

will induce a great amount of settlement—thus to some extent relieving the labour market and creating a demand for further labour. I am sure I need scarcely say that it has not been, and will not be, our desire to cause a glut of the labour market. Statements that the Government have such a desire have been made; but they are not true. No doubt, in parts of the country, there are some unemployed persons; but in no circumstances, and under no conditions, would it be possible—whether the scale of immigration be large or small—to find a country in which there are not some people who are not able, at times, to find work, or upon whom others would not look as undesirable employés. I am sure the number of such persons in this Colony at present is not large: in that statement I believe I shall be supported by honorable members from the various districts. Still, in view of the fact that some of the authorized railways are being completed, and from other circumstances, we have thought it better, for the next few months, to reduce the number of assisted immigrants.

I will briefly recapitulate the principal points of the Statement I have had the honor to submit to the Committee.

We wish to have it understood that we do not consider the question of Abolition an open one. We look upon it as already decided; and we are of opinion that there is no chance whatever of the decision being reversed. We wish honorable members and the country to recognize that Abolition does not end with the mere coming into force of the Abolition Act, but that the operation of that Act will cast upon the Government a large number of gravely onerous duties. I have desired to make it clear to honorable members, that a leading feature of the present Budget is the putting upon a simple footing the finance of the colony—relieving the Consolidated Revenue of various contingent charges—giving to the colony its finance, and to the different local bodies theirs—preventing in the future the clashing of claims, if not of interests, which has caused so much mischief in the past. It has been my duty to point out that certain changes in the Abolition proposals agreed to last Session have been rendered necessary by the larger knowledge and experience which the past year has supplied. Those changes are represented principally by the cost of Education being now proposed to be partly borne on the Land Fund, and by the cost of Charitable Institutions being mainly devolved upon the people of the colony themselves, and on the districts in which the institutions are respectively situated or the residents within which they serve. I have had to explain to the Committee that, in the opinion of the Government, it is necessary the Colony should take charge of the railways of the country; and that, in order to do so, and to meet the pressure of the interest on the cost of works in course of construction, as well as the deficiency to cover interest which the receipts in excess of expenditure may for some time show, there should be made from the Land Revenue of each provincial district, during the next nine years, a contribution beginning at 2 per cent., and falling gradually to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., upon the cost of the railways within its own boundaries. I have further had to explain that the Government believe the time has now come when a material increase in the price of the Waste Lands of the Crown should be made—not with the view of benefiting the Colonial Government, but to enlarge the surplus at the disposal of the Local Bodies, and for the purpose of doing justice to those who long years since purchased land at its present prices, and who have a right to consider that their labours, in making