

513. Did you fill these shafts up?—Yes.

514. *Mr. Gore.*] Will you point out now on the plan where that 2ft. of sand was?—About Shaft 8.

*Mr. Blair:* There is a note on the plan which makes it quite clear. It says: “Shafts 4 and 9 are filled with stones to within about 3½ft. of the surface; all the others to the same height as the drive.”

515. *The Chairman.*] Are you quite certain that it was to the north of Shaft 8? Are you quite sure of the position?—Yes; I am quite certain on the point.

516. *Mr. Mountfort.*] The soft clay is here [indicating on plan], you say; and if I put a cross there it will represent the place?—Yes.

517. That is where you got into soft ground?—Yes.

518. To what extent did you drive beyond that?—For about 8ft., I should say. It was very soft.

519. *Mr. Lawson.*] That is to the south?—Yes.

520. *The Chairman.*] What does it consist of?—A bluish clay. It was pretty stiff, but I should think it would carry water easily.

521. Was there water running out of it?—There was water mixed with it.

522. Were there any stones in it?—Very few; but as we went ahead we came on stones again.

523. Still, there was no more water than could be carried away with the soil as it was removed?—No.

524. It did not flow?—No.

525. Did it stand in the bottom of the drive?—There was always a little left.

526. A sort of leakage, in fact?—Yes.

527. *Mr. Mountfort.*] When you were doing this drive, where did you first enter? Where did you make your first entrance?—At the outlet.

528. You entered there and worked up this way [indicating on plan], I suppose?—Yes.

529. That is, towards the north-west; and you worked right on, following the course of the drain, as had been laid down; and, as you came on the water, it would run off?—Yes.

530. There was no point anywhere where it could bank up?—No.

531. It always had an outlet?—Yes; all the time.

532. Was the whole length of that drain opened at the same time?—No.

533. Was it filled up with stones behind you?—Yes.

534. So that at no time had you solid clay behind you: it was always open?—Yes. As we drove this way we filled it up with stones.

535. Then it was always open?—Yes.

536. *Mr. Blair.*] When this water came into the drain, did it come in more on the one side than the other, or did it come in all round?—It came in all round. We had some pretty heavy rains during that time.

537. You have told us that you had to timber some of the drive. What I want to know is, was there more pressure of the water on the one side than the other?—We had to timber it all round. The ground was pretty loose in some parts.

538. Was there any indication that the hillside was slipping in one direction more than another?—No. I cannot say that I took any particular notice of that.

539. *Mr. Mountfort.*] Was there any indication of the water rising up through the floor?—No; I should think not.

540. Would you have noticed it if there had been?—I certainly think so, if there had been.

PETER SETON HAY sworn and examined.

541. *Mr. Blair.*] Kindly tell the Commissioners what is your position.—I am Resident Engineer in the Public Works Department.

542. You are a graduate of the University of New Zealand, are you not?—Yes; I graduated in honours in mathematics; I obtained first-class honours.

543. I will put into your hands the report you submitted to the Government, or, rather, to the Engineer-in-Chief, on the 18th December last, after your examination of the Seacliff building. I may say that I will put this report in afterwards, together with supplementary observations made by yourself. I suppose you will, as you did in your report, first describe the building as you found it.

*Mr. Gore* submitted that the entire report should be read.

*Mr. Blair:* The witness only intends to make use of the report for the purpose of refreshing his memory.

*Mr. Gore:* For my part I say it is very desirable that I should know what is in this report, in order that I may cross-examine him on it; otherwise I shall have no opportunity of doing so.

*The Chairman:* In that case it may be necessary to read the report; but there must be parts of it that will be brought out in the witness's evidence.

*Mr. Blair:* My object is to elicit from the witness what he found at the building when he reported. If it is desirable to give *Mr. Gore* the opportunity he asks, I will put in the report subsequently.

544. *Mr. Blair* (to witness).] Will you describe the building as you found it?

545. *The Chairman.*] To begin with: give us the date of your visit.—The 23rd, 24th, and 28th November, 1887.

546. *Mr. Gore.*] That was your first visit?—Yes.

547. *Mr. Blair.*] These are your tracings attached to the report?—Yes.