

A statement of facts published pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Trustees of Saint Mary, Islington, respecting the sanitary condition of the workhouse, and the discharge of Dr. Semple from his situation of medical officer of the workhouse.

Contributors

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A

STATEMENT OF FACTS

PUBLISHED

Pursuant to a Resolution of the Board of Trustees

OF

SAINT MARY, ISLINGTON,

RESPECTING THE

SANITARY CONDITION OF THE WORKHOUSE,

AND THE

DISCHARGE OF DR. SEMPLE

FROM HIS SITUATION OF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF THE WORKHOUSE.

c

London:

J. & I. TIREBUCK, PRINTERS & LITHOGRAPHERS,
MONKWELL STREET, CITY, & ISLINGTON.

1855.

STATEMENT OF FACTS THE STATEMENT

Presented to a Resolution of the Board of Directors

SANITARY MATTERS - ISLINGTON

The Board of Directors, in its resolution of the 14th of January, 1904, directed the Sanitary Committee to report on the sanitary conditions of the district of Islington, and the Sanitary Committee, in its report of the 14th of February, 1904, has the honor to report that the sanitary conditions of the district of Islington are such as to require the attention of the Board of Directors.

DISCHARGE OF THE SANITARY COMMITTEE

The Sanitary Committee, in its report of the 14th of February, 1904, has the honor to report that the sanitary conditions of the district of Islington are such as to require the attention of the Board of Directors. The Committee has endeavored to bring about a general improvement in the sanitary conditions of the district, and has succeeded in securing the attention of the Board of Directors to the sanitary conditions of the district. The Committee has also endeavored to bring about a general improvement in the sanitary conditions of the district, and has succeeded in securing the attention of the Board of Directors to the sanitary conditions of the district.

THE STATEMENT.

On the 28th June, 1854, a Special Committee was appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Parish of St. Mary, Islington, to inquire into the statements contained in the report of Dr. Semple to the Poor-Law Inspectors, respecting the Sanitary condition of the Workhouse of that Parish, and to report thereon.

The proceedings of that Committee, and the subsequent resolution of the Trustees, dismissing Dr. Semple from his office, having been made the subject of animadversion in certain Pamphlets, which appear to have been extensively circulated throughout the Parish, and through the medium of newspapers and other periodicals, it has appeared to the Trustees, that the many misrepresentations contained in these publications ought not to remain uncontradicted.

The general opinion of the Trustees, with regard to the Pamphlet published by Dr. Semple himself, was, that the misrepresentations it contained might be properly left unnoticed, especially as its strongest refutation was the actual state of the Workhouse itself, which is open to all the inhabitants who may there have ocular demonstration of the comfort and cleanliness of its inmates, as well sick as healthy; but when the Trustees were informed that the erroneous statements thus circulated in the Parish, by Dr. Semple, had, to use a medical form of expression, "generated an atmosphere of agitation," and that a number of Medical Gentlemen, residing in this and the adjoining parishes, had assembled together, and, without inquiry of the Trustees as to the real circumstances, had adopted the allegations of Dr. Semple, and passed resolutions, afterwards extensively circulated, condemning in very strong terms the conduct of the Trustees, and that a deputation from that meeting had obtained an interview with the Poor-Law Board, and made representations to that authority, based upon Dr. Semple's own statement, under the mistaken notion that by doing so, they could obtain a reversal of the decision of the Trustees discharging Dr. Semple from his situation; it appeared to the Trustees, that it

was due to their constituents, the Rate-payers of this important parish, to publish a plain statement of the facts of the case, as shown by the evidence taken by the Trustees, and the real grounds of Dr. Semple's dismissal.

It was therefore, at a Special Meeting of the Trustees, held on the 17th January, 1855, resolved—

“ That the various publications circulated by Dr. Semple and his friends, on the subject of his dismissal from the situation of Medical Officer to the Workhouse of this Parish, be referred to the consideration of the Special Committee appointed by this Board on the 28th day of June last. And that such Committee be instructed to prepare a brief statement for publication, founded on the evidence laid before the Trustees, and the documents in their possession, relative to the dismissal of Dr. Semple, and to cause the same to be printed and circulated as they may deem expedient.”

