

necessary ; but in any case I would carry down the drain so as effectually to intercept the underground drainage and so as to be under the level of the deepest foundations of the building, as indicated on rough section, which gives a general idea of the surface-outline, &c., at A B. The part from W to drain on section gives also a general idea of the slope on which the temporary building stands as compared with the site on which the permanent buildings are to be erected, as shown by rough sketch on section. The drain shown on sketch would have a fall both to the north and south, and good facilities are given by the formation of the site for its construction. With regard to Dr. Hector's recommendation : when on the site the trenches for the tower were being cut, and I followed out his advice in cutting down the whole area of the tower to a lower level, the portion of greensand which occurred near this point proving only to be an isolated quantity of not more than a few barrow-loads, and no flow of water nor indications of such was visible after the rain-water which was then in the trenches was removed. The foundation of tower is now on hard blue clay-marl, and a solid bed of concrete from this upwards. A shaft is also being sunk at the north-east part of the central building, as suggested by Dr. Hector ; and as soon as the thickness of clay and boulder-formation is found we will be able to know at what cost the underpinning of walls can be done ; and, if it should still be considered necessary, to have this done also ; although I am inclined to think that it would not be requisite if the back main isolating-drain is carried out as intended, and as soon as the further extension of the clearing of the ground will enable it to be gone on with. As to altering the plans so as to turn the south wing down the spur, and face north, I am distinctly of opinion it would not be advisable, nor would it tend to give further stability to that already provided for ; because you will notice that on the plan cross wings of considerable extent are already contemplated to be carried down from the main line of the building in the direction referred to, and the general arrangements of the building would not be so satisfactory in successive steps as in uniform levels. Then, as to cutting down back portion to uniform level with front, the extent of excavation renders this most unadvisable, and the back building would be too much buried and damp. The kitchen wing, which is the main back wing, is only two stories in height—in part only one—and by the present plan is arranged level with the dining-room floor, and the whole of the basement portion of the main central portion of building is used as an open corridor. The tower is to be the clock-tower of the whole building, and also can be used for observation purposes, as it is the only point from which surveillance can be exercised into the various portions of the yards and airing-courts. I look upon the tower not as an architectural feature, but as a necessity in all such buildings ; and the position and foundation of the tower, as now carried out, is, I consider, the most secure of any one point in the whole area. I have taken upon me to delay giving immediate orders for the stoppage of the works as a whole until I hear from you in reply to this ; but, if the Minister of Works should still think it advisable, I shall do so, and in which case please inform me by telegram. I feel it my duty at the same time to point out that by suspending the works the contractor may have a claim for compensation, and it is chiefly for this reason that I have not given him written notice so far. Also, the work now going on does not interfere with anything which may be decided, the only works progressing being levelling up concrete bearings, making of bricks, and clearance of site. The plans as prepared were designed to suit the site, and after surveys and sections of the ground were furnished me from the Public Works offices. So far as I am concerned I have no objection to prepare fresh plans, but I am still of opinion, as from the first I understand you also have been, that the arrangement of the building on the site available was the best, taking into view all the requirements of the building and drainage, &c. I trust I have been explicit enough in my statement, but if there is any point I have overlooked or have not referred to, I shall be glad to give any further information in my power.—Waiting your further instructions, I remain yours respectfully, R. A. LAWSON.” I am still waiting those further instructions. I have never had a reply to that letter. On the 29th March, 1881, I again wrote Mr. Blair, in a letter referring to other matters as well. I need not read what was said about the other matters, but I will note what were referred to. The letter refers to the water-supply, isolating-drain, and accommodation for patients. These are the three items, and I will read the portion referring to the isolating-drain : “ I would further press the expediency of proceeding with the main back drainage, which has been deemed essential in order to isolate the whole of the block or site of the permanent buildings, so as to prevent any chance of ground-slips. The present dry season gives every facility for this work being done, but should heavy rain set in without the principal portion of this work being accomplished the ground around the principal portion of the building will be rendered impassable, and damage may result to the foundations of work already done. Dr. Hector in his report laid much stress on the necessity for isolating the site. I therefore deem it more urgent on my part to press the matter on your attention.” I received no notice of the receipt of this letter whatever—no reference whatever to the ground-slip. That was in March, 1881—the 29th of March. In a letter to Mr. Brindley, dated the 24th April, 1884, and referring to other matters, but I will read the whole letter—because it is entirely about Seacliff. Addressing Mr. Brindley, I say : “ Dr. Brindley,—I send you enclosed Gore's final account just to hand, by which you will notice he has managed to raise his amount from £5,976 to £8,480.” There are three dashes after that. “ It will be better for you to have an opportunity to study it before coming in to go over the whole matter. Let me know what day will suit you best to come in, and I will arrange to have Gore here to go into the accounts once for all. Perhaps it will be better for you to come in at night, so as to get the following day, and at the same time bring enclosed account with you. Also please remember items of expenditure over contract outside of Gore, such as drains, yards, cottages, &c., for making up my own account. Mr. Ussher was to have a look at the movement showing at the north wing, and see whether a drain behind would be necessary.” At this time—the 24th April, 1884—they were only beginning to discover that it might be necessary. “ I wish they had carried out my original proposal of isolating the whole site by cutting the main drain. They may have to do it yet after mischief is done.” And they will.