

Speech.

*Mr. Speaker, Honourable Gentlemen, and Gentlemen :—*

The circumstances under which we assemble appear to me to warrant the congratulations which it is accordingly my pleasing duty to offer to you upon the peaceful and prosperous state of the Colony and the flourishing condition of its finances, which have been so productive during the past year as to afford convincing proof of the beneficial operation of the existing tariff of duties.

Of the large amount voted for the construction and repair of Roads and Bridges during the last two Sessions, a large portion has already been expended, and so much of benefit and satisfaction has been afforded by the outlay which has taken place under this head of service, as would appear to suggest the expediency of some further appropriation, as well for the completion of any lines of Roads for which adequate means may not have been provided, as for the opening of others—in a word, in aid of an object which, while it secures to the Colony the inestimable advantage of good communications, also affords to a large portion of its poorer classes all that industry can require, viz. employment, with reasonable remuneration; at those seasons of the year when it would not otherwise be attainable.—The money thus expended becomes, in reality, a vote for the relief of the heads of poor families, afforded to them in the manner most advantageous to the public interests, and, at the same time, most satisfactory to their own feelings of independence—It may, in fact, be viewed as a patriotic investment of your surplus funds in the most useful and beneficial form, and of which the return is large and well assured.

The accounts of the expenditure under this head will be laid before you, and will, I doubt not, shew that it has been judiciously and economically made.

Of the increased tendency to agricultural pursuits, on the part of the Inhabitants of this ancient and interesting Colony, less equivocal or more satisfactory proofs can scarcely be referred to than those which will be found in the returns, which will be laid before you, of Sales of Waste Lands which have recently been effected under the new Land Bill, and which, though comparatively inconsiderable in their amount, nevertheless exhibit a nearly *tenfold* increase in the value of such Lands in the district of "Avalon" since the passing of that Bill—a result which must be regarded as almost wholly referable to the great improvement of the Roads and Communications which has been effected through your enlightened and patriotic liberality.—With reference to this Bill, amendments of three of its Clauses have been suggested by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, which will, I doubt not, receive your respectful attention.—In strict connection with this subject, I would express a hope that the "Agricultural Society" will receive such a share of your encouragement and support as may enable it to extend its operations, and thereby to confer increased benefits upon the Colony—An account of the expenditure of the sums already granted to that Association will be laid before you.

The Report of the Inspector of Schools, while it will, I trust, satisfy you that great benefits have been derived from your liberal appropriations in aid of Elementary Education, will also indicate the necessity which appears to exist for the extension of those benefits to many parts of the Colony which do not at present possess them—Accordingly, I recommend this subject to your consideration.

The question of the Fisheries, both as respects Foreign interference and the lines of delimitation within which the French are permitted, by Treaties, to take