That they have sustained losses through the said action, although acting under rights granted to them in due course of law under the gold-mining laws in force at Tinker's, and pray that this House will afford them relief.

I am directed to report as follows:—

That, in the opinion of this Committee, the petitioners are justly entitled to the repayment of the costs incurred by them in defending their rights in a Court of law, and that it be a recommendation to the Government that the sum of £500 be placed on the Estimates to defray such costs, subject to the Government being satisfied that the costs have been duly expended.

C. A. De Lautour,
Chairman.

11th September, 1877.

Report on Petition of William Sowerby Grenville.

The petitioner states that in 1874 he purchased a battery on the Thames Gold Fields.

That, in consequence of the operation of "The Mining Districts Act, 1873," he has been unable to obtain a title to the property on the terms upon which it was previously held—namely, by miner's right under the Act of 1866.

That his property has thereby been greatly depreciated in value, and that he has suffered considerable loss.

Your Committee have the honor to report that they consider that the petitioner is entitled to relief, and that the law should be so amended that titles held under the Act of 1866 should be held to be good, notwithstanding any provision of any Act to the contrary, and that such titles should be held and continued upon the same terms as originally provided, and that power should be granted to the Warden to issue rights for that purpose.

C. A. De Lautour,
Chairman.

11th September, 1877.

Report on "The Gold Mining Districts Act 1873 Amendment Bill."

The Gold Fields Committee have the honor to report that they have gone through the Bill as referred to them by order of reference dated 19th September, 1877, and that they have no amendments to suggest therein.

C. A. De Lautour,
Chairman.

20th September, 1877.

Report on Petition of W. E. Sadler.

I am instructed to report that it appears that on the 15th October, 1868, a resolution was passed in the House of Representatives:—

> "That a respectful address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying him to recommend to the House that a sum of £100 be offered as premium for the best essay to be written on the following subject: 'The means for securing the permanent settlement of the mining population of New Zealand, and for fixing within the colony the capital which is being constantly drained away from the gold fields, as shown in the great excess of exports over imports at the ports of the exclusively gold-mining districts.'"

In pursuance of this resolution, a Proclamation, dated 31st December, 1868, was issued in the General Government *Gazette*, prescribing terms and conditions subject to which premiums of £50, £30, and £20 were offered for the three best essays upon the following subject:—

> "The means for securing the permanent settlement of the mining population of New Zealand, and for fixing within the colony the capital which is being drained away from the gold fields, as shown in the great excess of exports over imports at the ports of the exclusively gold-mining districts."

On the 17th March, 1869, the following gentlemen were appointed by the Colonial Secretary (the Hon. E. W. Stafford) examiners to decide on the comparative merits of the essays: the Hon. Alfred Domett, M.L.C., the Hon. W. B. D. Mantell, M.L.C., James Coutts Crawford, Esq., R.M. Upon the 12th May, 1869, the examiners reported that the names corresponding to the mottoes in respect of which the several premiums have been adjudged are as follow:—

(1.) First prize, £50.—"Striving to better, oft we mar what's well," Robert H. Eyton, Parnell, Auckland.

(2). Second prize, £30.—"*Carpe diem*," F. W. Hutton, Auckland.

(3.) Third Prize, £20.—"*Ubi mel ibi apes*," E. T. Gillon, Wellington.

The Committee instruct me to report that the decision of the examiners was clearly affirmed, and that the request to your House to go behind that decision is utterly unreasonable.

C. A. De Lautour,
Chairman.

21st September, 1877.

Report on Petition of Henry Keesing, jun.

I am instructed to report that the Committee find that the claim of the petitioner was fully considered by a Commission, consisting of G. Maurice O'Rorke, Esq., R. C. Dyer, Esq., and D. Grove, Esq., appointed under the hand of his Honor the Superintendent of Auckland, 1870.