



The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 1881.

Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners, to both Houses of Parliament, on Saturday, August 27, 1881.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

THE time has arrived when I am at length enabled to release you from your unusually severe and protracted labours.

My relations with all foreign Powers continue to be amicable and cordial.

Progress has been made since I last addressed you in the territorial arrangements of the Levant. A Treaty has been concluded, with the sanction of all the Great Powers, for the cession of Thessaly to the Greek Kingdom; and its peaceful execution has begun.

Recent events in Tunis have led to communications between my Government and the Government of France; and I have received satisfactory assurances from the Republic as to the rights secured to me by Treaty with the Bey, and as to the relations between the Regency and the neighbouring Ottoman territory of Tripoli.

The Convention has been signed, which secures to the European population of the Transvaal, subject to important conditions therein set forth, a complete internal self-government. It awaits ratification by a Representative Assembly of the people. I trust that, when confirmed, it will contribute effectually to the tranquillity of South Africa and to stability in its affairs.

The hopes in which I indulged on the last occasion of my addressing you, with respect to the war in Basutoland, have been fulfilled; and I have to notice, with much satisfaction, the termination of hostilities in that country.

In the month of April my troops were withdrawn from Candahar, and the Government of Southern Afghanistan was assumed by the Ameer Abdur Rahman.

I have no reason to anticipate any disturbance of peace on the north-western frontier of my Indian dominions from the contest with the Ameer into which Ayoub Khan has since entered.

It will be my object, while respecting the independence of the Afghan people, to promote, by my friendly offices, as opportunity may arise, the restoration of peace.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

I thank you for the supplies which you have provided to meet the public charge, and for the contribution you have liberally made towards the expenses of the recent war in Afghanistan.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

The commercial negotiations with France have

been suspended; but I continue desirous on every ground to use my best efforts for the conclusion of a Treaty on terms favourable to extended intercourse between the two nations, to whose close amity I attach so great a value.

The Act for the Regulation of the Forces gives full legislative effect to the plans approved by Parliament for connecting regiments with the districts in which they will be mainly raised, and for combining together more closely the several branches of my land forces. This completion of the series of arrangements adopted by a former Parliament cannot fail to render more efficient the military organization of the country.

I warmly appreciate the zeal and assiduity with which you have devoted yourselves to the task of maturing a measure for improving the relations between the owners and occupiers of land in Ireland, and for otherwise bettering the condition of its agricultural population. It is my earnest hope that the new law may be productive of benefits commensurate with the care you have bestowed upon its enactments.

I regret that it has been found impossible to proceed with many measures on subjects of importance, which have been, or were prepared to be, submitted to you; and that, notwithstanding exertions almost unparalleled, you have been unable adequately to provide the country with legislation adapted to its growing wants.

It has been my study to use the exceptional powers confided to me in Ireland by two Acts of this Session with vigilance and firmness, but with discrimination; while I earnestly desire that the condition of that country may so improve as to enable me to dispense with, or to abate, the use of temporary and exceptional provisions.

Finally, I ask you to join me in imploring the blessing of the Almighty on our united efforts for the peace, greatness, and happiness of the Empire.

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 Saturday, the twelfth day of November next, to be then here holden; and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Saturday, the twelfth day of November next.