

TRANSFER OF INDIAN TRUST-FUNDS.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

RECOMMENDING

The transfer of certain funds now held by him, for the benefit of Indian tribes, to the custody of the Treasurer of the United States.

DECEMBER 14, 1875.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 11, 1875.

SIR: I have the honor to invite your attention to section 10 of the act making appropriations for the current and contingent expenses of the Indian Department for the year ending June 30, 1876, which is as follows:

That hereafter the security or securities upon the bond required by the act of February twenty-seventh, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, to be given by each Indian agent before entering upon the duties of his office, shall file a sworn statement with the Secretary of the Interior, setting forth the nature and kind of property owned by such security or securities, the value of the same, and where situated; and that no money appropriated by this act shall be paid to any Indian agent hereafter appointed until the security or securities shall have filed such statement. Each Indian agent shall keep a book of itemized expenditures of every kind, with a record of all contracts, together with the receipts of money from all sources; and the books thus kept shall always be open to inspection; and the said books shall remain in the office at the respective reservations, not to be removed from said reservation by said agent, but shall be safely kept and handed over to his successor; and true transcripts of all entries of every character in said books shall be forwarded quarterly by each agent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: *Provided*, That should any agent knowingly make any false entry in said books, or in the transcripts directed to be forwarded to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, or shall knowingly fail to keep a perfect entry in said books, as herein prescribed, he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction before any United States court having jurisdiction of such offense, shall be fined in a sum not less than five hundred nor more than one thousand dollars, at the discretion of the court, and shall be rendered incompetent to hold said office of Indian agent after conviction under this act.

The reference in the above-quoted section to the act of February 27, 1851, limits the application of the provision of the above section to a portion only of the Indian agents in the employ of the Government. I have required the Indian Office to extend the provision of said section to all Indian agents, subagents, and special agents, so far as the prep-

aration of their bonds and the keeping of the books of itemized expenses is concerned, but am without power to extend the penalties provided by said section to any other agents than those referred to therein. I therefore have the honor to request that the section may be so amended as to extend the provisions and penalties of said section to all agents in the Indian service, and an amendment is herewith submitted which is believed will accomplish the object desired, if the same shall be enacted into a law.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Z. CHANDLER,

Secretary.

The SPEAKER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

That hereafter the surety or sureties upon the bond to be given by each Indian agent, subagent, and special agent appointed by the President of the United States, the Secretary of the Interior, or other competent authority, before entering upon the duties of his office, shall file a sworn statement with the Secretary of the Interior, setting forth the nature and kind of property owned by such surety or sureties, the value of the same, and where situated; and that no moneys appropriated by any act of Congress, or otherwise, and no trust-fund or any other public funds appropriated or set apart for the benefit of any Indian or Indians, shall be paid to any Indian agent, subagent, or special agent to be hereafter appointed, and no public property of any kind, whether designed for the use of Indians or for any other purpose, shall be turned over to any Indian agent, subagent, or special agent, to be hereafter appointed, until the surety or sureties shall have filed such statement. Each Indian agent shall keep a book of itemized expenditures of every kind, with a record of all contracts, together with the receipts of money from all sources; and the books thus kept shall always be open to inspection; and the said books shall remain in the office at the respective reservations, not to be removed from said reservation by said agent, but shall be safely kept and handed over to his successor; and true transcripts of all entries of every character in said books shall be forwarded quarterly by each agent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: *Provided*, That should any agent knowingly make any false entry in said books, or in the transcripts directed to be forwarded to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, or shall knowingly fail to keep a perfect entry in said books as herein prescribed, he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction before any United States court having jurisdiction of such offense, shall be fined in a sum not less than five hundred nor more than one thousand dollars, at the discretion of the court, and shall be rendered incompetent to hold said office of Indian agent, subagent, or special agent after conviction under this act: *And provided further*, That the Secretary of the Interior, whenever in his opinion the interests of the service may demand it, may require any Indian agent, subagent, or special agent now on duty, to execute a new bond under the provisions and requirements of this section; and in case of the neglect or refusal of any such officer to execute a new bond when required by the Secretary of the Interior, within a reasonable time, such neglect or refusal shall be deemed sufficient cause for removal.