

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

(REPORT ON).

Laid on the Table by Mr. Speaker with leave of the House.

MEMORANDUM by the Hon. the SPEAKER of the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL upon the GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY presented to the JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

THE Joint Library Committee having, at the end of the last Session of Parliament, devolved upon the two Speakers the duty of looking after the Library during the recess, and the Hon. the Speaker of the House of Representatives having requested me to act for him, I have now the honor to report briefly, so that this Library Committee may enter upon its labours with a knowledge of what has been done during the interval of the recess.

In discharge of the duty so entrusted to me I frequently inspected the Library, and consulted with the Librarian as often as the occasion required. I always found the Librarian and his assistants attentive to their work.

I had the accounts audited up to the 31st March, 1882—the end of the Financial Year. The accounts, when examined, were found to be correct, and the auditor's certificate will be placed before the Committee. I may state that, after providing for outstanding liabilities, there will be a nett available balance of about fifty pounds sterling.

The Librarian was reminded from time to time during the recess that it would be desirable to collect the materials ready for a report; and Sir Maurice O'Rorke having expressed his approval that such a report from the Librarian should be prepared, a report to the two Speakers has accordingly been drawn up, which I have now the honor to submit on their behalf to the Joint Library Committee.

WILLIAM FITZHERBERT,
Speaker, Legislative Council.

REPORT.

The LIBRARIAN, General Assembly, to the Hon. the SPEAKERS of both HOUSES of PARLIAMENT.

GENTLEMEN,—

1st May, 1882.

I have the honor to submit to you, in accordance with your instructions, the following report of the work done in the library during the recess, and on its present condition:—

In accordance with the resolution of the Joint Library Committee on the 9th September, 1881, that the Legislative Council Committee-rooms (Nos. 4 and 5) should be annexed to the library, the necessary amount was placed on the supplementary estimates, and the work was put in hand as quickly as possible after the rising of Parliament. It occupied a somewhat longer period than was anticipated, and was not fully completed till the close of November. During this time, in addition to preparing for the binders' hands the various papers and magazines which we receive, after calling in all the books in the usual way, I took careful stock of them, and am happy to be able to report that only a very few were missing.

As soon as the new rooms were ready for occupation I entered at once on the task of rearranging the library. This was, of course, rendered necessary by the removal into these of many thousand volumes from the other rooms. After giving the matter due consideration, I set apart one of the rooms—No. 5—for the Imperial papers, of which we receive between eighty and ninety volumes annually. These, though forming a vast repertory of the latest and best information on almost all questions with which Legislatures are called to deal, have hitherto been practically inaccessible to members, owing to their being kept in a room in a remote part of the buildings which, in consequence of its surroundings, very few ever dared or cared to visit. They can now be readily and comfortably consulted by any who desire to see them. No. 4 has, in like manner, been mainly devoted to American publications, the Canadian sessional papers occupying the south end, and Congressional records, Senate, and Executive documents of the United States, and various other Government publications, the east end. The remaining portion of these rooms has been set apart for serial literature.

I have also removed to these rooms, for the convenience of members, a large number of beautifully-illustrated works which have of late years been kept away in the safe, and of the very existence of which many members were wholly unaware. Those who find a pleasure in the study of the masterpieces of high art will now have an opportunity of examining these quietly and at their leisure.

The dimensions of these two additional rooms, I forgot to mention, are respectively 19 feet by 13 feet, and 23 feet by 13 feet, and they contain shelf-accommodation for over six thousand volumes. That their annexation to the library was not uncalled for is now shown by the fact that even already the cases are almost full.