In pursuance of this resolution, the Committee have taken the subject into their consideration; they have compared the representations made by Dr. Semple, to the Poor-Law Board, in his reports, and to the public, in the pamphlets and articles published by himself and his friends, with the evidence laid before the Special Committee, and the documents in possession of the Trustees, and the result is contained in the following Statement.

The Special Committee, in the first place, made inquiry whether Dr. Semple had ever made any, and what complaints to the Trustees, of the want of accommodation in the Workhouse, prior to a certain report dated 15th May last, alluded to in his Pamphlet; and they found that in the month of September, 1853, a copy of the general order, and of the directions and regulations of the Board of Health, issued under the authority of the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, 1848, was forwarded by that Board to the Trustees, and on the 30th September, 1853, at a meeting of the Trustees then held,—

“ It was resolved, that the general order from the Board of Health be referred to the Sanitary Committee, for their special consideration and advice.”

On the same day the Sanitary Committee met, and passed the following resolution:—

“ That Dr. Semple, the Medical Officer of the Workhouse, be requested to report to this Committee, as to the Sanitary

“ condition of the Workhouse, and of the Parish generally, and to
 “ make such suggestions, with reference to the prevention of any
 “ epidemic disease, as he may deem proper.”

In pursuance of this resolution, a report was presented by Dr. Semple to the Sanitary Committee, from which the following extract, being all *that* relates to the Sanitary condition of the Workhouse, is made :—

“ 25, Cross-street, Islington,
 “ October 1st, 1853.

“ Gentlemen,

“ In accordance with your request, I beg to offer some obser-
 “ vations on the Sanitary condition of the Poor House of this
 “ Parish, and of the Parish generally, and to make some sugges-
 “ tions with reference to the prevention of any epidemic disease,
 “ such as that with which the Metropolis is now threatened. It is
 “ very satisfactory to me to be enabled to state, that the Poor
 “ House is entirely free from epidemic disease; and that, although
 “ there are on the average about one hundred cases continually
 “ under treatment, the instances of English Cholera and Diarrhœa
 “ bear a very small proportion to the rest; indeed, there is far less
 “ Diarrhœa prevailing at present, than in any previous years.

“ With regard to the Sanitary condition of the Poor House,
 “ *it appears to me to leave nothing to be desired*, the locality is ele-
 “ vated, affording excellent advantages for draining; the privies
 “ are detached from the rest of the buildings, and are regularly
 “ flushed with abundant quantities of water every day; the In-
 “ firmary Wards are all provided with water-closets, and *the most*
 “ *scrupulous attention is always paid to the complete ventilation of*
 “ *all the rooms*, which are also regularly scoured twice a week,
 “ and periodically whitewashed. *I have never perceived any offen-*
 “ *sive smell in any of the wards*, except those which necessarily
 “ arise from those patients who are suffering under offensive mala-
 “ dies, such as cancer, chronic abscesses, &c.

“ The Poor House is supplied with efficient baths, of which
 “ I am in the constant habit of making use in the case of the sick,
 “ and I am informed that the Master and Matron also enforce the
 “ practice of bathing amongst those who are well.

“ I have always advocated and adopted a liberal system of
 “ diet for the sick, because the general type of disease, which has
 “ prevailed of late years in this country, requires a system of sup-
 “ porting the constitution, not of lowering its energies.

“ The importance of carrying these principles into operation
 “ is, I think, sufficiently obvious, when considering the compara-
 “ tive immunity of the Poor House from all forms of epidemic
 “ and contagious disease, and especially from Cholera, which has
 “ scarcely visited the House at all.

“ During the first outbreak of Asiatic Cholera, in 1832, there
 “ were no cases in the Poor House; and in the second, in 1849,
 “ there were only three, one being a person previously in feeble
 “ health, and who is now alive, and the other two cases being
 “ clearly introduced from without by persons sent to nurse the
 “ out-door sick, who were suffering and dying from the epidemic.
 “ In the year 1849, only one case *died* of Cholera in the Work-
 “ house.

