

Two distinct questions, one relating to the Civil Service, and the other relating to an Income Tax, were submitted to the Commission. Both required careful inquiry and consideration, and rendered it necessary to procure various information from all parts of the Colony, some of which information has only been this day received.

The work of the Commission has been conducted, for the most part, during the Session of the General Assembly, when the usual official duties of three members of the Commission are considerably increased; the other member, who came from Victoria at the invitation of the New Zealand Government, was quite a stranger to the Civil Service here. We were also anxious to transmit our Reports to your Excellency in the course of the Session, in order that any questions referred to therein, which, in the opinion of the Government, required the action of the Legislature, might be dealt with at once, and not postponed to another year.

We sincerely trust that no defects on our part will prejudice or delay the consideration of the Civil Service, the reform of which was the chief object of our inquiry. Setting aside, as a minor consideration, the wisdom of the principles, or of the departmental improvements which we recommend, we think that the importance of some practical action in the matter cannot be over-estimated. It is not a question which merely involves the personal interests of Government Officers, but one which involves the practical administration, day by day, of public business, and the best mode of utilising a large public expenditure. It is a question of vitality, or decay, in the constitution of the Civil Service. Systematic re-organization will produce efficiency and economy as certainly as the want of it produces incompetency and waste. Procrastination only prolongs and increases these evils, and renders their cure more difficult.

We feel assured that the whole subject will receive the serious consideration of the Executive and of the Legislature, and that, as guardians of the public interests, they will be anxious to devise a remedy for any evils which are proved to exist, and we trust that the information and suggestions contained in our Reports, may, to some extent at least, assist them in the attainment of that object.

We respectfully submit to your Excellency this our final Report.

CHARLES KNIGHT, *Chairman*.  
W. GISBORNE,  
WILLIAM SEED,  
J. M. SPENCE.

Wellington, 17th September, 1866.

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