

84. So that no renewals would be required?—That is so.

85. *The Chairman.*] Then, in point of fact, the whole of that portion marked blue on the plan would become practically pink—new buildings?—Yes. The foundations may be made use of, but that is all.

86. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] Would you explain to the Committee the disadvantages or difficulties in the way of providing a new Parliamentary Buildings upon the old site?—Well, the disadvantages are shown on the plan. You can see that the present communication between the different parts of the building is not very good: the site is too narrow, and the lighting is bad. We should have very imperfect lighting from the roof, which means deficient ventilation. You must have windows in a building to get healthy ventilation and light. That is a great drawback to that site. Then there are the difficulties with regard to the differences of level: Sydney Street is 20 ft. below the level of the major portion of the site. That means that if you build along Sydney Street frontage you have got rooms that are against the clay bank, and those rooms could not be used for any important purpose. In Frain's contract the lower story was to be used for storage purposes for Bellamy's; and by building along Sydney Street you would have very imperfect lighting.

87. According to this plan of building on the old site there would be no possibility of transit for vehicles of any sort round the building?—No, that would be impossible.

88. *The Chairman.*] What is the estimated cost of putting the building on the old site?—£165,000.

89. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] Was there not an entrance from Sydney Street?—Yes, but vehicles could not be driven round the buildings.

90. But there was an entrance?—Yes, certainly.

91. And there were two entrances by which vehicles could approach the building?—Yes.

92. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] But there was not any transit within the grounds for vehicles?—No.

93. Well, in erecting a brick building of this kind in Wellington is provision made for earthquakes?—Yes, a steel building.

94. That is included in the estimate?—Yes.

95. Would it be safe to put up a building of that kind there without making provision for earthquakes?—I think not.

96. Will you state what class of ventilation there would be in the building?—Many of the rooms in the centre of the building will be very difficult to ventilate; they would require to be ventilated by means of fans. There are no windows in many of the rooms; there are skylights, but they do not give efficient ventilation.

97. How many air-wells and light-wells have you provided in this building?—There would be two light-wells. There is a courtyard in connection with the new portion fronting Molesworth Street, and also a small light-area behind Bellamy's and the Committee-rooms on the Sydney Street side.

98. *Mr. Izard.*] And then another by the billiard-room?—That is partially closed; that is very small.

99. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] With regard to the accommodation you have suggested in this building, have you suggested anything more than would be actually required for the use of Parliament?—I think not—just about the accommodation that is necessary, except that the library is to be extended. We have extended the library more than half its present area.

100. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] That would be two-story?—Yes. As a matter of fact, it would be three. There would be a basement in front, because the land is falling rapidly to Molesworth Street. I have shown the building extending out about 80 ft. to Molesworth Street.

101. *Mr. Barclay.*] If more rooms or more buildings were required it would be very difficult?—If more buildings were required it would be almost impossible, because the site is shown almost covered.

102. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] Now turn to plan D 8, sheet No. 2. What is the estimated cost for the building shown upon the present Government House site ground?—£180,000.

103. Does that provide any more accommodation than is shown on the old Parliamentary Buildings site?—It shows additional accommodation, and it is very much better arranged, but there is not much additional accommodation.

104. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] How many rooms does it provide—to what extent is it larger?—If you look at the sketch of elevation D 8 you will see there are three good floors. What is shown as a basement is really a story 14 ft. high, and there is excellent accommodation on that floor on the basement.

105. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] Will it be above the surface of the ground?—Two feet above the surface everywhere. It is really the ground floor, which extends back to about a third of the depth of the building.

106. *The Chairman.*] With regard to the Committee-rooms, how many extra would there be?—I should think you would have quite a dozen additional Committee-rooms compared with the number shown on sheet No. 3.

107. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] That is as compared with the plan of the building on the old Parliamentary Buildings site?—Yes. There would be twenty-six rooms in the floor above, and in the floor beneath there would be fifteen. There would be forty-one additional rooms as compared with the plan on sheet No. 3. That is, in addition to the number of rooms in the library and for Bellamy's.

108. You say there would be forty-one additional rooms?—Yes, for Committee-rooms, Ministerial rooms, and members' rooms, in addition to those shown on sheet No. 2.