“ (Signed) R. H. SEMPLE, M.D.,

“ Medical Officer of the Workhouse.”

“ To the Sanitary Committee.”

On the same day, Dr. Semple made his Annual Report to the Trustees; in which, after a statistical account of the disease and deaths during the past year, he proceeds as follows:—

“ The general healthiness of the House, and the diminished
 “ mortality, as compared with former years, are, I think, to be at-
 “ tributed, under Providence, to the improvements in medical
 “ science, *to the excellent Sanitary condition of the House as re-*
 “ *gards cleanliness, ventilation, salubrity of position, and diet;*
 “ *and to the prompt attentions displayed by all the Officers of the*
 “ *House in reporting and attending to every case of illness in its*
 “ *earliest stages.*

“ It will be observed, that very few cases have been sent to
 “ the hospital, except those labouring under contagious fevers,
 “ which I consider it highly inexpedient to retain among a num-
 “ ber of other patients labouring under different forms of wasting
 “ diseases, and who are precisely in the condition to render them
 “ liable to the infection. By the practice of sending fever cases
 “ to the Fever Hospital, I am convinced that the mortality in the
 “ House is very considerably reduced.

“ The number of cases sent to the Lunatic Asylums is larger
 “ than in former years; and I may remark, that these cases do not,
 “ for the most part occur among the usual inmates of the Work-
 “ house, but are brought there by the friends and relatives with a
 “ view to their removal to the County Asylums.

“ *I cannot speak too highly of the indefatigable exertions of*
 “ *the Mistress of the House, and of her uniform care and atten-*

“ *tion to the sick ; and the same remarks are due to Mr. Laman, the Master, whose duties have been interrupted by the attack of fever before alluded to, but from which he is now recovering.* ”

“ (Signed) ROBT. H. SEMPLE, M.D.”

“ To the Trustees of St. Mary, Islington.”

In Dr. Semple's Pamphlet, page 5, after complaining of the total inadequacy of the Infirmary Wards, and of their being small and ill-ventilated, &c., he states, that these evils had long been felt, and often represented to the Trustees. It will be seen that this statement is directly at variance with the foregoing reports.

Soon after the date of these reports, in the course of the same month of October, 1853, a woman, named Martin, was admitted into the Workhouse to be confined ; she was ill at the time, was prematurely delivered of twins, and in three days afterwards typhus fever developed itself, and she died. Immediately afterwards, several inmates took the infection, and two of them died.

These unfortunate occurrences were communicated by Dr. Semple to the Trustees at a Board Meeting, held 2nd November, 1853. In his letter or report of that date, after relating the above events, he adds,—

“ It will be observed, that as I noticed in a former report, the fever does not originate in the Workhouse, but it is introduced from without, yet it is inevitable that the disease should spread amongst a number of patients whose constitution has been broken down by previous disease ; hence, I think it absolutely necessary, that such cases of epidemic and contagious disease should be isolated as much as possible from all the other cases, and it is too evident, that the *present dimensions* and arrangements of the Workhouse do not permit this principle of isolation to be efficiently adopted.

“ It is, I think, a matter of serious consideration, whether the present Workhouse, although healthy in itself and well managed by its officers, is capable of affording efficient accommodation in case of the invasion of serious disease, or indeed of the continuance of the present epidemic maladies.”

This is the language of Dr. Semple on the 31st of October, after having on the 1st of that month, described the same establishment, with regard to its sanitary condition, as leaving “ *nothing to be desired.* ”

In this report of the 31st of October, he states his opinion, that it is absolutely necessary that cases of epidemic and con-

tagious disease should be isolated as much as possible, but adds, that it was a matter of serious consideration, "whether the *present Workhouse was capable*" of affording efficient accommodation for that purpose.

