2753. But you say that it was straight when you began to build?—Yes, so far as I know it was.

2754. If it had been 16½in. out of line you would certainly have seen it?—I should certainly have seen that.

2755. You have told us that you had a conversation with Dr. Hector in reference to this blind creek. Did it not exist just about where the north wing now is?—No; further north.

2756. You escaped that blind creek?—Yes; we are out of it.

2757. You escaped it by moving 5 chains south?—Yes.

2758. You think that moving 5 chains south at my request was a very wise thing?—Most decidedly.

2759. Do you not think it is a pity that we did not manage to get 2½ chains further south still?—I could only give you my opinion.

2760. Still I value your opinion?—That is possible, but it did not come off.

2761. You say distinctly that the foundations were put in to your thorough satisfaction?—I was perfectly satisfied.

2762. And you do not think that in the north wing they should have been any deeper?—No, I do not. I was satisfied with them at the time, so far as depth and width are concerned.

2763. As to the final certificate. You admit that you took part in the negotiations about it, but your temper got the better of you, and you ran away?—No. I considered myself downright insulted.

2764. Then you did not run away?—No; I walked away. I run away from nobody.

2765. You went away and did not come back for a time?—I did not come back for a week.

2766. *Mr. Gore.*] With regard to Mr. Dick being a competent man, I wish to ask, through the Chairman, if Mr. Brindley has ever acted as a Clerk of Works before he so acted on the building at Seacliff?—No. But I have superintended my own works.

2767. What works, and where?—At Oamaru. I do not see, Mr. Chairman, why I should be asked to answer personal questions.

2768. I will not press the matter beyond asking you again if you have ever been a Clerk of Works on any building other than that at Seacliff?—Not as Clerk of Works. I have been in business for myself. Since this matter has been raised about my experience I may mention that I have been in business since 1865, and that I was nine years in London.

2769. *Mr. Mountfort.*] When you made these working detail-drawings, who did you think you were making them for—for the Government or for Mr. Lawson?—For facilitating the work.

2770. But was it for the Government or for Mr. Lawson that you thought you were making these plans?—In my opinion they should have been supplied by Mr. Lawson.

2771. You think, then, that you made them on behalf of Mr. Lawson?—They were made on own paper, and they are my own property.

2772. *Mr. Lawson.*] They were made for your own pleasure?—Not exactly for my own pleasure, or they would not have been done.

2773. *Mr. Mountfort.*] What construction did you put on those dotted lines showing the back wall on the plan? How did you begin the work?—The building could not be constructed without the walls went down to the same level as each other, as shown by the sections; there is nothing to show that the cross-walls were to be stepped up the bank.

2774. Then, you always thought that the back wall went down to the same depth as the front wall?—I maintain that the building could not have been constructed without it.

2775. Did you recommend a better way of executing the concrete?—I believe so, by leaving out the packing.

2776. By omitting the packing?—Yes.

2777. Was that attended to?—It was not.

2778. If it was not attended to, why not?—I wrote down to Mr. Lawson, but I never got an answer to my letter. Of course the work had been going on for some time when I wrote.

2779. When you came up towards the north wall, did you recommend that concrete should be laid all over that part? That is in regard to the ambulatory of the north wing?—The reason why I recommended that it should be put all over that was, that there seemed to be a kind of lagoon—or rather a mud-hole—here [indicating on plan]. It was a kind of black-clay formation: it went right from there into the wall. It was a rank-smelling stuff, and I suggested that it should be covered up.

2780. Then it was not done for the sake of the foundation, nor for securing a wider bearing?—No.

2781. Would it not have been as well to have put a little concrete over the whole surface, and have put plates on it?—That was in regard to the sleepers for joists for the inside: it had nothing to do with the walls. You see it was soft material.

2782. It was not done?—No.

2783. Was this mud removed?—It is there still.

2784. Why was it not removed?—I do not know.

2785. But you were the superintendent of the works; and if it was such a nuisance you could have got it removed, surely?—There was no answer to the suggestion in my letter; therefore it was not done.

2786. This is the drawing [handing to witness] that you prepared for the execution of these wings?—Yes.

2787. It has sloping lines behind the back wall representing your excavation?—It was cut out as straight as they could, but it could never have been like that.

2788. If you prepared that drawing of work to be executed, why was not the work executed according to it?—

2789. You would not have been able to execute that back wall if it had not been fairly laid