

with the exception of one particular place, I never heard Mr. Brindley complain on the subject. He wanted stone packing from 18in. to 2ft. apart, which I was unwilling to give him, as we differed in our interpretation of the specification. I alluded to what I had done in other places in regard to stone packing, where I had put it 3in. or 4in. apart, but I was quite willing to concede him 9in., which I did. As a matter of fact, there never has been any dispute as to the quantity of concrete, because the metal was always measured in a box made to Mr. Brindley's own dimensions. I forget what the exact proportions of metal to cement were, but I think they were either 5 or 6 to 1. At first Chain Hills sand was mixed with the metal, but afterwards I got a good supply of gravel from Shag River brought down by the Railway Department; then sand was stopped being used. With the exception I have mentioned, I never heard any complaint from Mr. Brindley about the cement; there was no complaint beyond the stone packing, and that was with reference to the distances apart at which it should be put. The exception I have already alluded to is the centre wall in the extreme south wing. I was at Seacliff one afternoon, and coming down the back of the south wing I noticed Mr. Brindley, from the embankment, was standing over the man who was working there packing the trench. I went down and inquired what was the matter, and found that the man had been packing the stones 9in. apart, but Mr. Brindley had ordered them to be altered and put 18in. apart. I ordered the man to put the stones back 9in. apart, the trench being a narrow and shallow one. Mr. Brindley, being a bit hot tempered, the same as myself, got his back up at this, and he walked straight away. It is only a narrow wall, I may say; but the wall was finished. Mr. Brindley, however, refused to allow the bricklayers to work on it, and he stopped them. I saw Mr. Lawson in town, and explained the matter to him, and he said that it would have to come out. It stood some three weeks, and then part of it was taken out. I was there while it was being taken out. It was a very slow process indeed removing it, because it was as hard as bluestone. The part taken out measured, perhaps, 4yds. or 5yds. I kept that concrete lying there for months open to the inspection of any one. There was no concealment about its quality. Mr. Brindley, seeing how hard the concrete stood, admitted it was good; well, I should not, perhaps, say admitted, but he stopped it being taken out, and said there was no need for any more being taken out. The foundations were then made good, and there was no more said about it. The correspondence that has been read is dated at about the time that occurred. Mr. Brindley wrote that I was setting him at defiance, and all that; and he wanted the man who had done this work to be discharged. I do not think I can tell you anything more about the concrete. Respecting the friction between Mr. Brindley and myself, there can be no doubt that his letters confirm it; but that friction occurred, as you have heard from the last witness, through Mr. Brindley interfering with the men; in fact, it went on to such an extent that my foreman had to leave, as he has told you—the foreman who directly carried on the whole of the work in this central block and part of the north ambulatory. This man, I may tell you, had been with me for very many years. He was foreman at the Union Bank, at Watson's, and other buildings I have erected; and I had to discharge him for that reason. That foreman left, and another took his place. I may state that I always had count kept of the number of bricks we made and used, so that we knew when a man was doing a fair or honest day's work. We used to set on the average, when I inspected the work, which I mostly did at the outset, 800 bricks per man per day; but afterwards we found there was a falling off to 500 bricks per man per day. When it came to that I had to discharge that foreman. I told Mr. Brindley on many occasions that he must not interfere with my workmen; that I was losing all control of them; that if he wanted anything done he had only to apply to myself or the foreman, and it should be attended to. That was the real and principal cause of the friction between us. There were several other things that did not tend to make the feeling any more amicable. For instance, in the front central block all the columns were built in cement, but I did not object to that, because I knew that they had a very great weight to carry—had a very heavy gable upon them. Then he had cement bonds put round; I do not allude to cement when the hoop-iron was set in cement; it was a bond of 18in. of brickwork; these were five or six courses of brickwork set in cement. In fact, there was such a considerable quantity of cement ordered by him that I objected, and wanted to know if all this cement was to be paid for. He said no. Hence further friction. But I was not even then inclined to interfere; indeed, I conceded to Mr. Brindley what must have cost me a considerable sum of money. Mr. Brindley was not fond of having concrete above ground; as a matter of fact I do not think that there is much concrete above ground. The base of this centre block is shown in concrete, but it is carried up in cement brickwork, and is 2ft. 6in. Mr. Brindley wanted this plinth from the ground carried up in brickwork and cement, and I conceded that to him. Each course—that is, of brickwork, must have cost me considerably more than concrete would, because, while we had the bluestone for concrete on the ground, we had a difficulty about making the bricks and in getting sand from a distance. Yet I conceded that and never grumbled. But when this cement was going in right and left in different parts of the building, without any payment being made to me for it, you can quite understand that I grumbled, and that will account for the irritation between us. Certainly after that I seldom went near Mr. Brindley nor he near me. I never had any words with him; we just agreed to differ. I left him in the end with a very good feeling, which I believe he has towards myself. I may say, speaking of the building generally, and from my own knowledge of buildings, I believe that the Seacliffe Asylum is about as faithfully-erected building as any in New Zealand. I do not know any part of the building which has been "slummed"—certainly there was no intention on my part to slum; on the contrary, very far from it; I had a price sufficient to make good work of it. In regard to the concrete, it has been insinuated that I have reduced the thickness of the foundation in order to save money for myself. Now, as a matter of fact—as I think I have pretty well shown, and Mr. Brindley can substantiate it—all the foundations were measured as per plan—measured as they were put in the ground, and the difference either added or deducted, as the case might be, and the result was a total of 700yds. extra work. You have seen that the schedule-price is £2 5s. for concrete in