

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

(REPORT ON).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Stout, by leave of the House.

THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

6th May, 1886.

THE Joint Library Committee have the honour to report that during the recess they have attended to the Library. It is unnecessary for them to detail what has been done, as the Librarian has furnished a report, which they beg to forward to the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives.

The Committee would earnestly press on the attention of Parliament the need of providing a fire-proof building for the Library. Many of the books are exceedingly valuable, and in the event of an accident it would be difficult to replace them. A plan has been prepared by Mr. Beatson, of the Public Works Department; but, as a special report of the Librarian shows, the building proposed would be inadequate. It would be easy to enlarge it and, at the same time, keep to the main outlines of the plan. This would, however, be a matter for the Public Works Department to attend to, if Parliament sanctioned the erection of a new building. The Committee trust that the Parliament will not be prorogued before some provision has been made for commencing a new library building.

G. RANDALL JOHNSON, *Chairman*.

THE LIBRARIAN'S REPORT.

General Assembly Library, 6th May, 1886.

I HAVE the honour to submit the annual report on the condition of the Parliamentary Library, the work done in it during the recess, and the progress it has made.

Within a few days of the prorogation of the Assembly the Library Committee was convened. Its constitution was novel. For the first time the Joint Library Committee of the session was continued in office during the recess. Members resident in Wellington were, it is true, conjoined with the remanent members of the Joint Committee, and the effect of this was to constitute the Committee apparently as it had been constituted in previous recesses. In reality, in virtue of its being a continuation of the Sessional Committee, it was invested with legislative powers not possessed by any previous Committee. The advantage of a theoretically-continuous administration of the Library throughout the year is not to be overestimated.

The full Committee met just once. It granted the entrée to the Library to fifty-three Parliamentary, Government, and other officers, most of whom had previously enjoyed the privilege; and it nominated an exceptionally strong working sub-committee, which consisted of the Honourables Randall Johnson (the Chairman), Sir W. Fitzherbert, Mr. Hart, and Mr. Mantell; and, from the House of Representatives, the Premier, Dr. Newman, and Mr. Wakefield. By this sub-committee the library was not only governed, but also managed, little having been done by the Chairman, and nothing by the Librarian, without the leave of the Committee having previously been asked or its sanction afterwards obtained.

The Sub-committee held seven meetings. Besides details involved in the ordinary working of the Library, a number of matters of some importance were decided. It was settled that no books or magazines should be sent out of Wellington. Certain days were fixed on which the Library should be closed; but, as these proved to be not coincident with the days on which Parliament Buildings are open, it will be necessary to obtain the consent of the Speaker of the Legislative Council, under whose control the Buildings are, before the agreement becomes efficacious. The question of the propriety of binding all books purchased had been referred by the Joint Committee to the Sub-committee for further consideration; and four temporary rules were adopted: (1.) Books the published price of which was less than 10s. were to be sent in their ordinary cloth binding. (2.) Books the published price of which exceeded 10s. were to be half-bound in the customary morocco. (3.) Novels, and works of a permanent character, though