

19. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] You would also require to extend the drawing-room to the same width, because they are both on the one side?—Yes.

[The Hon. Mr. Guinness moved that the length of the dining-room be extended to 41 ft., which was agreed to by the Committee.]

20. *Hon. Mr. Guinness.*] What are the dimensions of the present billiard-room?—The present billiard-room is 28 ft. by 20 ft. and the proposed new room would be 30 ft. by 20 ft., and it has an additional bay window.

21. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] What is the size of the Governor's room in the proposed new Government House?—22 ft. by 18 ft.

22. And the Governor's private room is—what, as compared with the old one?—The old room was 18 ft. by 13 ft. and the proposed new room would be 20 ft. by 13 ft. The Secretary's room is 20 ft. by 16 ft.

23. *Mr. Baume.*] With regard to the drawing and dining rooms, when these are opened up they are practically one huge hall?—Yes, we have folding-doors and projecting piers at the sides.

24. But they do not project very far?—No. In fact, we could do without them.

25. For instance, we have large meetings held at Government House, and I was wondering whether it could be so constructed that these rooms could be turned into a large hall or auditorium?—Yes, they could be made so.

26. *Hon. Mr. Guinness.*] These projections are slight—a few feet?—Yes, but they could be done away with altogether.

27. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] Are those doors to be constructed so that they can be lifted up?—No, folding-doors such as they have in schools: they fold flat against the wall. They slide along a groove at the top and bottom, and fold flat against the wall. Those are the best for large rooms like these.

[Plan of existing Government Departmental Buildings, showing how site may be utilised for the erection of shops, warehouses, or offices on Lambton Quay, produced, marked "Ex. B."]

28. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] In the event of a decision being come to by this Committee, how long would it take to prepare plans and specifications according to your suggestions?—For what building?

29. Calling for tenders for both Parliamentary Buildings and Government House?—It would take quite six months.

30. Would it be the same with regard to the Parliamentary Buildings as with the Government House?—They would go on concurrently.

31. *Mr. Massey.*] Would there be any delay in calling for competitive designs?—Yes, there certainly would be a delay.

32. What would the delay amount to?—I think you would require to give them four months additional.

33. Do you mean to say it would require ten months to do it?—If there was competition it would require at least ten months.

34. *Hon. Mr. Guinness.*] And do you mean to say that for the Parliamentary Buildings only it would take ten months?—Yes. The architects would require at least four months for competitive drawings, and then they would require six months to prepare the working-drawings. I do not think any firm of architects could do it in a shorter space of time than that. It took three months to prepare competitive plans for additions to the Wellington Hospital, and the expenditure was only £8,000.

35. *Mr. Baume.*] What would be about the extra cost involved in calling for competitive designs?—It would be really the amount of the prizes, that is all.

36. *The Chairman.*] And the advertising?—Yes.

37. And the preparation, I suppose?—That is exclusive, of course, of the architect's commission of 6½ per cent.

JACKSON PALMER examined. (No. 2.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—Jackson Palmer.

2. You are Chief Judge of the Native Land Court?—Yes.

3. You have been asked to attend this Committee to give some information with regard to the accommodation required by your Department?—Well, at the present time, down in the Government Buildings, where we are, I have unrecorded titles representing between five and seven million acres of land. If they were burnt we should have no chance of reconstructing them again. They represent some millions of money, and therefore we must have a strong-room. I wrote to the Government two years ago telling them I did not like the responsibility of all that in a wooden room.

4. And therefore you require new offices with a commodious strong-room?—Yes.

5. Have you any idea of the area you would require?—Well, it will require to be a complete room for these, because there are three hundred minute-books, and then we have got all the Native-land purchase files in connection with these since 1870. They will require to be in a complete strong-room. The files cannot be put away, because they have to be searched daily, and have to be open to the public.

6. Then you would require special accommodation, with pigeon-holes easily accessible for all those things?—Yes.

7. And, in order to do that, have you any general idea as to the size of the strong-room you would require for that purpose?—Well, the strong-room would require to be a room much bigger than this room we are in, and it would require to be absolutely fireproof.

8. Assuming this room to be 20 ft. by 12 ft., that would not be large enough?—No. The room I have got them in is 36 ft. by 15 ft., and that is not large enough.