

29th January, 1857.

THIRD SESSION, SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 20th VICTORIA.

A copy of His Excellency's Speech having been left with the House, it was read by the Clerk, and is as follows :—

Mr. President, and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council :

Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly :

His Excellency's
Speech on opening the
Session.

You will resume the exercise of your Legislative Functions, under circumstances so favourable in regard to the Commercial and Financial position of the Colony ; and the material prosperity of its Inhabitants ; as to justify me in offering to you, and through you, to the Country, my warm congratulations.

The quantity of the Staple Produce which has left our Shores during the past year, considerably exceeds the export of any previous year recorded in our Colonial Annals ; while a Tariff which admits to consumption, articles of food of first necessity—the Bread and Meat of the People—free from Taxation, has contributed to the Revenue a sum of about £91,000, being nearly one fourth more than the largest annual amount ever received into the Colonial Chest, from the same source.

It must be, to you, a just cause of satisfaction, that the Policy adopted in the Session of 1855, whereby the Provisions of the Treaty with the United States, of the 5th June, 1854, were extended to this Colony, has, by opening up new Markets, both of Consumption and Transit, into which our Colonial Produce is admitted at its natural Commercial Value, materially assisted in sustaining and even augmenting that value, during a period when the unusual abundance of the supply would, under ordinary circumstances, have probably produced an opposite effect.

While these great advantages have been secured to our Commerce and Finance, the industry of the Fishing Population has not, I have reason to believe, been exposed in a single instance to interference from without, by the exercise of the privilege to take fish upon our Coasts, which, under the Treaty in question, is extended to Citizens of the United States.

Confidence may, I think, be felt, that the conditions which ordinarily regulate the employment of Capital, Time and Labor, will