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Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners to both Houses of Parliament, on Friday, August 16, 1878.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

WHEN, in a critical condition of public affairs, you assembled at the commencement of the year, I pointed out to you that, in the interests of my Empire, precautions might become necessary, for which I appealed to your liberality to provide. At the same time I assured you that no efforts in the cause of peace should be wanting on my part.

Your response was not ambiguous, and contributed largely to a pacific solution of the difficulties which then existed. The terms of agreement between Russia and the Porte, so far as they affected pre-existing Treaties, were, after an interval of discussion, submitted to a Congress of the Powers; and their councils have resulted in a peace which I am thankful to believe is satisfactory and likely to be durable. The Ottoman Empire has not emerged from a disastrous war without severe loss; but the arrangements which have been made, while favourable to the subjects of the Porte, have secured to it a position of independence which can be upheld against aggression.

I have concluded a Defensive Convention with the Sultan, which has been laid before you. It gives, as regards his Asiatic Empire, a more distinct expression to the engagements which in principle I, together with other Powers, accepted in 1856, but of which the form has not been found practically effectual. The Sultan has, on the other hand, bound himself to adopt and carry into effect the measures necessary for securing the good government of those provinces. In order to promote the objects of this Agreement, I have undertaken the occupation and administration of the Island of Cyprus.

In aiding to bring about the settlement which has taken place, I have been assisted by the discipline and high spirit of my Forces by sea and by land, by the alacrity with which my Reserves responded to my call, by the patriotic offers of military aid by my people in the Colonies, and by the proud desire of my Indian Army to be reckoned among the defenders of the British Empire, a desire justified by the soldierly qualities of the force recently quartered at Malta.

The spontaneous offers of troops made by many of the Native Governments in India were very

gratifying to me, and I recognise in them a fresh manifestation of that feeling towards my Crown and Person which has been displayed in many previous instances.

My relations with all Foreign Powers continue to be friendly.

Although the condition of affairs in South Africa still affords some ground for anxiety, I have learnt with satisfaction from the reports of my civil and military officers that the more serious disturbances which had arisen among the native population on the frontiers of the Cape Colony are now terminated.

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,

The Act which has been passed for amending and greatly simplifying the law relating to Factories and Workshops will, I trust, still further secure the health and education of those who are employed in them.

I have had much pleasure in giving my assent to a measure relating to the Contagious Diseases of Cattle, which, by affording additional securities against the introduction and spread of those diseases, will tend to encourage the breeding of live stock in the country and to increase the supply of food to my people.

You have amended the Law as to Highways in a manner which cannot but improve their classification and management, and at the same time relieve inequalities in the burden of their maintenance.

I trust that advantage will be taken of the means which you have provided for dividing Bishoprics in the more populous districts of the country, and thus increasing the efficiency of the Church.

I anticipate the best results from the wise arrangements which you have made for the encouragement of intermediate education in Ireland.

The measure for amending and consolidating the Public Health Laws in that country is well calculated to promote the important object at which it aims.

The measure passed in regard to Roads and Bridges in Scotland and for the abolition of Tolls will greatly improve the management of highways in that part of the United Kingdom; while the Acts relating to Education and to Endowed