

thing : he was entirely acquainted with what the whole thing was to be : I did not know it. That is a good reason why I should have assistance now ; but I again say I submit to your ruling, and I shall open my case and do the best I can.

*Mr. Blair :* I should not like that remark to go uncontradicted. As I stated at the beginning of the inquiry, this inquiry was not promoted or asked for by the Public Works Department ; but so far as the Public Works Department and—

*The Chairman :* We have already talked that matter out. It is no use going over it again.

*Mr. Blair :* I wished to mention it, or a wrong impression might go abroad.

*Mr. Gore :* Before Mr. Lawson commences I should like to ask if the evidence of Mr. Hay has been copied out. I took some notes of it, the accuracy of which Mr. Hay disputes, and I have no means of ascertaining their correctness. I should like to know if they are written out and if I can get them.

*The Chairman :* We have no objection to your seeing the evidence which has been written out. It has not been corrected.

*Mr. Gore :* I should like to see it as taken down by the shorthand writers, because if portions are to be deleted then my notes, of course, will not be correct.

*The Chairman :* You have nothing to do but to inquire whether certain evidence has been taken down.

*Mr. Gore :* A witness cannot blow hot and cold at the same time. If he stated in a prior examination a certain thing and he wants to give different evidence now, I want to know which statement is right. I submit that I should have a copy of Mr. Hay's evidence before he is re-examined.

*The Chairman :* Mr. Hay's evidence, as far as it has been copied out, is here, and you are at liberty to go through it.

*Mr. Lawson :* Is it understood that as the evidence goes on it will be written out and available for inspection ?

*The Chairman :* It will be open for inspection here.

*Mr. Lawson :* And that it will be written out as soon as possible ?

*The Chairman :* Yes.

*Mr. Blair :* As Mr. Chapman is going to remain alongside Mr. Lawson's elbow I presume I may have a lawyer alongside of mine.

*The Chairman :* Yes, a dozen if you like.

*Mr. Lawson :* I understand that Mr. Blair has finished—that this is all the evidence he is going to bring.

*Mr. Blair :* No, I stated that I was two-thirds through. The understanding was this : As Mr. Lawson was not prepared to go on with his case I went on with mine. It was understood that I should go on as far as I could without Mr. Brindley ; and this I did. Then Mr. Lawson was to go on with his case and finish. I have rebutting evidence to bring when I hear what Mr. Lawson says.

*Mr. Lawson :* I mean to confine myself to what Mr. Blair has already stated.

*The Chairman :* As far as Mr. Brindley is concerned, is his evidence going to be taken now, or when ?

*Mr. Blair :* No ; he is not ready to give evidence now. The distinct understanding was—you will find it put down in my statement, and agreed to by yourself—that I was to have the privilege of recalling any witness I wanted after Mr. Lawson had stated his case, because I was only anticipating Mr. Lawson's case.

*The Chairman :* Not to repeat former evidence.

*Mr. Blair :* No ; I am not going to repeat, but I distinctly claim the right to rebut.

*Mr. Lawson :* He claimed the right to refer to the evidence—to make a speech ; that is all he claimed, so far as I know : and then he said that Mr. Gore and I might go on talking for hours if we liked. He simply claimed the right of review, which I at once conceded, although he opened it.

*The Chairman :* I think, so far as the Commissioners are concerned, they are anxious to get as much evidence as they possibly can, and they will not refuse any request to bring forward evidence that will help them either on one side or the other.

*Mr. Blair :* I have certainly some evidence to bring forward.

*The Chairman :* We are not bound by strict forms.

*Mr. Gore :* I told you I had produced all the evidence I could do, but I understand that in the event of new evidence cropping up I shall have the privilege of bringing other witnesses.

*The Chairman :* If it is not refused to the one it will not be refused to the other.

*Mr. Lawson :* Is it to be understood we are all to have the same right in the matter ?

*The Chairman :* I suppose the Commissioners will have power to bring it to an end some time or other.

ROBERT ARTHUR LAWSON SWORN and examined.

*Mr. Lawson :* It was my intention to enter fully into a statement as to the initiation of this present inquiry, but I will not do so now. Suffice it to say that after much difficulty it has been obtained, and certainly not too soon, through my agency, and I am glad that the opportunity is now given, and before a competent tribunal, to ascertain the cause of the injury done, and even now progressing, at the north wing of the Seacliff Lunatic Asylum. This cause I hope to be able to establish by testimony of the clearest and most indisputable character, and in doing so wholly to separate from it the multiplicity of subjects which have been needlessly but somewhat skilfully and systematically grouped round it, evidently with the object of screening it from view and so warping the judgment sought for in the whole matter. I shall further follow step by step the sworn statement of Mr. W. N. Blair, as given before this Commission, and show by testimony that cannot be disputed that all the charges he therein makes, so far, at least, as I am concerned, are