

taking into account the many and varied fractures and fissures to be found in the block now under discussion, have come to the conclusion that it would be inexpedient to advise the Government to attempt any underpinning or repairing works. From the plans and construction of the works these operations, conducted in very small compartments and by artificial light, must be very expensive, and, if successful, would only result in a patched and unsatisfactory building. The Commissioners recommend that the longitudinal portion of Block 2, comprising the north ambulatory, be taken down with care, and the materials fit for use numbered and marked, so that they can be replaced in the same positions as at present, and that the building be re-erected, but in a better manner and with more care to constructive details than formerly. They anticipate that the value of the materials to be reused will more than cover the cost of the taking-down. The ground-surface at the site should be levelled and drained by pipes under the site of the building, and a strong platform of concrete—say, 2ft. in thickness—should be thrown over the entire area, with deepened borders under the outer and main walls, and with projecting footings. Fair time should be allowed for the concrete to set, and the work carried up with—say, main wall, 1ft. 10½in. thick for the ground-floor, 1ft. 6in. for the first-floor, and 1ft. 2in. for the second-floor, all in English bond with iron ties; all wall-plates built on solid set-offs; and the whole three longitudinal walls well tied together, either by dog-irons to fished floor-joists or with iron tie-rods. If the main block is extended more to the north than at present, it may be built to form an abutment; if the building is to be carried no further northward, then strong buttresses should be built at that end of the block. The upper and lower airing-courts should be laid down with asphalt, having good fall and outlets, and every possible precaution should be taken by drainage to prevent water from obtaining entrance below the surface of the ground near the building. The Commissioners observed that along the north front the ground is now disposed so that it tends to cast the rain-water towards the walls. This should be at once remedied, and an asphalt pavement not less than 8ft. wide, with an outward slope, be laid down all round the north wing.

The Commissioners also consider that iron tie-rods should be placed to those principals in the roof of the upper hall or theatre of the central portion that are now without this assistance. As the construction of this part is rather weak, and the unusually heavy outside corbels on the thin wall require all the cross-tie that it is possible to give it, it would be as well that the new ties, and also those already in the roof, should be connected by iron bolts with the outside corbellings.

With regard to the main front centre gable the Commissioners recommend that the turrets be taken down, the stone staircases taken out, and that they be re-erected with wooden stairs, and be further secured by strong iron bands connected together by iron bar-ties across the gable. Minor repairs, as at the bay window in the north wing, may be also necessary.

After the close of the proceedings a letter was received from the Architect, Mr. Lawson, requesting that another sitting should be held by the Commissioners, in order that certain documents might be called for which had not been produced by the Engineer in Charge, Mr. Blair. That gentleman having, however, stated upon oath that the documents called for had no existence, and therefore could not be produced, the Commissioners decided that it was not advisable or necessary to reopen the inquiry. As the Commissioners had carefully gone into all possible evidence bearing upon constructive matters, and having satisfied themselves that the documents referred to by Mr. Lawson, if in existence, were bearing upon subjects quite outside the scope of the inquiry intrusted to them, they decided to refuse the application, but to forward his letter with this report, writing to him in reply to that effect.

Given under our hands and seals at Dunedin, this fifth day of March, 1888.

(L.S.)	H. P. HIGGINSON, M. Inst. C.E.
(L.S.)	W. H. SKINNER, Architect.
(L.S.)	B. W. MOUNTFORT, Architect.

APPENDICES.

List of Witnesses—Mr. Lawson's Protest—Mr. Lawson's Two Letters and Replies thereto—Mr. P. S. Hay's Plans of Building (5 sheets)—Ground-plan of Seacliff Asylum—Elevation of Building in 1884.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Messrs. W. N. Blair,
James Donald,
E. R. Ussher,
James Hunter,
James Lough,
P. S. Hay,
Daniel Dodd,

Messrs. Robert Forrest,
George Cronk,
George Watkins,
Benjamin Butcher,
John Gore,
Alfred Morrison,
John Dick,

Messrs. James Gore,
R. A. Lawson,
Alfred Brindley,
Donald Reid,
James Marchbanks;
Sir James Hector.

MR. LAWSON'S PROTEST.

To the Honourable the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the condition of the Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Building.

On my own behalf, and on that of any others who may hereto append their signatures, I protest against any further evidence being taken in the matter of the above inquiry in the absence of Alfred T. Brindley, seeing that he is a principal mentioned in the remit from His Excellency the Governor to the said Commissioners, and, that being so, there is therefore a possibility of his being subjected to serious loss and damage because of his absence, or because of any decision which may