

I observe that by the 257th section of "The Bankruptcy Act, 1867," No. 18, provision is made for the mode of executing Deeds of Arrangement out of New Zealand. As the law of New Zealand may not be known in many places it appears to me that this provision is likely to lead to some difficulty, and it does not seem to be so well adapted for the purpose required as section 304 of "The Imperial Bankruptcy Bill."

I have, &c.,
BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.

The Officer Administering the Government
of New Zealand.

No. 31.

COPY of a DESPATCH from His Grace the Duke of BUCKINGHAM to the
OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND.

(No. 20.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 25th February, 1868.

I referred, for the consideration of the Law Officers of the Crown, the Act of the Legislature of New Zealand "To establish the County of Westland and to make temporary provision for the government thereof," a transcript of which accompanied Sir G. Grey's Despatch No. 121, of the 8th of November last, together with the Memorandum of Ministers upon it, which was enclosed in his further Despatch of the 16th of that month.

I am advised that the General Assembly of New Zealand has not the power to separate one part of a Province from the rest, and to make such part into a County, under a separate and distinct form of government, or to vest in the Governor the powers vested in him by the present Act.

As it appears, however, that an alteration in the existing Provincial system of New Zealand is urgently needed, Her Majesty's Government propose to introduce a Bill into Parliament for the purpose of giving further powers to the General Assembly of the Colony to enable it to meet, by legislation, the requirements now existing and which may be expected to arise.

I enclose a draft of the Bill which it is proposed to introduce into the Imperial Parliament for this purpose, and I shall be glad to be informed whether, in the opinion of your Government, it will be sufficient to meet the requirements of the case.

I have, &c.,
BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.

The Officer Administering the Government
of New Zealand.

Enclosure in No. 31.

DRAFT of a BILL proposed to be introduced into the Imperial Parliament.

WHEREAS by the third section of an Act of the Session holden in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth years of Her Majesty, intituled "An Act respecting the establishment and government of Provinces in New Zealand, and to enable the Legislature of New Zealand to repeal the seventy-third section of an Act intituled 'An Act to grant a Representative Constitution to the Colony of New Zealand,'" it was provided that it should be lawful for the General Assembly of New Zealand, by any Act or Acts to be by them from time to time passed, to establish or provide for the establishment of new Provinces in the Colony of New Zealand, and to alter or provide for the alteration of the boundaries of any Provinces for the time being existing in the said Colony, and to make provision for the administration of any such Provinces, and for the passing of laws for the peace, order, and good government thereof; and whereas doubts are entertained whether the said General Assembly has power under the above recited enactments or otherwise, to abolish any such Province now or hereafter to be established, or to withdraw from such Province any part of the territory comprised therein, except for the purpose of including the same within the limits of some other such Province, and it is expedient that such doubts should be removed:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. The General Assembly of New Zealand shall be deemed to have, and since the passing of the aforementioned Act to have had, the power of abolishing any Province at any time heretofore established, or which may be hereafter established in New Zealand, or of withdrawing therefrom the whole or any part of the territory comprised therein, and of passing laws for the peace, order, and good government of the territory withdrawn from or ceasing to form part of the territory of any such Province, whether such territory shall or shall not be included within the limits of any other Province of New Zealand.