In his report to the Poor-Law Board, of the 28th July last, he refers to the communication thus made by him to the Trustees, and represents the *opinion* there given, as an "earnest entreaty to the Board to make arrangements for isolating cases of fever generally, and for affording increased accommodation for the sick poor during the approaching winter, when an increase of disease might reasonably be expected." Instead of an earnest entreaty for isolating cases, he merely says, "I *think* it absolutely *necessary*." And then adds, "It is too evident that the *present dimensions* of the Workhouse do not permit the principle of isolation to be efficiently adopted;" and doubts whether the *present Workhouse is capable* of affording it. To the representation thus made to the Poor-Law Board, as to his letter of the 31st October, he adds the following: "My letter was read, the facts were not denied, and the subject referred to a Sub-Committee. I need hardly add that nothing whatever was done."

This sudden conversion of Dr. Semple, from a conviction of the all-sufficiency of the establishment on the 1st, to the notion that a new Workhouse was indispensable on the 31st of the same month,—one short month only having intervened,—created some surprise at the Board of Trustees, but the subject was immediately referred to the House Committee, who forthwith proceeded to consider what was best to be done, and especially with reference to the distinct intimation of Dr. Semple, that the House was not capable of affording efficient accommodation for isolating contagious and epidemic diseases.

In the mean time, a House of Refuge, in the Lower-road, was provided by the Trustees for the reception of Cholera cases. The inhabitants of that neighbourhood became alarmed, and presented a very numerous and respectably signed Memorial and remonstrance against the measure;* a large and influential Deputation of such inhabitants waited upon the Trustees to urge them not to introduce so objectionable an establishment into their neighbourhood. The subject was adjourned for consideration, and afterwards, at a special meeting, fully discussed. It happened however, that no further case of typhus had occurred in the Workhouse. The Cholera began to disappear, and in deference to the wishes and entreaties of the Memorialists, the Trustees resolved to comply with their desire, and the house was given up.

* Signed by 385 Inhabitants.

This very natural and reasonable result is thus distorted by Dr. Semple in his Report to the Poor-Law Board:—

“ They ” (the Trustees) “ had no sooner taken it ” (the House of Refuge in the Lower-road), “ and had begun to adapt it to the intended purpose, *when some intestine discord arose among the Trustees themselves*, and the House of Refuge was suddenly “ abandoned.”

Soon after this event, Mr. Weale, one of the Poor-Law Inspectors, attended at the Workhouse, and made the usual periodical examination of the establishment. He went over the whole of it, including all the sick wards (and not the healthy parts only, as stated by Dr. Semple in his Pamphlet), and then made the following Report:—

“ St. Mary, Islington, 13th December, 1853.

“ I have to-day inspected the Workhouse at the request of the Poor-Law Board, in consequence of the illness and absence of my colleague, Mr. Hall, and I have great pleasure in reporting that I found the several wards very clean, and in excellent order. The inmates looked clean in their persons and were very orderly. I was sorry to see, *in so well regulated a Workhouse (in every other respect)*, the men placed two in a bed.*

“ The Workhouse is not now crowded, and great care should at this time be taken to prevent any particular ward from becoming so. I beg to suggest to the Trustees that they should request their Medical Officer to visit the several wards weekly, and to report any instance of over-crowding.

“ (Signed)

ROBERT WEALE,

“ Poor-Law Inspector.”

The cessation of typhus fever, the disappearance, or nearly so, of Cholera, the satisfactory report of Mr. Weale on the 13th December, 1853, nearly three months after Dr. Semple's most satisfactory report of the 1st October, naturally induced the Trustees to entertain a reasonable hope that all danger had passed away; and that they might safely leave the question of erecting a New Workhouse, or providing extra wards on the old site, to the new body of Trustees, who would, in about three months from that time, be elected by the Rate-payers. Under these circumstances, it was resolved to postpone the further consideration of the subject for three months.

* Most of the double beds have since been altered to single ones, in compliance with this suggestion.

After the triennial election of the Trustees, on the 24th April last, *the House Committee*, who were appointed on the following 3rd May, met for the first time on the 9th of that month, before any further communication had been made by Dr. Semple as to the insufficient accommodation of the Workhouse, and the Committee appointed a meeting for the purpose of taking into consideration the erection of additional Sick Wards. A few days afterwards Dr. Semple presented to the Board his Report, dated the 15th May. From the month of November, 1853, to the 15th of May, 1854, no further report on the subject had been made by Dr. Semple, either to the Board or the House Committee.

