

spouting, and in reply to same, have to state that the spouting of which I approved at Messrs. Clarke and Thompson's was 5in. by 4in., D-shaped, or 4½in by 3½in. inside. I preferred its being D-shaped to square; but the interior size was, at the least, 3½in., not 2½in. as you state those now delivered on ground. They are too small, and must not be used. I have just gone over to Clarke and Thompson's, and verified the correctness of measurement; if the heads are too small to get in between corbels, they will do secured under as per your sketch." . . . That shows clearly enough about that. I gave these instructions: they were to be of the size specified; also that I preferred them D-shaped instead of rectangular, for the reason that the D-shaped, when placed in position, would offer less opportunity for the inmates to handle them or injure themselves by coming in contact with them, and they have always proved themselves amply sufficient in that respect. I wish specially to call to your notice that all the matters I have referred to, I have given testimony concerning—written testimony. I do not depend upon hearsay from this, that, or the other friend or person. These are the records of the building as it went, and which cannot be gainsaid—no getting over them whatever. No matters of opinion I am giving you, but facts, which have come before me, I say, as the building progressed, and they are now placed before you in the books. And now, and finally, I come to a rather peculiar portion of Mr. Blair's statement—namely, Mr. Blair's knowledge of what he calls "scamped foundations" in June, 1885—in June, remember, 1885. I have again to ask at this stage whether the letters I asked for yesterday have been placed before you? The letters—namely, between Mr. Blair and Mr. Ussher, on or about that date.

*The Chairman:* No.

*Mr. Lawson:* I wish them to be produced now.

*The Chairman:* We have none put in.

*Mr. Blair:* What date?

*Mr. Lawson:* They were referred to yesterday—three of them, and on that subject.

*The Chairman:* We have a letter from Mr. Ussher to the Engineer-in-Chief, but we have no letters whatever from the Engineer-in-Chief to Mr. Ussher.

*Mr. Lawson:* Well, those are the letters I want to have handed in. I wish all the correspondence about that produced. I am determined that they shall be produced, and I shall not go further until every letter is produced.

*Mr. Blair:* If you will mention the letters between two certain dates I will put them all in.

*Mr. Lawson:* I have put all my private letters in for the last ten years. I am not afraid to expose my letters to the world.

[Mr. Blair handed in letters from the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief to Mr. Ussher. (Exhibit No. 23.) Also a plan which Mr. Lawson asked for yesterday, of "cross-section at slip, Seacliff Asylum." (No. 24.)]

*Mr. Lawson:* That is the one on which I reported before the issue of Mr. Blair's published report of August, 1885. I reported, and he quoted part of it.

*The Chairman:* The tracing was sent to the Engineer-in-Chief in April, 1885.

*Mr. Lawson:* I say about it the trench herein referred to is shown in Drawing No. 2, cross-section of slip, Seacliff Asylum. You see it is admitted clearly in public documents that there is a slip; there it is, as far back as 1885, and Mr. Blair comes here to-day and tells us that there is no slip—that there was no movement in the foundations at all; that is the main part of the statement, that everything is caused by the deflection of ½in. in 72ft. That is the reason I want to produce that document. As far back as June, 1885, Mr. Blair gives us his sworn statement that he became aware the foundations were defective, and that it would be difficult to find a more flagrant example of scamping than such a discovery afforded him; that was in 1885. What, I ask, was Mr. Blair's plain duty with such a discovery before him, as a responsible public servant receiving Government emoluments, and in charge of so important a trust?—surely not to screen the scampers and their scamping; but, as a faithful public servant, to expose them as they deserved to be exposed. Does he do this? No. He walks about from 1885 to 1888 with it, so far even as his department is concerned, hidden away apparently. Gentlemen, you have the documents before you to prove that. There is Mr. O'Connor's letter to-day placed before you, which states that up to January of this present year nothing was formulated in this office as to Seacliff. Nay, more. Three months after this same June Mr. Blair publishes a report, which was laid on the table of the House, dated the 17th August, 1885. If you have not got it, here is a copy for each of you. In that you will find that he poohpoohs the importance of the slip; the whole thing at Seacliff was nothing except for the injury to the work at one point. He publishes that report, and he says there is not any deviation; and, amongst other things worthy of the notice of this Commission under the circumstances, he says it is quite clear that the movement in the ground has stopped altogether. You see he admits the movement, which he said at that stage had become so small as to be harmless; but still it is there.

*Mr. Blair:* That was on the authority of Mr. Lawson.

*Mr. Lawson:* No. You read the latter portion of this report.

*Mr. Blair:* Well, just read it.

*Mr. Lawson:* I was not going to read it, but I have no objection to doing so. I shall only quote clause 6 of the report, as it is the only portion which refers to this matter. Extracts from Dr. Grabham's reports are quoted. In November, 1884, he says, "I was sorry to notice that movement of the soil is still progressing beneath the female wing, as evidenced by cracked walls, falling plaster, and broken concrete pavement. This movement is evidently promoted by soakage of water from high ground at the rear of the building. It is highly desirable to provide against this soakage by laying down tar-pavement in the airing-courts for a width of at least 12ft. from the walls, and by providing proper drainage to carry away the rainfall from them." You will notice that this is Dr. Grabham's clear statement about the building—"the movement of the soil is still progressing." You see we have evidence of this from all quarters. Then the next extract is, "I have again to draw your attention to the structural defects mentioned in my former reports. Move-