

1500. Where did it come from?—From the top level, and from above. There was no trench at the back of the building.

1501. Then the storm-water flowed right into the building, did it?—Yes.

1502. Up to that time had there been any means of draining the water that lay in the foundations?—No; the foundations generally lay full of water.

1503. *The Chairman.*] Do you speak generally, over the whole building?—Yes.

1504. *Mr. Gore.*] Were any steps taken to drain the foundations?—No. Mr. Blair, at the time of the flood, gave me instructions to cut a drain at the back of the tradesmen's entrance, and I did cut a drain to take the water away.

1505. Did you ever receive instructions to drain this centre block?—I do not know whether instructions were received, but I did it. I do not know whether instructions came from Mr. Lawson or not, but, as I said, I put the drain in.

1506. However, some one must have given you instructions. Was the water laying in the foundations at that time?—Yes. We ran a 6in. pipe in front of the centre block afterwards.

1507. Would that water lying there have had a tendency to injure the foundations?—I think so. It must have already softened the ground.

1508. James Donald in his evidence has stated that some of the stone packing was put into the foundations, that it was tipped and not spread: is that correct?—No.

1509. Is the tower-foundation, where this witness says it is very bad, strong enough, do you think, to carry the superstructure?—I think it is the best part of the whole work.

1510. Do you infer that that foundation is as good as the rest?—I imagine that it is very good indeed.

1511. *Mr Mountfort.*] How far down did that foundation go?—I was not on the work then. That was done before my time.

1512. *Mr. Gore.*] Did you ever notice from the corridor if the building was in a straight line?—Yes; we used to pride ourselves on it being straight.

1513. By whom do you mean "we"?—Mr. Brindley and myself.

1514. Have you ever noticed any settlement on this northern corner?—No; and if there had been I should easily have noticed it.

1515. Then you have never noticed any inequality through the whole building?—No; it was very fair all through.

1516. *The Chairman.*] I ask you whether the contract does not provide for the contractor keeping the foundations clear of water at his own expense during construction?—I think not. I kept the trenches clear of water while the footings were being put in, but we had nothing to do with draining the building.

1517. Then you considered you had not to provide drainage during construction?—We drained it while putting in the concrete, and kept the trenches dry, but had to do nothing more.

1518. I ask you again if you consider drainage is provided under the contract?—You may be sure it was not, or else they would have made us do it.

1519. Under clause 21 of the General Conditions it is provided that "the contractor shall repair and make good the drains," &c. [read], "and keep the work free from injury," &c. Would you not consider that under that clause you would have to run the water out of the foundations?—As a general rule we consider that these conditions are not worth the paper they are written on.

1520. *Mr. Blair.*] You said that I gave you instructions to drain these foundations: did I give you these instructions in writing?—No; verbally.

1521. Did you charge for the drains?—Yes.

1522. Were they paid for under the final certificate?—Yes, to the best of my belief.

1523. At the time that you proved that the building was perfectly straight from end to end did you ever try it with an instrument?—No. I had no theodolite; we had a surveyor's level.

1524. Can you run lines with a surveyor's level?—No; but in taking a sight through the corridor with your eye you cannot get 3in. out.

1525. Will you swear that any of these corridor-doors are in line within an inch?—Yes, they were.

1526. That they are now?—I do not know anything about that.

1527. Will you swear that any door amongst them was in line?—I will. They were all put in to the same measure.

1528. But you have already told us that you had no instrument: how do you gain your knowledge?—Then, you think we should have had a civil engineer?

1529. How did you set out the building—from one end?—From the centre. A civil engineer from the Public Works Department gave us the centre-line of the centre block and the straight lines through the corridor at right angles with the centre block, and we worked off his pegs.

1530. *Mr. Mountfort.*] When did you give up possession of the building—that is to say, when did the authorities take charge of it?—In January, 1884.

1531. When you gave it up, then, was it entirely without flaw or fault?—It must have been, or they would not have taken it over. When I gave it up there was a slight crack through the ambulatory-floor. That was the only thing.

1532. There were no indications like what we see there now?—None whatever.

1533. All the damage has been done since?—Yes.

THURSDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1888.

WALTER JOHN GORE recalled.

1534. *Mr. Mountfort.*] I think that you said, in answer to a question that I put to you yesterday, that when you gave up the building it was without flaw of any kind, and that there were no indications of the damage which afterwards occurred? Possibly you would like to hear the