

2307. Will you point it out in the letter you wrote to the Minister?—Yes; here it is: “I have not yet received any particulars or information as to statements made by Mr. Blair or Public Works Department as to the Seacliff Asylum in Parliament.”

2308. I am not yet in Parliament, thank God?—I said I asked for these statements that were made up by you or by the Public Works Department as to the Seacliff Asylum in Parliament. I do not say by you, but by the Public Works Department.

2309. What date is that?—The 20th January, 1888. The information I sought for was what was made public in Wellington, and I wanted it to be given to me here.

2310. You ask for certain reports?—I asked simply for what was said about the building in Parliament. It was publicly said there in Wellington, and I could not get to know it here in Dunedin; and I thought that was unfair, and I think so still.

2311. You said there were insinuations against the building, the architect, and everybody else in the public Press. Were these insinuations prompted by the Public Works Department?—I cannot tell where they came from. They seemed to come from the sky above, and from the earth beneath, and from the waters under the earth.

2312. You wrote a letter to the *Evening Star* with reference to this building a year or so ago?—I do not know.

2313. You have not got it?—No.

2314. Did you write to the *Evening Star* in ambiguous terms, alluding to a Government Inspector being at Seacliff, and the work being carried out under him?—I cannot understand what you mean.

2315. Did you write to the evening papers here on one occasion, referring to the works at Seacliff having been carried out under a Government Inspector?—If I did, it was true. I do not remember.

2316. Can you produce that letter?—No.

2317. Have you any recollection of that letter leaving it to be inferred that the Public Works Department had the conduct of the building?—No, I have not.

2318. Did you see articles in the paper stating that the Public Works Department were altogether responsible for the building?—I do not think I did at any time. I wrote only one or two letters to the papers altogether about the whole thing. I suffered in silence. I did not write in ambiguous terms. I like to make things plain when I write.

2319. *Mr. Gore.*] I should like to ask Mr. Lawson if he has known of other buildings than the Seacliff Asylum that have had stone packing put in the concrete foundations?—Oh, yes! plenty.

2320. Are there any in Dunedin?—Yes.

2321. Can you mention one?—The last I put up is that down on the flat.

2322. You mean on the reclaimed land?—On the reclaimed land, for Mr. James McDonald.

2323. How far apart was the packing put in the foundation?—Nearly close.

2324. Has the building shown any indications of settlement?—Not so far as I know, to any extent. There may be a little.

2325. What is the concrete in Mr. McDonald's building composed of?—It is lime-concrete.

2326. Do you know other buildings where packing has been placed nearly close?—Yes, I know of other buildings.

2327. Have they shown any signs of settlement?—No, not that I know of.

2328. *Mr. Skinner:* Mr. Lawson, I suppose the building was finished to your entire satisfaction?—Yes; there were one or two small items left to be done, but they were mere trifles. Towards the end I may say the thing was hurried most fearfully to get possession of it. They nearly kicked us out. It was as much as we could do to get done.

Mr. R. A. LAWSON recalled.

2329. *Mr. Blair.*] Did you ever consult me, or speak to me as to dispensing with Mr. Brindley's services because he was not getting on with the Contractor?—Not to my knowledge.

2330. If I swear you did, will you deny it?—Yes; I will distinctly. I never did such a thing to my knowledge. Mr. Brindley from first to last had my confidence. The only fault I had to find with Mr. Brindley was his petulant temper. I speak it to his face; that was all. I never had any other fault to find with Mr. Brindley, and I say it before his face, and that is the reason I asked him to work amicably with the Contractor.

ALFRED THOMAS BRINDLEY, sworn and examined.

2331. *Mr. Blair.*] Were you Inspector at the Seacliff Asylum?—Yes.

2332. From first to last?—From first to last; from the 13th of October, 1879, to the 30th of September, 1884.

2333. Had any work been done towards the building when you went out?—A certain portion of the excavation had been prepared by the patients under Mr. Hume's charge, and portions of the bush had been cleared: about three and a half acres. The sections lines of the levels were all pegged out.

2334. What were your principal duties?—To superintend the work under Mr. Lawson's instructions. I was given to understand I was under Mr. Lawson's instructions.

2335. Did you get any instructions from the Public Works Department with reference to the building?—No; not direct. I got the letter of appointment, which I have here. [Mr. Lawson asked that the letter of appointment should be produced, which was done].

2336. *The Chairman:* Is this the formal letter of appointment? It reads quite differently from what was the intention of it. Mr. Low writes: “Referring to your application of the 7th of July, and to subsequent conversations on the subject, I now beg to inform you that I am authorised to employ you as Inspector of the new lunatic asylum about to be erected at Seacliff.”