

Report of the Committee to the Commissioners of Sewers of the City of London, acting as the Burial Board for the said City, upon the address of the Archdeacon of London, on November 8th, 1855, to the churchwardens of the City of London and its liberties, on the subject of the City of London Cemetery, at Little Ilford.

Contributors

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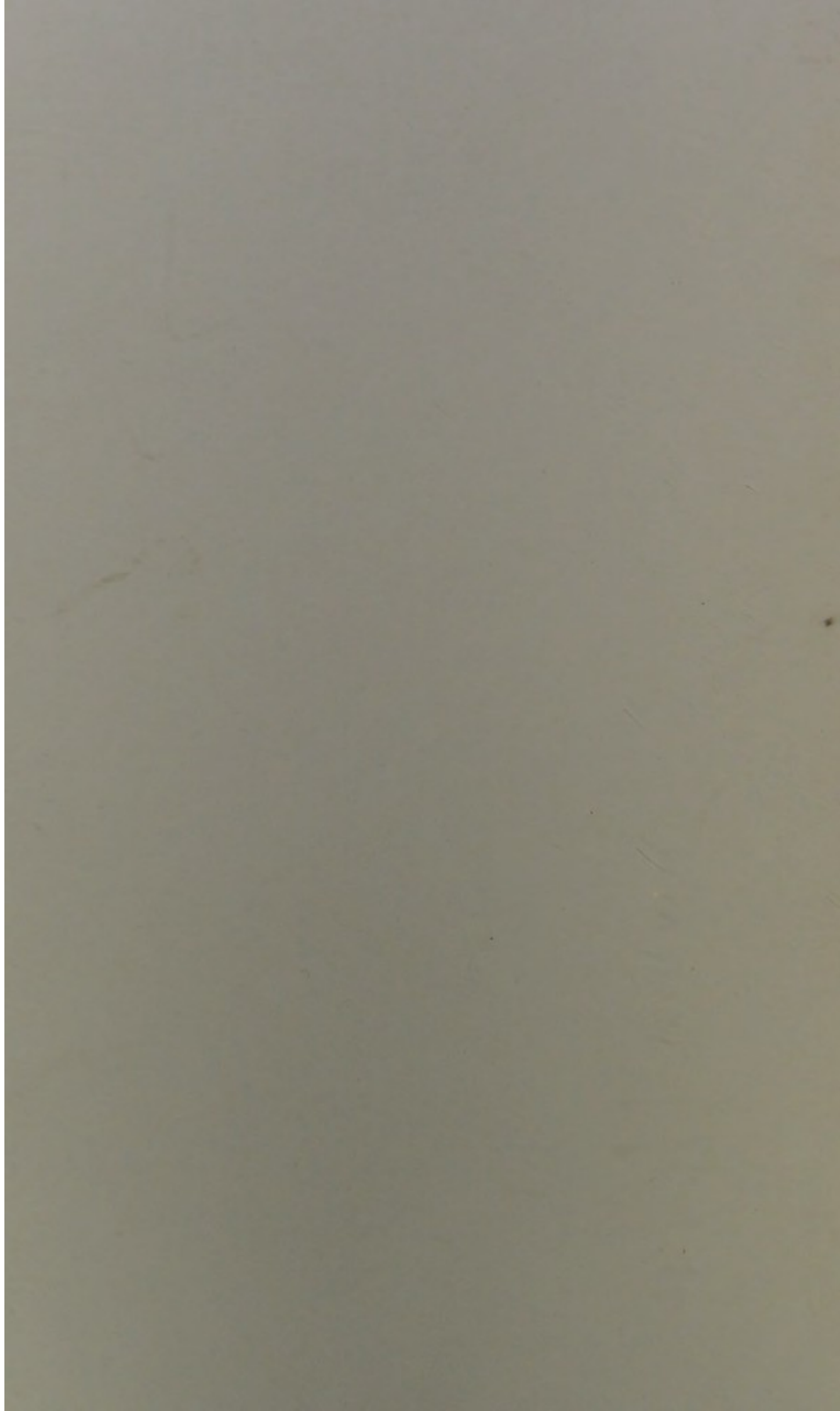
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REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE

