

represent double the cost of the Railway in each case. This will be no hardship to the Province. The proceeds will pass to the extinction of the Railway debt and to the payment of interest. Fifteen per cent. of the proceeds we are willing to pay to the Provincial Loan Account, or to an account for Provincial Public Works.

line, taking land at nominal value. Application of proceeds.

It will be asked, Why do all this now? Why not let well alone? I answer, The well of the present will not be the well of the future, if we neglect to scan with vigilant eye the necessities of the position. I might compare the Public Works Policy to the setting in motion of a highly-powerful and carefully-constructed piece of machinery. As safe and wise would it be to set that machine in motion and allow it to work on untended, as it would be to refuse to recognise the necessity of carefully guiding and watching the vast machinery which, properly worked, will prove as valuable as otherwise it may prove injurious. The question must be dealt with now, for demands are being made on every side, and Parliament must meet them. The question is one which belongs to no party—it would equally beset any Ministry. It is the question of wisely restraining the healthy exuberance which makes each village think itself of such Colonial importance that it should be connected by railway with the next hamlet. We have no Smith, Jones, or Robinson in the House, so I may use their names. They represent, let us suppose, neighbouring districts. A village in Smith's electorate is anxious to have a railway. Is Smith to tell the people they ask too much? Is he to say he will vote for Railways elsewhere and neglect the place in which there reside fifty persons who voted for him? Smith acquiesces—he will not perish politically. Brown and Jones have likewise become equally aware that their re-election depends on their exertions in local behalf. Jones, Smith, and Robinson combine to support three works. They meet three other members similarly circumstanced. Here is a combination of six, or of twelve votes, for the side they support—six for voting and six for not voting against. I ask the House to strengthen Smith, Jones, and Robinson; to let them tell their constituents that the law has confined to the Colonial Parliament the control of Colonial works, and that the local governing powers will provide for local wants.

Why such action now necessary.

I have now to consider the question of future money requirements. Honorable Members will recollect that the original proposals upon which the Immigration and Public Works Policy was based were, that, over a term of ten years, there should be an expenditure of something like eight millions and a-half; and, besides, that land grants, for works performed, should be given to the amount of two millions. It was proposed that the eight millions and a-half should be made up partly by cash payments, partly by expenditure induced by guarantees, and partly by the proceeds of land set aside for the purpose, or by land being accepted by contractors in lieu of cash. It was thought necessary to ask for a loan of four millions only, that amount including the one million which the Imperial Government were to guarantee. Subsequently, it was found to be not desirable to secure expenditure upon works by giving guarantees upon such expenditure, nor to make payments in land; and the intention of setting apart land as railway estates has, for reasons which need not now be dwelt upon, been only carried out to a very small extent. Dating the commencement of the Public Works Policy from the time I have already indicated—about June, 1871—the expenditure during the first two years amounted to little over the sum estimated; but the authorized loan of four millions will, necessarily, be inadequate for carrying out plans involving a much larger expenditure; and already the estimated cost of the railways authorized to be constructed is very much in excess of the portion of the authorized loan which was set apart for railway purposes. As I explained last year, it was not necessary when obtaining an authority to expend a stated amount during a period of ten years, to make provision at once for borrowing all the money; but it is necessary now, in view of the rapidity with which the railways are being constructed—and in view, also, of the fact that there are additional railways which the Government feel bound to ask the Legislature to authorize—that provision should be made for an amount of borrowed money in excess of the four millions already authorized. This is the more required, because the Government consider it

Amount of money required.

How original proposals have been departed from.

Result—£4,000,000 Loan authorized, is inadequate.