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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1878.

*Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners, to both Houses of Parliament, on Thursday, December 5, 1878. My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

**I** REGRET that I have been obliged to call for your attendance at an unusual and, probably, to most of you, an inconvenient season.

The hostility towards my Indian Government manifested by the Ameer of Afghanistan, and the manner in which he repulsed my friendly Mission, left me no alternative but to make a peremptory demand for redress.

This demand having been disregarded, I have directed an expedition to be sent into his territory, and I have taken the earliest opportunity of calling you together, and making to you the communication required by law.

I have directed that papers on the subject shall be laid before you.

I receive from all foreign Powers assurances of their friendly feelings, and I have every reason to believe that the arrangements for the pacification of Europe, made by the Treaty of Berlin, will be successfully carried into effect.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

The Estimates for the ensuing year are in course of preparation, and will in due time be submitted to you.

*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

I propose that after full deliberation upon the matters which have led me to anticipate your usual time of meeting, and after a suitable recess, you should proceed to the consideration of various measures for the public benefit which will then be laid before you.

I confidently commit to your wisdom the great interests of my Empire, and I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend your counsels.

**A**T the Court at Windsor, the 27th day of November, 1878.

PRESENT,

The QUEEN'S Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

**H**ER Majesty in Council was this day pleased to declare Her Consent to a Contract of Matrimony between His Royal Highness the

Prince Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick, Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale, Earl of Armagh, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and Her Royal Highness the Princess Thyra Amélie Caroline Charlotte Anne, daughter of His Majesty the King of Denmark, which consent Her Majesty has also caused to be signified under the Great Seal.

**A**T the Court at Windsor, the 27th day of November, 1878.

PRESENT,

The QUEEN'S Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

**W**HEREAS the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England have, in pursuance of an Act of the sixth and seventh years of Her Majesty chapter thirty-seven, sections six and eight, duly prepared and laid before Her Majesty in Council a scheme, bearing date the fourteenth day of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight, in the words following, that is to say;

"We the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England in pursuance of the Act of the sixth and seventh years of your Majesty chapter thirty-seven, sections six and eight have prepared and now humbly lay before your Majesty in Council the following scheme for authorizing the sale and disposal of certain property situate in the parish of Bishopwearmouth in the county of Durham and now vested in us.

"Whereas under and by virtue of a certain indenture bearing date the twelfth day of February one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine and made or expressed to be made between the Consett Iron Company Limited of the first part Jonathan Priestman of Shotley Bridge in the county of Durham Iron Manufacturer of the second part Henry Ritson of Benfieldside in the said county of Durham Coal Owner of the third part, and us the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England of the fourth part a certain piece or parcel of land situate in the parish of Bishopwearmouth in the county of Durham more particularly described in the schedule hereunto annexed, became with its appurtenances, and is now, vested in us.

"And whereas the said land is not subject to any outstanding beneficial lease or grant, but is