

ticular, which concerns the Fisheries, calls for early settlement; lest the possible indiscretion of individuals should impair the neighbourly understanding, which it is on all grounds so desirable to cherish and maintain. I have, therefore, engaged in amicable communication with the President of the United States. In order to determine the most convenient mode of treatment for these matters, I have suggested the appointment of a joint Commission; and I have agreed to a proposal of the President, that this Commission shall be authorised at the same time, and in the same manner, to resume the consideration of the American claims growing out of the circumstances of the late war. This arrangement will, by common consent, include all claims for compensation which have been or may be made by each Government, or by its citizens, upon the other.

The establishment of a Prince of the House of Savoy on the Throne of Spain, by the free choice of the popularly-elected representatives of the Spanish nation will, I trust, insure for a country which has passed with so much temperance and self-control through a prolonged and trying crisis, the blessings of a stable Government.

I am unhappily not able to state that the inquiry which was instituted by the Government of Greece into the history of the shocking murders perpetrated during the last spring at Dilessi has reached a termination answerable in all respects to my just expectations, but I shall not desist from my endeavours to secure the complete attainment of the objects of the inquiry. Some valuable results, however, have in the meantime been obtained, for the exposure and the repression of a lawless and corrupting system, which has too long afflicted the Greek Peninsula.

The anxiety which the massacre at Tien-tsin on the 21st of June last called forth has happily been dispelled; and while it will be my earnest endeavour to provide for the security of my subjects and their trade in those remote quarters, I count on your concurrence in the policy that I have adopted of recognising the Chinese Government as entitled to be dealt with in its relations with this country in a conciliatory and forbearing spirit.

The Parliamentary recess has been one of anxious interest in regard to foreign affairs. But I rejoice to acquaint you that my relations are, as heretofore, those of friendship and good understanding with the Sovereigns and States of the civilized world.

Papers illustrative of the conduct of my Government in relation to the several matters, on which I have now summarily touched, will be duly laid before you.

In turning to domestic affairs, I have first to inform you that I have approved of a Marriage between my daughter Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne, and I have declared my consent to this union in Council.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

The revenue of the country flourishes, and the condition of trade and industry may, though with partial drawbacks, be declared satisfactory.

The estimates for the coming year will be promptly laid before you.

*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

The lessons of military experience afforded by the present war have been numerous and important.

The time appears appropriate for turning such lessons to account by efforts more decisive than

heretofore at practical improvement. In attempting this you will not fail to bear in mind the special features in the position of this country, so favourable to the freedom and security of the people, and if the changes from a less to a more effective and elastic system of defensive military preparation shall be found to involve, at least for a time, an increase of various charges, your prudence and patriotism will not grudge the cost, as long as you are satisfied that the end is important and the means judicious. No time will be lost in laying before you a Bill for the better regulation of the army and the auxiliary land forces of the Crown, and I hardly need commend it to your anxious and impartial consideration.

I trust that the powerful interest at present attaching to affairs abroad, and to military questions, will not greatly abate the energy with which you have heretofore applied yourselves to the work of general improvement in our domestic legislation.

I commend anew to your attention several measures on subjects which I desired to be brought before you during the last session of Parliament, but which the time remaining at your disposal, after you had dealt with the principal subjects of the year, was not found sufficient to carry to a final issue.

I refer especially to the Bills on Religious Tests in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, on Ecclesiastical Titles, on the Disabilities of Trade Combinations, on the Courts of Justice and Appeal, on the Adjustment of Local Burdens and on the Licensing of Houses for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors.

The inquiry made by a Committee of the Commons House being now complete, a measure will be placed before you on an early day for the establishment of Secret Voting.

A proposal is anxiously expected in Scotland for the adjustment of the question of primary education. With reference to the training of the young in schools on a national scale and basis, that portion of the country has especial claims on the favourable consideration of Parliament; and I trust the year may not pass by without your having disposed of this question by the enactment of a just and effective law.

The condition of Ireland with reference to agrarian crime has, in general, afforded a gratifying contrast with the state of that island in the preceding winter; but there have been painful though very partial exceptions.

To secure the best results for the great measures of the last two sessions which have so recently passed into operation, and which involve such direct and pressing claims upon the attention of all classes of the community a period of calm is to be desired: and I have thought it wise to refrain from suggesting to you at the present juncture the discussion of any political question likely to become the subject of new and serious controversy in that country.

The burdens devolving upon you as the great Council of the nation, and of this ancient and extended Empire, are, and must long continue to be weighty. But you labour for a country whose laws and institutions have stood the test of time, and whose people, earnestly attached to them and desiring their continuance will unite with their Sovereign in invoking upon all your designs the favour and aid of the Most High.