

No. 6.

FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS TO T. H. SMITH, ESQ., CIVIL COMMISSIONER.

Office of Minister for Native Affairs,
Auckland, March 3rd, 1862.

SIR,—

His Excellency the Governor having been pleased to appoint you to be Civil Commissioner for the Bay of Plenty District, this day constituted under the "Native Districts Regulation Act" and "Native Circuit Courts Act," I have to convey to you the following instructions for your guidance.

His Excellency's Government have perused with interest the Report received from you under date 25th January, detailing the steps which were taken by you in pursuance of my instructions of the 14th December last; and are glad to recognize the prudence and good judgment with which, so far as their information enable them to judge, you executed the duty you were sent to the Bay of Plenty to undertake.

In the course of the communications that have taken place since your return, between His Excellency and yourself, as well as with members of the Government, you will have learnt the progress that has been made in introducing Sir George Grey's plan of Native Government into several districts, and also the opinion of the Government on the proposals made by you for the organization of the District confided to your management. It will be unnecessary, therefore, that I should enter into any great detail in conveying to you the decisions at which the Government has arrived.

I observe that it is proposed there shall be 24 Assessors, 16 Wardens or chief Kareres, and 29 Kareres, to include all the settlements both inland and on the coast. Though this number of officers will cause the total expenditure incurred on account of your district to exceed the proportion that would in strictness be appropriated to it under Sir George Grey's plan, His Excellency has, under the circumstances so fully detailed by you, decided not to disturb the arrangements which you provisionally made; and you are accordingly authorized to complete the organization of your District in the manner you propose. In one particular, however, that of the salaries, it is necessary to make an unimportant alteration. The Governor has no objection to giving effect to the proposal that the salary of the Assessors should be uniform in amount: and in fixing it at the £30 proposed by yourself, His Excellency trusts the Natives will see his desire to deal liberally with them on this point. But the Wardens' or Chief Kareres' salary has been fixed at £20 a year; and the Kareres' pay, as in all the districts, is £10 per annum, with clothing. The salaries of the Native officers throughout the district will, in accordance with my directions of 14th December, commence from the 1st January last.

The Government has had under consideration the probable necessity that will arise for the appointment of a second Resident Magistrate, in addition to Mr. Henry Clarke, to reside somewhere at Rotorua. Should you, indeed, consider it immediately requisite, the Government is prepared to give effect at once to your recommendation: but I need not point out to you that, except where European settlement may cause collision of race and therefore necessitate the more constant supervision of an English officer, the great object to be kept in view is to minimise the expenditure on European officials, so as to allow as large a portion as possible of the total amount that may be available for the Native service, to be distributed among Natives. For the present it seems likely that you would yourself be able to hold Circuit Courts as a Resident Magistrate, in the Rotorua country; and under the circumstances of the excess over other Districts in the expenditure proposed by you, it is hoped that the appointment of another Magistrate may be saved during the present year.

With regard to your proposition of a certain sum (£50 per annum) being appropriated to defray the expenses of the Village Runangas already or to be constituted in your district, I have to observe that it is not yet established that it would be advisable to make any payment whatever to a Runanga, whether directly by way of salary or indirectly as now suggested.

There exists in the minds of many who have paid attention to the subject of institutions for Native government, insuperable objections to any such payment; and so far as at present advised, His Excellency's Government are inclined to give weight to those objections. The thing to be desired is to induce the Natives at once to take a practical interest in free self-government, and accustom themselves to the exercise of political duties. It may be that the best form of constituting the Village Runanga will be to make every adult male resident within the limit of its authority a member of it, as has been done in the Lower Waikato; and although I am aware that objections exist on the part of Natives in some districts to this form, it is not certain that these should be encouraged. If it were decided that members of the Village Runanga should be paid (or divide among themselves a certain sum by way of expenses), the tendency might be both to limit the number of members and to confine the right of membership to Chiefs: whereas if it were known that no payment would be made, the tendency might be towards having all adult males as members. It is impossible at this early stage of the experiment now making, to determine which of these two tendencies would be the best: but it is necessary now to keep on the safe side, and avoid committing the Government, even in one case, to a course which would immediately be claimed as a precedent by other Village Runangas, and presently occasion an expenditure of £1000 a year, to be probably extended at last to £4000 or £5000 a year which would be infinitely better spent in other ways. You will take care to explain to the Natives that in rejecting this demand for the provision of expenses, the Government is swayed by considerations not merely of economy but of their own good in the long run.