TO THE

COMMISSIONERS OF SEWERS OF THE CITY OF LONDON,

ACTING AS THE

BURIAL BOARD FOR THE SAID CITY,

UPON THE ADDRESS

OF THE ARCHDEACON OF LONDON,

ON NOVEMBER 8th, 1855,

TO THE CHURCHWARDENS OF THE CITY OF LONDON
AND ITS LIBERTIES,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

CITY OF LONDON CEMETERY, AT LITTLE ILFORD.

(with Appx by Letheby)

Ordered to be Printed, November 20th, 1855.

M. LOWNDS, PRINTER, 148 $\frac{1}{2}$, FENCHURCH STREET.

1855.

REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF LONDON
ON THE
MATERIALS FOR THE CITY
OF LONDON
TO THE
CITY OF LONDON
IN 1851

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*At a Meeting of the Commissioners of Sewers
of the City of London, acting as the Burial
Board for the said City, held at the Guild-
hall, Tuesday, 20th November, 1855 :—*

The following Report from the Committee to whom it was referred to consider the Address of the Venerable Archdeacon Hale, delivered at St. Sepulchre's Church, on 8th November, 1855, was read.

RESOLVED—

That the same be received and adopted.

ORDERED—

That the same be printed, together with the Report of the Medical Officer of Health of the City of London in reference thereto ; and a copy be sent to every Member of this Court, and of the Court of Common Council ; and to the Incumbents and Churchwardens of the several Parishes within this City.

JOSEPH DAW,

Clerk.

At a Meeting of the Commissioners of Sewerage
of the City of London, held at the Guild
Hall, Tuesday, 20th November, 1855.

The following Report from the Committee to
whom it was referred to consider the Address of
the Venerable Archbishop of Canterbury, delivered at St.
Stephen's Church, on 18th November, 1855, was
read.

Resolved—
That the same be received and adopted.

Ordered—
That the same be printed, together with the
Report of the Medical Officer of Health of the City
of London, and be sent to every Member of the Court, and to the
Churchwardens of the several Parishes within the
City.

JOSEPH DAW

Clk.

REPORT.

TO THE HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS OF SEWERS
OF THE CITY OF LONDON, ACTING AS THE
BURIAL BOARD FOR THE SAID CITY.

WE, whose names are hereunto set, your Committee to whom on the 16th day of November instant, it was referred,—“To investigate the statements and charges made against the Burial Board of this City, by the Venerable Archdeacon Hale, in his Address to the Churchwardens of London, at St. Sepulchre’s Church, on the 8th instant, and sent by his sanction for publication in ‘The Morning Advertiser Newspaper,’ and to report thereon.” Also, “To consider the letter of the Venerable Archdeacon Hale, in respect of the proceedings of the Burial Board:”—DO CERTIFY, that having met together and carefully considered the same; We beg to report that, in our opinion, it is due to the Venerable Archdeacon, and to the ratepayers of the City of London, that you should point out certain errors in some of the statements into which the Archdeacon has fallen.

And first, we cannot but express our surprise that, although the Metropolitan Burials Act (under

which you are appointed the Burial Board for the City of London) was passed into a law on the 1st day of July, 1852, and you have been engaged ever since that period in carrying its provisions into effect in the most public manner, yet the Archdeacon of London should, as he states, "about Midsummer last, for the first time, be informed that a site of ground had been purchased for the purpose of a Cemetery for this City at Ilford." (The approval of the site by the Bishop of London and the Secretary of State, was sought and obtained in June 1854, and was matter of notoriety.)

And that although the Clergy of London must have been officially cognizant of the provisions of the same Act, empowering the Court of Common Council (if they choose) to appoint any one or more of the incumbents members of the Burial Board; yet that no application was made by any one to be so appointed during the three years in which all the works were proceeding; and it was not till the land had been purchased, the buildings erected, and the whole had approached completion, so that it became necessary to arrange the scale of fees, and apply to the Bishop for consecration, that then, in July 1855, a memorial was presented to the Court of Common Council for some of the incumbents to be appointed on your Board: we suppose no one would feel surprised that the Court of Common Council should, under such circumstances, ex-

press their opinion that such appointment was not required.

