

1919.
NEW ZEALAND.

FURNISHING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(FINAL REPORT OF)

(MR. MALCOLM, CHAIRMAN.)

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1919.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 219 be suspended, and that a Select Committee be appointed, consisting of twelve members, to take evidence on the best method of improving the acoustic properties of this chamber, and, with the approval of Cabinet, to take such steps as may be deemed necessary to effect this purpose; this Committee also to make to Cabinet such recommendations as it may deem desirable in regard to furnishing this chamber; the Committee to have leave to sit during the recess, and when dealing with the furnishing of all parts of Parliament Buildings beyond the two chambers to sit as a Joint Committee with a similar Committee appointed by the Legislative Council; all members of this Joint Committee residing outside the boundaries of the City of Wellington to be entitled to receive reasonable travelling-expenses in connection with attending each sitting during the recess; the Committee to consist of Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bill, the Hon. Mr. Herries, Mr. Isitt, the Hon. Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Malcolm, the Hon. Mr. Ngata, Mr. Parr, the Hon. the Speaker, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Witty, and the mover."—(Hon. Sir W. FRASER.)

REPORT.

The Furnishing Advisory Committee has directed me to report:—

The Committee held eight meetings during the recess. It devoted its chief attention to improving the acoustics of the chamber, and everything that experience and science could suggest was tried.

The Committee called in the services of Professor Clark, lately Professor of Physics at Victoria College. After a long series of experiments on definite lines he discovered the causes of the bad acoustics of the chamber, and he recommended that the floor of the chamber and the panels of the walls in the galleries should be covered with absorbent material. His recommendations, which are hereto appended, were adopted, with the most satisfactory results—results that will, the Committee feels sure, be gratifying to members.

Numerous recommendations in regard to furniture, &c., have been made by the Committee and have been adopted.

In response to requests from your Committee, the Speakers or Prime Ministers of various Parliaments of the Empire have sent most interesting photographs of exteriors and interiors of many of the Parliament Buildings throughout our Empire. These have now been mounted, bound, and placed in the library. The Committee is particularly indebted to the Government of India for the splendid collection of views it sent.

The Committee has received every possible assistance from the Government Architect.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the hearty co-operation of the Minister of Public Works, who practically adopted every recommendation made by the Committee.

The Committee recommends that the Furnishing Advisory Committee should be continued.

2nd September, 1919.

A. S. MALCOLM, Chairman.

APPENDIX.

Victoria University College, Wellington, 28th May, 1919.

Sir.—In accordance with your Committee's request of the 26th March, I have made a careful study of the acoustic properties of the chamber of the House of Representatives in the new Parliament Buildings, and I take pleasure in submitting the report which you will find enclosed.

I have made only general suggestions for altering the room, because materials of proper acoustic quality at present available in the Dominion are not entirely suitable from an artistic standpoint. Information about proper materials manufactured elsewhere is expected within a few days, and when this comes to hand it will be possible for me without further experimental work to make more definite suggestions if the Committee so desires.