.