We very much regret that the Archdeacon should have considered it right, in his public address in the Church, to the various official representatives of 106 parishes within this City, to comment so stringently upon the site and arrangements of a Burial place, which at the same time he acknowledges he has not visited. We certainly wish that he had personally inspected the locality before he pronounced his judgment.

Thus, we think there is an error in the Archdeacon's statement as to its distance from the City. He says that "all the other Cemeteries (excepting the Great Northern) are nearer by several miles." Its situation is hardly seven miles from the City, and it is approachable in every way by level and excellent roads; immediately adjoins the Eastern Counties Railway, and provision is made for a siding from the rail direct into the Cemetery.

It will be seen, therefore, that, as compared with other Metropolitan Cemeteries, it is at least as near as many of them; and it is as near as the Act of Parliament permitted; and there being no hills to ascend, as to those Cemeteries situate North or South of London, it is comparatively much easier of access.

The Archdeacon proceeds to allude to the cost of the Cemetery, and the question of the accounts of the Burial Board, and states, "I have not attempted to examine the accounts of the Commissioners of Sewers in their capacity of a Burial Board for the City of London; but I presume that they, as a Burial Board, are subject to the same duties as other Burial Boards, and that the 17th section of the Act is binding upon them, which directs that they shall keep accounts, which shall be open to inspection, and that such books shall be open at all seasonable hours to the examination of every member of the Board, churchwardens, overseers, and ratepayers, without fee or reward. I learn from the authority of an official publication, upon the Burial Acts, that the ground purchased at Ilford consists of ninety-one acres, and one of the Commissioners of Sewers, here present, informs us the sum of £85,000 has been spent upon it, charged or chargeable upon the Consolidated Rate."

We have only to remark, that the accounts are kept in a perfectly distinct and regular manner; that they are annually printed and circulated; and their results have been frequently published; and that they are open to inspection. That the charges for the Cemetery upon the Consolidated Fund have been £78,979 4s. 4d; that this sum includes £3,317 11s. 0d. invested in Consols as the foundation of a sinking fund to pay off

the debts contracted; and the further sum of £2,689 2s. 11*d.* interest paid on loans. That the quantity of land purchased has been 200 acres instead of ninety-one acres as stated; of which about 100 acres are surplus, and will be sold; and its proceeds will of course go to the credit of the account.

We have, in former reports, explained that this additional quantity of land was necessarily purchased, the owner objecting to sell less except at such increased price as rendered it a matter of pecuniary policy to buy the larger quantity, knowing that the surplus land must hereafter sell at remunerating prices.

Taking these circumstances into consideration, it appears that the real outlay for this Cemetery of 100 acres of land has not exceeded £72,000; moreover, you have still 100 acres of land in hand to be sold and placed to the credit of this account, which makes it, we believe (compared with the cost of any of the existing Metropolitan Cemeteries), one of the least expensive.

The Archdeacon mistakes as to the required extent of ground for an annual mortality of 3,662 persons. In respect of the number of interments which one acre of ground will allow, the Arch-

deacon states that "supposing that 3,662 persons are all buried as in a Company's Cemetery, as is stated in section 158 of Mr. Chadwick's Report, one acre of ground would be far more than sufficient to contain them all, supposing each body to be deposited in a separate grave." Mr. Chadwick's Report says (section 157, page 135,) "The well-considered regulations then give about 1,452 common graves per acre for a town population;" and the remarks quoted by the Archdeacon from Mr. Chadwick's Report, at section 158, refer to a proceeding justly regarded by that gentleman as reprehensible, and adopted by those who sought to make the most profit from the least space.

