

I have revised that estimate with a view to such economy as could be effected without trenching upon the privileges of the House. I have given the whole matter my best consideration, and feel satisfied that the House would view with very great jealousy any interference with the right they have always enjoyed of determining the remuneration of their officers. These salaries the House revises from year to year, and if I am now to combine with the Government in recommending smaller salaries than have been fixed it would virtually be placing the salaries of the officers of the House at the disposal of the Speaker and Executive, instead of their being, where I think they should continue to be, at the absolute control of the House.

I think that on reflection both the Cabinet and yourself will approve of this view of the matter, and that in any case you will not ascribe my disregard of their suggestions to any desire to be discourteous towards them.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

G. MAURICE O'RORKE, Speaker.

No. 6.

The SPEAKER, House of Representatives, to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Mount Smart, Penrose, 11th April, 1887.

In reply to your letter of the 8th December last, in which the name of Mr. Bell is mentioned, I regret to have to say that I was unable to induce that officer to offer to undertake the charge of the Private Bill Office and the duties of Examiner. His reason for not accepting the position—namely, that a large amount of the private Bill business would probably be transacted by his brother, Mr. H. D. Bell, of Wellington—was sufficient to cause me to refrain from further pressing him to become a candidate for the office of Examiner of Private Bills.

I was in communication in December and January last with the Speaker of the Legislative Council, Sir William Fitzherbert, on the subject of appointing an officer to the charge of the Private Bill Office; but he expressed a wish that I should adhere to a suggestion I made when the office became vacant, and confer with him on the matter when I was attending the University Senate. To this I agreed; but on arrival at Wellington I found Sir William had left for England. In the absence of the Speaker of the Legislative Council, and in the uncertainty when there would be one with whom I could confer, I felt constrained to assume the responsibility of asking the Clerk of Parliaments, Major Campbell, to undertake the duties temporarily. This he has consented to do, so that no inconvenience will be sustained by the public.

The Standing Orders relating to Private Bills do not provide for the amalgamation of the offices of Examiner and Clerk of Parliaments, nor is Major Campbell's appointment valid without the concurrence of the Speaker of the Legislative Council; but I think the Standing Orders Committees of the two Houses should be invited to deliberate on such and kindred matters. I hope that you, as leader of the House, may be on our Committee.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington,

G. MAURICE O'RORKE, Speaker.

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