

*Mr. Blair :* It shows that the Contractor was in the habit of getting Mr. Lawson to pass what Mr. Brindley would not do.

*Mr. Gore :* Has the evidence Mr. Blair is now extracting anything whatever to do with the object of the Commission? As I understand, the business of the Commission is to inquire into the cause of the cracking of the building. That, I understand, is attributed to the sinking of the foundations. I do not know the object of this.

*The Chairman :* It is a question as to the quality of the bricks.

*Mr. Lawson :* Mr. Gore may imagine what he likes, and write what he likes: I am not responsible for that. [Letter, Gore to Brindley, put in and marked "28."]

2279. *Mr. Blair.*] There is just one question or two more. Reverting to the big-slip theory: you said you believed the whole damage was caused by a big slip?—I am not going to say a big slip. I say a big slip or movement of the ground.

2280. That is, carrying the whole building with it?—Apparently not the whole building.

2281. The whole of the north wing?—I cannot say even the whole of the north wing, but apparently.

2282. That is because one part objects to go. You do not hold that the whole of the north wing is going?—It has moved apparently. I am simply looking at the thing as it stands, the same as you do. I am not going to make an assertion that it is so inevitably.

2283. You made a very strong assertion?—So I do as far as my judgment carries me.

2284. You said the whole building moved?—No; not the whole building.

2285. The whole of the north wing, is not that the case?

*The Chairman :* I understood the witness to say the north wing had moved bodily.

*Witness :* That is, a portion I mean of the north wing, or the cross-block of the north wing.

2286. *Mr. Blair.*] Do you believe the whole of the north wing is moving bodily downhill?—It appears to have done so. I would not say that all is moving at an equally rapid rate.

2287. If that moved would not cracks appear in the north wing so soon as the movement began?—I have already said it is quite possible the hill could move without showing these signs. I have already said so.

2288. You said in your evidence that I had held the view that it was a ground-slip?—It is your reports I go by.

2289. What statement—what report?—The report for 1885.

2290. Is that the only one?—That is the only one I can put my finger on. I can only take your words for it.

2291. Do I say in that report it was a ground-slip?—You refer to it certainly as a ground-slip.

2292. No, I do not refer it as a ground-slip?—"Movement of the ground"—it is the same thing.

*Mr. Blair :* Mr. Lawson is putting words into my mouth.

*Witness :* I am not wanting to do that. I am only quoting your own words.

*Mr. Blair :* The words I used were—

*Witness :* I have quoted from your own report.

2293. *Mr. Blair.*] The words I used were: "After careful examination of the building and the ground I came to the conclusion that even in the small area affected there is no great movement in any particular direction. The injury to the building is no more than may have been caused by irregular settlement in the foundations?"—I am quite satisfied with that: I do not want to say any more.

2294. And before that I said: "I am glad to say these fears are groundless, as there is no general movement of the land." From that report how could you arrive at the conclusion that I said there was a ground slip?—From your own words. I have quoted your words.

2295. From the last clause, "It is quite clear that the movement of the ground has stopped altogether." There is movement of the ground I admit?—That is all I say.

2296. The building could not be injured without movement of the ground; what I say is that it is not horizontal movement?—I only want you to admit your own words. I do not want to put words into your mouth, and if I did I did not mean to do so.

2297. You quoted Dr. Grabham's evidence in support of movement?—It is there now.

2298. Why did not you take Dr. Grabham's evidence about putty-joints?—That was so ridiculous I did not think it worth while taking notice of.

2299. Is it not possible the other is equally ridiculous?—You can judge for yourselves.

2300. There is just one other point I want to ask you about. You said that you had difficulty in getting particulars of the charges made against you?—Yes; I gave the evidence of that.

2301. And that I behaved unfairly?—I did not say you specially.

2302. Or the department?—Yes, the department.

2303. Is it usual on the eve of an inquiry like this to give evidence in support of one's case to the person who asks for the inquiry?—I do not know what is usual in these inquiries. To tell the truth this is the first time I have had anything to do with such things, and I hope it will be the last.

2304. I think you might consult Mr. Chapman as to whether I am right in saying that he who asserts, proves?—What I asked for was to get information about what had been said in Parliament, and that is not before the inquiry; that was said in a public place, and I thought I had the right to know what that was.

2305. You wanted to know what you were charged with?—I wanted to know what was said in Parliament.

2306. Was there anything said about asking for what had been said in Parliament in that letter you wrote to the Minister? Did you ask after what had been said in Parliament when you wrote that letter?—Yes; I re-read it here to-day.