Now mark the date of this Report, 15th May, 1854. Two days afterwards, a large room, which had been used as the Men's Receiving Ward, was fitted up with ten beds, and used as an additional temporary Sick Ward for men; and, in deference to the opinion of the Medical Officer as to the necessity for a New Workhouse, the Trustees, at a Board Meeting held the 17th May, resolved—

“ That it be referred to the House Committee to consider the
 “ propriety of erecting a New Workhouse, or of enlarging the
 “ present, so as to afford proper accommodation to the poor,
 “ particularly of the Sick Poor, together with suitable offices for
 “ the transaction of parochial business.”

At another meeting of Trustees, held 19th May, it was resolved—

“ That the Infirmary Wards being full, Dr. Semple apply
 “ to the authorities of the London Fever Hospital to receive such
 “ cases as may be labouring under the *preliminary symptoms*
 “ of typhus fever.”

On the *very same day* (the 19th), Dr. Sankey, resident Medical Officer of the Fever Hospital, attended the meeting of the Trustees, and on behalf of the authorities of the Hospital, acceded to the request of the Board for the admission of the cases alluded to.

At a meeting of the House Committee on the subject on the Tuesday following, the matter was taken into consideration, and the Surveyor was ordered to produce plans at the next meeting.

At the next meeting, on the 30th May, the Surveyor was directed to attend the following meeting of the Committee, with all such plans relating to the Workhouse as he might have in his possession.

On the 13th June, the drainage of the Workhouse and Offices was taken into consideration by the House Committee, and the Surveyor ordered to attend the next meeting thereon.

On the 20th of June, the Surveyor attended, and was ordered to remedy the nuisance arising from the drain under the Dispensary; and, on the 27th of the same month, he made the report, of which the following is a copy:—

“Surveyor’s Office,
“June 27th, 1854.

“C. H. Hill respectfully reports that the cause of the stench
“at the Dispensary, was an insufficient air-trap, which has been
“remedied. He also reports that the drainage of the Workhouse
“and Offices is in a complete state of repair, and quite efficient.

“CHAS. H. HILL, Surveyor.”

“To the House Committee.”

At the several meetings of the House Committee, held the 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th of June, and 4th, 11th, 18th of July, as appears by the Minutes, the subject of increased accommodation for the Sick Poor was discussed and fully considered. The time of the Committee was occupied, not in disputing any of the facts mentioned in his report, as stated by Dr. Semple in his Pamphlet*—but in serious and earnest endeavours to devise a remedy, Dr. Semple admits that he attended some of these meetings. During this period plans were prepared for additional Sick Wards; and at the last meeting the Surveyor was directed to make some alterations, in order the more effectually to accomplish the object of increased accommodation.

At the next meeting of the Committee, on the 25th July, the altered plans were produced, and the Committee recommended the Board to adopt them, which they did. At the next meeting of the House Committee, on the 1st of August, the Surveyor was ordered to prepare the necessary working plans and specifications for the Poor-Law Board; and, on the 8th August, these plans were submitted by the Surveyor to the Committee, and ordered to be transmitted to the Poor-Law Board for their approval.

Ever since that time the matter has been progressing as fast as the necessary compliance with the regulations of the Poor-Law Board would admit; and there is no reason to doubt that the additional wards will be completed in the course of the ensuing spring. Persons ignorant of the difficulties attending the erection of public buildings under the Poor Laws, may feel some degree of surprise to find that what was determined upon so long ago as

* See his Pamphlet, p. 10.

