

282. Do you remember Dalgetty's people coming to you, and asking you to put the brand of Brooks, Schoulbred and Co. on the list of cements that might be used in the public works?—If by letter, the letter can be found.

283. I think it was by letter, and personally?—If it was by letter, the letter can be turned up.

284. Was it by letter?—I cannot say; but I may say I have no authority to approve of brands—brands must be approved by the Engineer-in-Chief of the Colony.

285. Did you ever test any cement to see if it was equal to the approved brands?—Personally, I never did.

286. *The Chairman.*] You mean that Messrs. Dalgetty's agents applied to have this cement permitted to be used on all public works?

*Mr. Gore:* On public works generally, and on these in particular. They were the agents for this special brand.

*Witness:* As I have explained, it would be beyond my functions to allow any particular cement to be used in public works in the colony without reference to the Engineer-in-Chief. I should be reprimanded for doing such a thing.

287. *The Chairman.*] Then you have no recollection of it?—No; and if it was by letter the letter can be turned up. I may say that the agents of all sorts of people come to me, and I always refer them to the Engineer-in-Chief.

288. *Mr. Gore.*] I know there were some interviews between you and Dalgetty's agents, and that it passed between you?—It could not have been passed by me, because I have no authority.

289. James Donald was here on Saturday. Is he employed by the Public Works Department?—I believe he is at the present time.

290. And has been for some time?—I think so.

291. He has been in the Public Works Department's employ for some time as ganger?—Yes, I think so.

JAMES HUNTER sworn and examined.

292. *Mr. Blair.*] What are you, Mr. Hunter?—Inspector of Public Works in the Dunedin District.

293. You have had to do with Seacliff since the building was finished?—Yes, since Mr. Brindley left.

294. Has all the work that has been done, then, since Mr. Brindley left been done under your directions—since the building was taken over from the contractors?—Yes, except little jobs the asylum people may have done themselves.

295. I would first ask you with reference to a letter that Mr. Ussher sent to the department on the 18th September, 1885, in which he reported having discovered a gap in the concrete footings in the centre wall of the north wing?—Yes.

296. There is a plan there numbered. That is where it was?—Yes.

297. What are these numbers?—These are reference-numbers on the original plan.

298. *Mr. Gore.*] Not on the original plan; on this plan, I take it?—Yes, on that plan.

299. *Mr. Blair.*] Did you find the gap there?—Yes.

300. Was there a drain in that gap?—There was what appeared to have been a contractor's drain—bricks laid in a sort of hollow shape, and broken boards laid over the top of them, and the board bedded with a sort of lime mortar on the top of the bricks.

301. Does any permanent drain go through there?—The permanent drain goes through about 3ft. or 4ft. underneath the top of the footings—say 3ft., to be certain.

302. Does the permanent drain go through the footing?—No; I know it goes 1ft., and I think about 2ft., under them.

303. Had you to do with these stone drains that are put in round the building?—Yes, all of them.

304. You had to do with them from first to last?—Yes.

305. Can you describe the class of drain that you put in?—The first drain?

306. *The Chairman:* Cannot we distinguish these drains by numbers or letters?

307. *Mr. Blair.*] This is No. 1 drain. How was that drain (No. 1) constructed?—The first one (No. 1) was made an open cut up to about here, ahead of the access of the ambulatory, about on a line with the front of the colonnade.

308. And after that?—It was a drive, with shafts. When we got on a line with the back of the airing-court, where we turned in to go behind it, they were 18ft. apart. When we got to about where a line from the back of the airing-court would cross the drain No. 1, it was driven from shafts sunk every 18ft. Before that they were a little wider.

309. Eighteen feet apart?—Yes. From here, where a line from the back of the airing-court would cross the drain, the shafts were filled with stone to the surface of the ground. Before it came to that point, as it was an area that was going to be cultivated, they were not filled to the surface, but to say 6ft. or 8ft. from the surface, and filled in with a layer of puddle to prevent the asylum people running water down them.

310. How were the stones laid that were put in?—The open cut was treated as shown; the drive was filled with stones in the same way, but, of course, not near so narrow at the bottom.

311. Did you find any difficulty in driving that?—Well, we were on a line of boulders nearly all the way. Had we been a little lower we should just have missed them. There was a stratum of boulders that we were in nearly all the way after we passed the line of the back of the building going westward.

312. Did you find the ground slipping in on you very much?—It did not show like a slip at all, except at one point.

313. And where was that?—That is about here, opposite the slip behind the airing-court, between chains 2 and 3.