

The fees payable by suitors are settled by the enclosed decree regulating the expenses of legal proceedings.

The record of proceedings before one of these Courts is received in evidence by any of the ordinary Courts of Justice. This is found in many cases to facilitate the discovery of the truth, for it frequently happens that contending parties before a Mediator readily make confessions, which, being placed upon the record, serve to prove facts in ulterior proceedings.

The working of this new institution had already given the most satisfactory results in all the Provinces of the Kingdom, although the Courts of Mediators have been in existence in several places only since the beginning of the present year, and in others were established towards the end of last year. There is reason to believe that in the course of time still more important results will be obtained, and that the system of Mediation will have the effect of putting an end to much litigation.

It is not probable, however, that persons called upon to discharge the somewhat laborious duties of Mediators will continue to give their services gratuitously as the law prescribes.

No. 17.

COPY of a DESPATCH from His Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM to Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

(No. 82.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 17th December, 1867.

I have received your Despatch No. 101, of the 8th October last, and the Memorandum of your Responsible Advisers which is enclosed in it.

You will inform your Ministers that I have carefully considered that Memorandum. That I am glad to observe that your Ministers raise no objection to the course laid down in my Despatch of the 1st August as that which is pursued by the Secretary of State with regard to charges brought against Colonial Governors or other persons in authority in the Colonies. That I do not find in the Memorandum anything which requires from me any further statement than that contained in my Despatch No. 49 of 1st August, which, I think, will enable you to understand and explain the views of Her Majesty's Government on the matters to which the Memorandum relates.

I have, &c.,

BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.

Governor Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

No. 18.

COPY of a DESPATCH from His Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM to Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

(No. 83.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 21st December, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 112, of the 17th October.

I trust that your anticipations of the continuance of the present state of tranquillity in the Northern Island may prove to be well founded.

I have, &c.,

BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.

Governor Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

No. 19.

COPY of a DESPATCH from His Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM to Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

(No. 84.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 21st December, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatches Nos. 106 and 107, of the 8th and 11th October, on the subject of the Petition addressed to Her Majesty by John Topi Patuki, chief of the Ngahitahu and Ngatimamoe tribes, in which he prays that the Royal authority may be exerted to prevent the Native claims to the block of land in Otago known as the Princes Street Reserve, from being affected by legislation in the General Assembly of New Zealand.