

As Mr. Nichols claimed to have taken the property, litigation was threatened, and legal notice was sent to me respecting his claim; but prior to receiving it I had written a letter (No. 3) to the Superintendent, in order to bring this part of my mission to an issue.

The reply (C) of the same date, settled the matter as regarded the University, but Fernhill remained as before.

Being assured by both sides that the House would be placed at my disposal whether the Superintendent or Mr. Nichols became the tenant of Mr. Biss, I determined to proceed with the measuring plans, estimates, &c., until the 27th, when, in consequence of a conversation with Mr. Biss, I was led to the conclusion that the Provincial authorities had finally secured the property, and thereupon wrote again (No. 4) to His Honor, and received a satisfactory reply (D) on the afternoon of the same day.

Mr. Macandrew's proposal to accommodate the Upper House in the Provincial Council Hall is quite satisfactory, it being well arranged and comfortably seated for forty members, exclusive of the Executive.

The dimensions of the hall are 82 ft.  $\times$  31 ft., and the fittings appropriate as well as handsome. There are also in connection with it two rooms, each 19 ft.  $\times$  17 ft., six rooms 17 ft.  $\times$  13 ft., and one 44  $\times$  15 ft., all furnished and ready for occupation.

The Hall is fitted with a gallery to hold 140 strangers, Speaker's Gallery to hold 20, besides a Reporters' Gallery.

These apartments form portion of the Provincial Public Buildings, and are situated on the south side of Water Street, whence they are approached by a flight of stone steps and paved terrace thirteen feet wide.

The University Building (plans of which are attached) is on the opposite or northern side of Water Street, which is one chain wide; and in the estimates submitted herewith, provision is made for a bridge to connect both Houses at the level of the terrace, leaving twelve feet of head room under the bridge for the traffic of Water Street.

The cost of this passage of communication would be £310; and if it can be dispensed with, that amount could be deducted from the estimates.

The Hon. Mr. Bell, however, considers it absolutely required; and it may be of some importance to mention that by having it, the Lobbies, Bellamy's, the Smoking Room, Library, and Reading Room, &c., would be common to both Houses, and some expense in this direction would be saved.

The House of Representatives could be arranged for in the central hall of the University; and by inspecting the plans it will be observed that the accommodation throughout the building is not only ample but convenient.

The hall itself measures 60 ft.  $\times$  40 ft. and 30 ft. high; it is well lighted, but the ventilation requires improving, which my estimates provide for.

The size of the House of Representatives in Wellington being 50 ft.  $\times$  25 ft., will enable you to judge by comparison of the sufficiency of the floor space.

As the University Council have made it a condition not to injure the hall more than necessary, and stipulated that it is to be given up in a like condition to what it is at present, I have arranged the gallery accommodation clear of the walls, the only connection being by iron bolts here and there, securing the galleries to the walls.

On the floor of the House there would be a passage on each side between the seats and the wall; and as I propose that the House and Bellamy's should be warmed by removing the hot-water apparatus from Wellington, the pipes could be placed under a raised platform, on which the back seats would stand.

There would be gallery space for fifty ladies, forty Councillors, one hundred and thirty strangers and ten-reporters, with a separate entrance and staircase to each gallery.

Ample provision could be conveniently arranged for Bellamy's, the Lobbies, Smoking Room, Lavatory, &c.

With reference to Bellamy's, I have ascertained that caterers can be found to undertake that department without requiring kitchens, &c., in the building; but if it be considered necessary to cook on the spot, sufficient room could be arranged without difficulty in the rooms under Bellamy's, at an extra cost of say £75.

The accommodation for Committees would consist of one room 30 ft.  $\times$  21 ft., three rooms each 16 ft.  $\times$  14 ft., and one other 16 ft.  $\times$  11 ft.

The Speaker's room would be to the right of the chair, and entered either directly from the House or from the east corridor; its dimensions are 30 ft.  $\times$  21 ft.

The Premier's and Executive Office is close by the Chair and Treasury Benches, with an ante or Secretary's room adjoining and communicating; the dimensions of the former are 26 ft.  $\times$  18 ft., and of the latter, 16 ft.  $\times$  11 ft.

The entrance for Members would be from Water Street, under an arcade 76 ft.  $\times$  19 ft., from which there are doors to the Lobbies, Bellamy's, and the Smoking Room.

Another arcade, 84 ft.  $\times$  15 ft., faces the west or Princes Street, the Smoking Room having a second entrance from it at the south end, and the Private Bills Office entrance being at the north end.

The Clerk to Parliaments would be provided for close by the Speaker's chair and office, with two rooms 16 ft.  $\times$  14 ft. each, one 18 ft.  $\times$  16 ft., and one 16 ft.  $\times$  11 ft.

The approach to the upper floor completes the description of the ground floor, which is by a spacious staircase from the Western Arcade.

The only accommodation required for the Assembly on the upper floor would be a Library and Reading Room, which Major Campbell prefers upstairs, as being removed from the noise and bustle of the House.

The dimensions of the Library are 43 ft.  $\times$  21 ft., and of the Reading Room 28 ft.  $\times$  24 ft.

The distribution of the apartments appropriated to Parliament is concurred in by Major Campbell.