

The Proposed Masonic Hall, Mark Lane Street

To his Grace the Most Worshipful Grand Master  
and the Brethren of the Committee

Gentlemen

I have the honor to submit to you  
two Designs, marked A. and B. respectively.

The problem which has been  
set before Architects for solution consists chiefly in providing  
a certain amount of accommodation for a certain definite  
sum, to be expended in the most economical manner.

The instructions issued to Architects  
are of such a general character as to be liable to very varied  
interpretations as to the number and size of the apartments  
to be provided. — It is possible that some Competitors  
may honestly believe, and be willing to state, that the amount  
of accommodation suggested by the Committee may be provided  
for the sum specified (about £7300 net), but I have no  
hesitation in stating, as the result of some experience, that  
for this outlay a building could not be erected which would  
substantially and amply meet the views of the Committee,  
so far as a fair reading of the instructions would suggest.  
Were the different Lodge rooms and apartments provided of  
the ample dimensions, and finished and decorated in the  
manner in which I would desire our Metropolitan Masonic  
Hall to be, and with all the necessary subsidiary apartments  
and Offices involved but not specially mentioned in the instructions,  
it could not, in my opinion, be satisfactorily and worthily  
carried out for such an expenditure as £7300.

Keeping therefore in view this —  
all-important question of cost, I have prepared and submit  
design A. which, in my opinion, combined the most economical  
distribution of cubical content and area, which the instructions

would warrant. — It must not, I submit, be objected to it, that any of the apartments are insufficient in dimensions, or that some desirable subsidiary apartments are wanting, as the provision of those deficiencies only involves some slight addition of expenditure. My object has been to keep conscientiously within the sum named, and to provide the accommodation specified as fairly as such a condition would permit.

Should this, or the plan suggested in design B. be found to possess any merit in the general arrangement. I submit that this want is not to be confounded with the question of sufficiently ample accommodation, as that involves a mere extension of certain portions of the plan, which do not affect their general economy and arrangement.

Design A. I accordingly submit, as being within the conditions specified, and while I refer the Committee to the accompanying estimate of a Building Surveyor of experience, I respectfully assure them that this plan, or any other of equal or greater area and cubic content could not be carried out in anything but a very plain manner internally, — too plain, I think, for the importance of the building — for the sum specified. I also believe that any plan however excellent in arrangement, which proposed less superficial area of accommodation than this, must in some respect fail to comply with the fair spirit of the instructions.

In design B. I venture to submit an arrangement of more contracted dimensions, and of more economical distribution, but capable in every respect of extension. And while design A. might meet the conditions by providing very extensive accommodation in a rather plain manner, this design would meet them in another respect by providing more moderate accommodation in accordance with the cost, in a more satisfactorily finished manner, and is at the same time capable of future extension and amplification.

With regard to the external appearance — the elevation towards Molesworth Street — I must fairly consider in a certain sense — as a secondary consideration to the internal economy of the building. The materials which I suggest are Portland Stone and Limestone. Brick is also suitable

for the general facing, and I would reserve to myself a right to estimate in that material, if called on for more detailed particulars - I have in both adopted the arrangement of raising the principal floor somewhat, by a basement, as giving greater dignity to the Elevation, rendering the basement floor more serviceable, and at the same time retaining the present basement stories to a great extent available, without extra cost, as Cellars, Stores &c,

I would strongly urge on the Committee, should they adopt either of those plans in whole or in part, that the principal rooms - the Grand Lodge room, and Dining Hall should be increased in dimension, at a small additional outlay, but it would not be possible by any arrangement, however ingenious, to do so under the present conditions of accommodation and cost.

It is proposed to avoid the inconvenience of fireplaces in crowded rooms, to admit heating by warm flues or hot water apparatus in the Lodge room and great Dining Hall, but fireplaces may be substituted if desirable.

It has been fully considered and provided for, but it has not been considered necessary to indicate the system on the drawings.

On the other side appears my estimate of the comparative cost, which I believe will bear the closest scrutiny.

I have the Honor to be  
Most Worshipful Grand Master and Brethren  
Yours fraternally  
"Ecce quam bonum" -

Design A.

By Surveyor's estimate accompanying	£ 7500	0	0
Probable rent from premises in Frederick Lane, undisturbed £13 at ten years	420	0	0
<b>Total Least</b>	<b>£ 7080</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
By occasional cost of extension of principal rooms and decorations.	500	0	0
	<b>£ 7580</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Design B.

By Surveyor's estimate	£ 6500	0	0
Rent of premises in Frederick Lane at above, less value of entrance to Builder's yard, at ten years	320	0	0
Probable rent of Builder's yard, and store at fifteen years.	420	0	0
<b>Total Least</b>	<b>£ 5760</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>