

1902.
NEW ZEALAND.

“THE MAORI ANTIQUITIES ACT, 1901”

(SUGGESTIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, ETC., IN CONNECTION WITH).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Carroll by Leave of the House.

1. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MAORI MUSEUM.

SIR,—

Wellington, 12th March, 1902.

We have, as requested, considered the rough form in which a Bill authorising the establishment of a Maori museum at Wellington should be drawn, and have the honour to state below the main requirements of such an Act. We recommend, in order to carry out the full intention of “The Maori Antiquities Act, 1901,” that a Bill be introduced to Parliament somewhat as follows:—

1. That a museum be established in Wellington, to be called the National Maori Museum, for the preservation of the antiquities of the Polynesian race.

2. That power be secured under the Bill to appoint a Board of Governors of not less than seven members, of whom not less than three shall be members of the Native race.

3. Power to appoint a Director, and such assistants as may be found necessary.

4. The Board of Governors to be empowered to act as trustees for the safe custody of property intrusted to them.

5. That an estimated sum of £15,000 be appropriated by Act for Museum buildings, and offices pertaining thereto, but with provision that not more than £3,000 be spent in any one year. In addition, to provide for carrying on the Museum, a further sum of £3,000 a year be provided.

It may be added that during the first two years from the commencement of the buildings at least £1,000 a year out of the £3,000 above must be spent in fittings, with a lesser proportion from time to time afterwards; but the whole sum would be required for purchases, exchanges, memoirs, &c., continuously.

The following is a suggested scheme for the staff: Director, £500; preparator, £200; clerk, £160; messenger and caretaker, £100: total, £960.

We also beg to append a rough plan of a suggested scheme of buildings.*

We have, &c.,

S. PERCY SMITH.

A. HAMILTON.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Suggestions for the Requirements of a Maori Museum.

Entrance porch.

Square hall, lighted from the top by a dome or lantern light, and having a light gallery round it at the level of the first floor. This hall to be used for portraits and memorials of noted persons of the Maori race, who would be represented by paintings, and, I hope, eventually by statuary. The full scheme provides for a specially lighted picture-gallery to be added at some future time for portraits and pictures of events in Maori history. The decoration of this hall would be a study in the application of Maori ornament to modern architecture.

Rooms at each side, one of which would be the Curator's office and the other the library for the collection of books, prints, photographs, &c. The rooms above these would be devoted to stores and the preparation of specimens, and the other would be a photographic studio with a top light.

Beyond these rooms would be the museum proper, a large hall divided by two walls which do not go to the roof. The roof of this part of the building should be like that of a wool-store of the ridge-and-valley type. The cases for the specimens would be arranged round the walls and the table-cases, &c., in the middle. All the wall-space would be available except the end, the greater part of which would be large sheets of plate glass, giving a view of the glass-and-iron winter garden in the rear in which are placed the Maori war canoes and the different Maori buildings. If the site permits this portion of the ground to rise at the back so much the better for the effect. A portion of this area would require to have the roof watertight, so that groups of Natives modelled in papier-maché might be placed in the neighbourhood of the canoes. The groups would represent Native carvings, preparing flax, &c. The rest of the extension would be of glass and iron. It would be possible in a building of this kind to have the roof of the house and of the *pataka* of the proper materials. This cannot be done if they are in the open.

I propose to have the large windows previously mentioned so that visitors shall be able to see

* No plan attached to papers laid on table.