

2380. *Mr. Blair.*] With reference to this stone-packing, did you object to it?—Yes, I did. It was never satisfactory.

2381. You saw the letters that have been put in, your own letters, with reference to the stone-packing; do they represent the state of affairs as it then stood?—Yes, that is so.

2382. They did when you wrote those letters?—Yes, there is no doubt about that. Some of them might have been written in a moment of very great wrath, but even then they did not show what I felt at the time.

2383. With reference to this stone-packing, did Mr. Gore practically put you at defiance in the matter?—Yes, he did on several occasions. Speaking about that I see there is the evidence of James McDonald; he speaks about the way they were putting the concrete in the trenches. He was a very decent man. I never had anything to say to him about not putting the work in properly, except with regard to this concrete. I said to him one day that he was putting the packing 3in. or 4in. apart, and I maintain that he never put it further apart than that. The evidence is that he says it is 6in., 7in., and 8in. apart. That is not correct. He said to me, "I must do as I am instructed." What his instructions were he did not say, but the proof was the way in which he put the stone in.

2384. Did they sometimes put it in improperly when you were standing by?—Yes; there was one man who put it in improperly when I was standing by. That is the man I asked should be dismissed.

2385. Was he dismissed?—I believe he was.

2386. Was this matter of concrete a matter on which there was continual dispute?—Yes, there was always bickering going on. It was never satisfactory from beginning to end to myself. One thing is that sand was worth 7s. 6d. a load landed on the ground. There was nothing said in the specifications about the quantity of sand. It simply says, "stone and a sufficient quantity of shingle," and there was no shingle brought on the ground till the concrete of the north wall was put in. It was always mixed up with sand.

2387. Was it mixed with sand and broken stone?—Yes.

2388. Were those stones washed before being put in the packing?—I never saw them washed, or very seldom. They might have been once or twice. The stone was brought from the bush, or as it came out of the excavation. Sometimes it was spalled, sometimes it was not; but there was no attempt at washing. It was dumped down at the side of the bank or else in the trench, and just hand-placed. It was put on the bank, and as I said before the place was always mud; you could never do anything there without jack-boots on, and if it was put there you may guess what sort of binding there would be with the concrete, with, as I said before, 2in. metal.

2389. If you had been acting in the way ordinary Inspectors do would you have taken upon yourself to determine anything about the concrete foundations?—No, I should not; though I am perfectly satisfied, with regard to the depth of the foundations, that they would carry all the weight that is on them; that is, if they were put in properly.

2390. Did Mr. Lawson practically leave the whole conduct of the thing in your hands?—Yes.

2391. Except backing you up, we will say?—You may say practically he did. He placed that confidence in me. He knew my abilities, but I do not consider that he backed me up to the letter of it in certain things.

2392. Did he back you up as regards that concrete in the way that in your opinion you ought to have been backed up?—You are referring to—

2393. The packing?—Only in writing that letter he backed me up to a certain extent, and with regard to some that was removed, that had been put in by that man who was discharged, we had some taken out. It was two or three weeks before it was taken out; before the thing was actually settled. I think I wrote a letter, but did not get any answer to it for six or seven days. It is now in the letter-book.

2294. As to the preparation of this pile of plans we have here, would you consider that an Inspector's duty, or the duty of a clerk of works?—No, the duty of a clerk of works is only to keep records of the work—measurement of the work. I do not think that I ought to have been called upon to make calculations of all the openings, and things of that sort, and to set the whole thing out.

2395. Do you think you ought to have had these plans prepared for you?—Yes.

2396. *Mr. Lawson.*] All these plans you have made?—The plans required for the work. I do not say all those. There are certain of them might have been done without.

2397. *Mr. Blair.*] Do you consider that you should have been supplied by the architect with all the plans required for the supervision and setting-out of the work?—Yes, most decidedly. Of course, there might be drawings, scale-drawings, that the clerk of works might be supposed to do, in which there were any mouldings; but the architect likes generally to do that himself. There were not many mouldings in the building. It becomes a question of taste with regard to these things. Working-plans of the size I have made ought to be supplied.

2398. With reference to this back wall, did you object to that being treated as an extra?—Yes, right through; from beginning to end.

2399. You were in Mr. Lawson's office before the contract was let. Were the working drawings prepared in a great hurry?—I forget now exactly the time. I fancy when I went to Mr. Lawson it was somewhere about July, 1878, and I was with him nine or ten months, I think, altogether; and I think it took about four or five months to get the plans out. The sketch-plans were drawn, submitted, and altered, and that is the result there. (The contract drawings.) I would not be certain about the time, I have no data to go by; but that is my impression.

2400. In the north wing did you want the packing done away with altogether? There is a letter to that effect?—If it is in the letter-book it is correct. I have had no communication at all till I got over here about these things, and I have been away three years and a half and cannot call to