

OFFICE OF CHIEF CLERK INDIAN SERVICE.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

Communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs recommending the re-establishment of the office of chief clerk.

FEBRUARY 14, 1890.—Referred to the Committee on Expenditures in the Interior Department.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
February 1, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, a communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the 27th ultimo, forwarded by the Secretary of the Interior, recommending that the position of chief clerk of the Indian Office be re-established at a salary of \$2,500 per annum.

Respectfully, yours,

W. WINDOM,
Secretary.

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, January 27, 1890.

SIR: I have the honor to state that since the organization of this office as a Bureau of the Interior Department, in 1849, and up to and including the fiscal year 1886, Congress annually provided for a Commissioner of Indian Affairs and a chief clerk, who, under Section 178, Revised Statutes, was authorized to act as Commissioner in the absence of the head of the Bureau. During the year 1882 the work of the Indian Bureau increased considerable, and this office presented to Congress, through the Department, annually since the fall of 1882, an estimate for an Assistant Commissioner, but no action was taken by Congress on that request until 1886, when, in the act making appropriations for the legislative, executive, and judicial expenses of the Government for the fiscal year 1887, approved July 31, 1886 (Stat. 24, p. 200), provisions were

made for an Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs "who shall also perform the duties of chief clerk."

While this legislation relieved the Commissioner of the work of signing letters relative to routine work, etc., it did not provide the assistance which was and is required. The duties of the chief clerk of a Bureau, as provided for in sections 173, 174, and 175, Revised Statutes, are numerous and a faithful performance of such duties leaves little time for him to properly perform the duties of Assistant Commissioner.

Important legislation had within the last few years in relation to allotment of land, the establishment of schools, and other legislation requiring dealings with individuals of this class of our population in place of with tribes and bands as heretofore has increased very largely the work of the Indian Office, more than persons not closely connected and fully acquainted with the work are able to appreciate. It is impossible for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to himself hear and determine all matters in relation to land titles, allotment of lands in severalty, purchase of supplies, etc.; these matters should and ought first to be carefully examined into by the respective chiefs of divisions and the Assistant Commissioner and then brought by the latter to the attention of the head of the Bureau for decision.

Under the present organization of the Indian Bureau, where the Assistant commissioner must act also for and perform all the duties of chief clerk, it is impossible for him to give these important measures the consideration to which they are entitled and which they ought to have, and as a consequence important work is often too long delayed.

I therefore deem it absolutely necessary and for the best interest of the service that the position of chief clerk of the Indian Office be re-established, separate and distinct from that of the position of Assistant Commissioner, and with that end in view I have caused to be prepared and submit herewith an estimate for an appropriation for the pay of the Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs and of a chief clerk of the Indian Office, and respectfully recommend that the same be transmitted to Congress, with your favorable recommendation, to take the place of the estimate made in the regular annual estimate for the fiscal year 1891.

Very respectfully,

T. J. MORGAN,
Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

[Indorsement.]

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR,
January 28, 1890.

Respectfully forwarded to the honorable Secretary of the Treasury with my approval, for the favorable consideration of Congress.

JOHN W. NOBLE,
Secretary.

Item to be inserted in the bill making appropriations for the legislative, executive, and judicial expenses of the Government for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1891, and for other purposes:

Salaries, office of Commissioner of Indian Affairs:

Assistant Commissioner	\$3,000
Chief clerk	2,500