If due allowance be made for a reasonable space between graves, extra space for vaults, &c., and adequate extent of land for roads, paths, buildings, and plantations, it will be found that, while the Burial Board for the City of London has been liberal in its provision of space for the present and future generations of its citizens, it has not by any means so exceeded the bounds of reason as the Archdeacon's statement would seem to imply.

Upon this question of extent, we extract the following passages from the Instructions to Burial Boards, in providing Cemeteries, issued under the authority of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, in

which it will be seen your proceeding is mentioned with commendation, and as an example for others:—"Besides the space actually required for the accommodation of the average annual interments, some allowance ought to be made for increase of population, and sufficient ground set apart for buildings, walks, and decorative purposes." "It may be useful to state, that in one instance a Burial Board has provided forty-two acres for a population of 30,000; in another case five acres have been set apart for a population of 6,200; and, in a third instance, eight acres have been purchased for a town with 12,500 inhabitants. The Burial Board of the City of London has provided ninety-one acres for a population of 130,000, with an annual mortality of about 3,120. It would be well, on many accounts, that a large view of the question should be taken, and a sufficient area provided for any contingency that might arise."

* * * * *

"The result of overcrowding, in so far as regards the economical use of the ground is, that the soil becomes saturated with organic matter, and that decay of the coffin and corpse, which is requisite before a grave should be re-opened, is delayed. Entire skeletons of corpses, too closely crowded together, have been disinterred after the lapse of twenty-three years, even in a good soil."

We do not think it necessary to notice the

objection that the land in the Cemetery has not been apportioned out for the 106 respective parishes of this city, further than there appears to us to be no sufficient reason to justify such a complicated sub-division of what is designed to be one burial ground for a whole city.

The Archdeacon objects to joint burial grounds, meaning cemeteries, in which both churchmen and non-conformists are interred.

We do not wish to comment upon this opinion, we content ourselves with drawing the Archdeacon's attention to the 30th clause of the Act, 15 and 16 Vic., cap. 85, which enacts "*That in providing any burial ground, the Board shall set apart a portion thereof which shall not be so consecrated, and may build thereon a suitable chapel or chapels for the performance of funeral service.*" We may add, that when the plans showing the proportions of these several allotments were laid before the Bishop of London, his Lordship, in general terms, expressed his approval of them.

The Archdeacon having, in a Charge to his Clergy, on the 16th of May last, stated at some length his opinions upon the question of intramural interments as not being injurious to health; and in this, his address of the 8th inst. repeated, "That it cannot be proved upon medical, chemical,

or physiological principles, or by the experience of the inhabitants of church-yards, that intramural interments in England has been or is injurious to the public health," we have thought it right to take the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health of the City of London upon this question (which we subjoin as an Appendix), though it is not necessary for us to enter upon it at any length; the unanimous voice of medical science has decided it, and this decision has been repeatedly sanctioned by the Legislature. You, as the Burial Board for this City, have the duty confided to you to carry out the law so as best to convenience the public.

We would remark too that the Archdeacon is wrong in supposing that the inhabitants of houses adjoining church-yards do not deem them "less healthful" than others—that they do so, the minutes of your Court will show. To quote only one case, the vestry of Bishopsgate parish, in September 1849, passed a resolution, "That, in the opinion of this vestry, the public health is alarmingly endangered by the continued practice of interring the dead in the parochial burying grounds, and in the vaults under the church," and the vestry spontaneously closed their church-yard.

In respect of the opinions expressed by the Archdeacon in his letter to the Clerk, of the 12th

November inst., in reply to the proposal which we submitted to the Bishop of London for one uniform scale of fees to be paid to the City Clergy, without the performance of any duty; we are sorry to see the obstacles which it places in the way of a liberal and just arrangement. We desired at once to recognize the fact that fees are reserved to the Clergy, and we offered a commutation upon them, adopted after ascertaining from all the Metropolitan Cemeteries the fees which, under their Acts of Parliament, they are severally required to reserve and pay over to the Parochial Clergy.

