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FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1880.

Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners to both Houses of Parliament, on Wednesday, March 24, 1880.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

AS the time assigned by law for the termination of the present Parliament is near at hand, I am induced, by considerations of public policy and convenience, to select this period of the session for releasing you from your legislative duties, with a view to an immediate dissolution, and the issue of writs for a general election.

I cannot part from you without expressing my deep sense of the zeal and ability which, during more than six years, you have consistently displayed in exercising your important functions, nor without tendering to you my warm acknowledgments for the useful measures which you have submitted for my acceptance, and especially for the manner in which you have upheld a policy the object of which was at once to defend my Empire and to secure the general peace.

My relations with Foreign Powers are friendly, and favourable to the maintenance of tranquillity in Europe.

I entertain the confident hope that the measures adopted in Afghanistan will lead to a speedy settlement of that country.

I have had much satisfaction in assenting to the Acts you have passed for the relief of the distress unhappily prevalent in parts of Ireland, and trusting that these measures will be accepted by my Irish subjects as a proof of the ready sympathy of the Imperial Parliament, I look forward with confidence to the restored prosperity of their country.

I rejoice to observe the indications of a general improvement in trade, and that the commercial depression which I have had to lament appears to be passing away.

I have witnessed with the greatest sympathy the heavy losses sustained by the various classes connected with the cultivation of the soil, and have viewed with admiration the patience and high spirit with which they have contended against an almost unprecedented series of disastrous seasons.

I trust that, with the blessing of Providence, a more favourable harvest may be looked for, and that, from the Commission which I issued to inquire into the causes of agricultural depression, suggestions may come which will lead to the more profitable use of agricultural land, and to a higher development of this branch of national industry.

The electors of the United Kingdom will be called upon forthwith to choose their Representa-

tives in Parliament, and I fervently pray that the blessing of Almighty God may guide them to promote the object of my constant solicitude—the happiness of my people.

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 Tuesday, the thirteenth day of April next, to be then here holden; and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Tuesday, the thirteenth day of April next.

Lord Chamberlain's Office, St. James's Palace, March 8, 1880.

NOTICE is hereby given, that Her Majesty's Birthday will be kept on Saturday, the 29th of May next.

Lord Chamberlain's Office, St. James's Palace, March 22, 1880.

NOTICE is hereby given, that The Queen will hold Drawing Rooms at Buckingham Palace, on Tuesday, the 11th, and on Thursday, the 13th, of May next, at three o'clock.

REGULATIONS

TO BE OBSERVED AT THE QUEEN'S DRAWING ROOMS AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

By Her Majesty's Command,

The Ladies who propose to attend Her Majesty's Drawing Rooms, at Buckingham Palace, are requested to bring with them two large cards with their names *clearly written* thereon, one to be left with the Queen's Page in Attendance, and the other to be delivered to the Lord Chamberlain, who will announce the name to The Queen.

PRESENTATIONS.

Any Lady who proposes to be presented to The Queen must leave at the Lord Chamberlain's Office, St. James's Palace, *before twelve o'clock*, two clear days before the Drawing Room, a card with her name written thereon, and with the name of the Lady by whom she is to be presented. In order to carry out the existing regulations, that no presentation can