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Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, delivered by the Lords Commissioners to both Houses of Parliament, on Saturday, August 10, 1872.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

THE time has now arrived when you may properly relinquish the performance of your arduous duties for a term of repose which has been honourably earned by your devoted assiduity.

I rejoice to inform you that the controversy which had arisen between my Government and the Government of the United States, in consequence of the presentation of the American claims for indirect losses under the Treaty of Washington, has been composed by a spontaneous declaration of the arbitrators, entirely consistent with the views which I announced to you at the opening of the session. In concurrence with your action on the part of the United Kingdom, the Parliament of Canada has passed the Acts necessary to give effect to the Treaty within the dominion. All the arrangements contemplated by that instrument are, therefore, now in progress: and I reflect with satisfaction that the subjects with which it has dealt no longer offer any impediment to a perfect concord between two kindred nations.

Since I addressed you at the commencement of the session, I have received from the Government of France the formal notice which would bring to an end the Commercial Treaty of 1860. The Government, however, has indicated a desire for further communications. In any correspondence on this subject I shall be guided by an earnest anxiety to secure attention to the just claims of my subjects, by the friendly feeling which has so long united the two countries, and by my conviction of the moral, as well as material benefits to be derived by each from a free intercourse between them.

I have had great satisfaction in concluding with the Emperor of Germany a treaty, in conformity with the provisions of the Act of 1870, for the mutual surrender of fugitive criminals. I am engaged in framing similar arrangements with other Powers.

My Government has taken steps intended to prepare the way for dealing more effectually with the slave trade on the east coast of Africa.

I have cheerfully given my assent to an Act of the Legislature of the Cape Colony, for the establishment in that colony of what is now generally known as responsible government.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

My acknowledgments are due to you for the ample provision which you have made for the varied exigencies of the public service.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Although the wants and expectations of the country seems to outstrip every effort of Parliament in its career of legislative improvement, I notice with satisfaction the main additions which you have been enabled to make during the present year to our laws.

The Act having reference to outrages upon natives in the islands of the Pacific is well designed, by providing for the more easy and effectual prevention and punishment of the offences at which it is aimed, to promote the ends of humanity and the honour of the Empire.

The Act for the localisation of the army, while it strengthens the defensive system of the country, will lend an indispensable aid in effecting those important reforms which have been approved by Parliament.

The Act which establishes the Ballot will assist to secure alike the independence of the voter and the tranquillity and purity of elections for members to serve in Parliament.

Although you have been unable, during the present session, to mature any measure directed against corrupt practices in the choice of Members of Parliament, I observe with pleasure that the cognate subject of municipal elections has had your attention, and that you have presented to me a law which is well calculated to check existing evils, and which provides a tribunal for trying the validity of such elections.

By the Scottish Education Act you have made provision for the further extension and greater efficacy of the training of the young throughout Scotland, in accordance with the conscientious and deep-rooted convictions of the people, and with the principles of religious freedom.

The Act for establishing a Board of Local Government in Ireland, modelled on the English statute of 1871, supplies a machinery for giving effect to many useful laws, and promises to extend within that portion of the United Kingdom the solid benefits of popular local institutions.

The measure for the amendment of the Act of Uniformity, based as it is upon careful inquiry and on a large amount of ascertained consent, has