For your information we subjoin these fees. They are as follow:—

	For a Vault.		For Open Ground.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Highgate Cemetery and Nunhead				
Cemetery	5	0	1	6
South Metropolitan Cemetery ..	20	0	7	6
(Divisible among Clergy and Parochial Authorities as has been accustomed.)				
			s.	d.
Brompton Cemetery, on each interment ..	10	0		
The Necropolis ditto ..	6	2		
Paupers	1	0		
Tower Hamlets—				
Vaults	7	6		
Common Interments	2	6		
Paupers	1	0		

Our Scale was proposed as a fair medium:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
For Interment in a catacomb or vault	10	0
For ditto in brick grave	5	0
For ditto in common grave	2	6
For ditto paupers (by Act fixed)	1	0

The lamented illness of the Bishop of London has, of course, prevented our proposal being considered by his Lordship. We much regret this, as, from our experience of the views and feelings of that distinguished Prelate, gathered from our interviews with him upon this subject, we have reason to think our proposal would with him have produced different results.

It seems to us manifest that you cannot, without most inconvenient consequences, frame a Scale of Charges for your Cemetery to be subject to an indefinite or a most variable demand from the Parochial Clergy, churchwardens, or others, for fees.

As we understand you to require us to advise you upon the course most expedient to be adopted under the circumstances of the case, we draw your attention to the 30th and 32nd sections of the Act, 15 and 16 Vic., cap. 85, which provide—
“That such burial ground may be consecrated by the Bishop of the diocese, when the same shall appear to him to be in a fit and proper condition

for the purposes of interment according to the rites of the United Church, provided always, that in providing any burial ground, such Board shall set apart a portion thereof, which shall not be so consecrated as aforesaid, and may build thereon a suitable chapel or chapels for the performance of funeral service, and that from and after the consecration as aforesaid, such burial ground shall be deemed the burial ground of the parish for which the same is provided, and where the same is provided for two or more parishes, such burial ground shall be in law as if such parishes were one parish, and as if such burial ground were the burial ground of such one parish."

And by the 7th section of the Act, 18 and 19 Vic., cap. 128, it is enacted, "That all such fees, payments, and sums, as may be fixed, settled, and received by the Burial Board under the former Act shall be so fixed and settled, subject to the approval of one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, and no such fees, payments, or sums shall be altered or varied without such approval."

Hence it would appear that your Cemetery cannot be opened as a Cemetery for the parishes of London until it shall be consecrated; and the unconsecrated part cannot be opened until the fees have been approved by the Secretary of State; and as the Bishop has told us he cannot consecrate it until

an arrangement has been effected with the Clergy about the fees reserved to them, it seems to us that the only alternatives are—an arrangement with the Clergy upon the basis of the offer made to them through the Bishop; or an application to Her Majesty's Government to carry through an Act of Parliament to effect this desirable object for the City of London, under the special circumstances in which the Act of 15 & 16 Vic. has placed you.

All which we submit to the judgment of the Board.

Dated this 19th day of November, 1855.

W. A. PEACOCK.

T. J. HOLT.

JAMES WATERLOW.

THOMAS ABRAHAM.

EDWARD HICKSON.

R. B. WHITESIDE.

BENJAMIN BOWER.

H. LOWMAN TAYLOR.

H. DE JERSEY.

an arrangement has been effected with the Clergy about the fees payable to them, it seems to us that the only alternatives are—an arrangement with the Clergy upon the basis of the offer made to them through the Bishop; or an application to Her Majesty's Government to carry through an Act of Parliament to effect this desirable object for the City of London, under the special circumstances in which the Act of 15th 1847 has placed you. All which we submit to the judgment of the Board. Dated this 15th day of November, 1855.

EDWARD HICKSON
 R. D. WHITFIELD
 BENJAMIN BOWEN
 H. LOWMAN TAYLOR
 H. DE JERSEY
 THOMAS ABRAHAM
 JAMES WATKINSON
 T. J. HOVE

A P P E N D I X.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

ON THE

INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF INTRAMURAL
BURIAL.

APPENDIX

REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

OF THE
INTERIOR DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

OF THE
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



