

Auckland, 25th November, 1857.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of 4th November, on the subject of the appropriation of the Fund set apart in the Civil List for Native Purposes; in which you warn me to prepare for any decision which may be arrived at by the General Assembly in their next Session, when you think it probable that the distribution of that Fund will be materially altered. From other words in your letter I infer that the Native Fund is likely to be devoted to other than educational objects; and that in lieu of the Civil List from which the several Religious Bodies have hitherto received assistance, there will be substituted a sum of money to be appropriated for say seven years, I presume out of the General Revenue of the Colony.

On this proposition, I beg most respectfully to submit to the consideration of His Excellency,

1. That the Native Civil List is an estimated portion of the Public Revenue presumed to be contributed by the Natives themselves.

2. That it was evidently not intended under the Constitution Act that this money should be at the discretion of the General Assembly in the same manner as the Ordinary Revenue of the Colony; for the simple reason, that the Natives at present are not able to exercise any influence in the General Assembly.

3. That the appropriation of the greater part of the Native Civil List to the purposes of education under the direction of the several Religious Bodies, was supposed by Sir George Grey to be both most beneficial and most acceptable to the Natives themselves.

4. That no expression of a contrary opinion, so far as I know, has ever been communicated to the Government by the Natives; on the contrary, they have given the most practical proof of their approbation of the present system by the gratuitous surrender of large estates in various parts of the country for the maintenance of the Schools now receiving Grants from the Civil List.

5. These estates, though likely in time to yield an income sufficient for the support of the Schools, cannot be expected to do so at present.

6. The position of the Clergymen who superintended gratuitously the Native Schools, I conceive to be that of agents for the Natives themselves, with the sanction and under the control of the Governor; but to be in no sense the servants of the General Assembly nor responsible to it; nor in any way connected politically with the Government of the Colony.

7. I submit that this independence of character and position can scarcely be maintained if the Managers of Schools are made to depend upon a vote of the General Assembly, which, even if given with a guarantee that it will be continued for seven years, can never have the stability of the present Civil List.

8. While then I shall have each Manager of a Native School entirely free to act upon his own conscientious conviction in accepting or refusing the proposed alteration, I must say at once, that, as at present advised, I cannot undertake to be the administrator of any fund for Native Education to be granted by the General Assembly in lieu of the present Civil List.

9. If I am not going out of my own province, I would suggest that the present Civil List, unaltered in its mode of appropriation, should be guaranteed for seven years, to give time for the School estates to be brought into profitable occupation, and that the Schools now in operation should after that time have no further claim upon the Fund; this term of seven years is no more than is due to the Clergymen, who have altered all their mode of life in order to carry out the plans of the Government.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

G. A. NEW ZEALAND.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.