



# The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1868.

*Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners, to both Houses of Parliament, on Friday, July 31, 1868.*

*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

I AM happy to be enabled to release you from your labours, and to offer you my acknowledgments for the diligence with which you have applied yourselves to your Parliamentary duties.

My relations with foreign Powers remain friendly and satisfactory. I have no reason to apprehend that Europe will be exposed to the calamity of war, and my policy will continue to be directed to secure the blessings of peace.

I announced to you at the beginning of this session that I had directed an expedition to be sent to Abyssinia, to liberate my Envoy and others of my subjects detained by the Ruler of that country in an unjust captivity.

I feel sure that you will share in my satisfaction at the complete success which, has attended that expedition. After a march of 400 miles, through a difficult and unexplored country, my troops took the strong place of Magdala, freed the captives, and vindicated the honour of my Crown: and by their immediate return, without one act of oppression or needless violence, proved that the expedition had been undertaken only in obedience to the claims of humanity, and in fulfilment of the highest duties of my Sovereignty.

The cessation of the long-continued efforts to promote rebellion in Ireland has for some time rendered unnecessary the exercise by the executive of exceptional powers. I rejoice to learn that no person is now detained under the provisions of the Act for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, and that no prisoner awaits trial in Ireland for an offence connected with the Fenian conspiracy.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

I have to thank you for the liberal supplies which you have voted for the public service.

*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

I have had much satisfaction in giving my assent to a series of measures completing the great work of the Amendment of the Representation of the People in Parliament, which has engaged your attention for two Sessions.

I have seen with satisfaction that the time necessarily occupied by this comprehensive subject has not prevented you dealing with other questions of great public interest, and I have gladly given my sanction to Bills for the better government of Public Schools, the regulation of railways, the amendment of the Law relating to British Sea Fisheries, and for the acquisition and maintenance of Electric Telegraphs by the Postmaster-General; and to several important measures having for their object the improvement of the Law, and of the Civil and Criminal Procedures in Scotland.

By the appointment of a Comptroller-in-Chief in the War Office a considerable reform in army administration has been commenced, which, by combining at home and abroad the various departments of military supply under one authority, will conduce to greater economy and efficiency both in peace and war.

It is my intention to dissolve the present Parliament at the earliest day that will enable my people to reap the benefit of the extended system of representation which the wisdom of Parliament has provided for them. I look with entire confidence to their proving themselves worthy of the high privilege with which they have thus been invested; and I trust that, under the blessing of Divine Providence, the expression of their opinion on those great questions of public policy which have occupied the attention of Parliament and remain undecided, may tend to maintain unimpaired that civil and religious freedom which has been secured to all my subjects by the institutions and settlement of my realm.

Then a Commission for proroguing the Parliament was read; after which the Lord-Chancellor said:

*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

By virtue of Her Majesty's Commission, under the Great Seal, to us and other Lords directed, and now read, we do, in Her Majesty's name, and in obedience to Her Commands, prorogue this Parliament to Thursday, the eighth day of October next, to be then and there holden; and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Thursday, the eighth day of October next.