June, 1854, should not have been completed in January, 1855; but if those persons could only have an opportunity of trying to accomplish it, they would be able to understand the many practical difficulties that prevent dispatch. For instance, the plans were forwarded to the Poor-Law Board the 8th of August. On the 5th September, that Board required further information. On the 12th, the additional plan required was sent. On the 26th, some remarks were received from the Poor-Law Board as to the size of the wards, &c. On the 3rd October, additions were recommended. On the 24th, a report from Dr. Semple on the subject, and suggesting alteration, was laid before the Committee. On the same day, the Surveyor was ordered to alter the plans in accordance with the suggestion of the Poor-Law Board. On the 14th November, the plans being altered, were again forwarded to the Poor-Law Board. And on the 12th December, the approbation of that Board was obtained. The plans were subsequently submitted to the District Surveyor, *and are now before the Official Referees for their sanction.*

With regard to the temporary accommodation afforded, as before stated, by fitting up the Men's Receiving Ward as an additional Sick Ward, it was necessary to appropriate two large rooms on the basement story, as a temporary receiving ward for the reception of male paupers, where they remain only until the doctor orders to what part of the house they are to go. When lunatics are sent to the Workhouse, they are first necessarily placed in the receiving ward. A keeper is always with them, until an order can be obtained for their admission to an asylum. On the 19th May, an arrangement, as before stated, was made with the authorities of the Fever Hospital, which is very near the Workhouse, by which all patients in the house, labouring under *premonitory symptoms* of typhus fever, were for the future to be sent to that establishment. Until this arrangement was made, no patients could be received at the Hospital until the fever was developed. Having made this arrangement for increased accommodation for the sick poor, the Committee immediately proceeded, from week to week, at every sitting, to consider the best means of complying with the recommendations of Dr. Semple, and selecting the best site, and adopting the best plans in their judgment, for the more permanently providing for the accommodation of the sick poor, and to guard against any emergency or unusual pressure of sickness.

These particulars are detailed at greater length than might have been thought necessary, if the subject had not been misrepresented by Dr. Semple in his Pamphlet, by newspapers and other publications, and by the medical gentlemen who assembled

at Baker's Rooms to sympathise with Dr. Semple, and condemn the conduct of the Trustees.

And what says Dr. Semple, in his report to the Poor-Law Board of the 28th July, after he had attended the meetings of the House Committee, after the additional Sick Ward for the men had been fitted up, and an arrangement made for the fever patients to be taken to the hospital? After all that could be done, was done, and the Committee were sitting, as he knew, week after week, devising means to provide further accommodation for extraordinary occasions, and to guard against overcrowding, he writes thus to the Poor-Law Board:—

“ It was determined that my report of the 15th May should “ be referred to a *Sub-Committee*.* This Sub-Committee, how- “ ever, instead of proceeding to remedy the evils described, began “ to doubt their existence, although the truth of my statements “ had always been admitted by the General Board; and it became “ quite evident that to refer a question to a Sub-Committee, was “ equivalent to getting rid of it altogether. While admitting, “ therefore, the assertion of the Trustees, that several of the matters “ brought forward in my report were ‘ under consideration,’ I by “ no means admit that any real improvement was ever contem- “ plated.”

Can it be a matter of surprise, that, after these *extraordinary* assertions and insinuations, the Committee and the Board of Trustees should have lost their confidence in Dr. Semple?

Long before Dr. Semple's Report of the 15th May, an In-door Medical Officer and Dispenser, at his suggestion, had been appointed by the Board, and an Assistant Dispenser had afterwards, at the like suggestion, been engaged, and a new Dispensary was in the course of erection, the better to facilitate the medical arrangements of the Workhouse.

It had long been the established rule for the medical officer of the Workhouse to attend the Friday morning meetings of the Board of Trustees, to report the state of the House; and on Friday, the 9th June, Dr. Semple attended as usual† and was asked whether he had anything to report; he stated that the ventilation and drainage of the Workhouse were defective; the Chairman inquired whether he had any thing further to report; Dr. Semple replied, “ No.”

* This was not a Sub-Committee, but the *House Committee*, as Dr. Semple well knew.

† From that time to the day of his dismissal, 25th of December, Dr. Semple wholly neglected this important part of his duty, and discontinued his attendance on the Board.

A few days after this, a copy of the Report made by Dr. Semple to the Poor-Law Inspectors, dated the 9th of June, 1854, was received at the Parochial Offices, and presented to the Board of Trustees at their next meeting, who thereupon appointed the Special Committee, as before stated.

This Report is dated the same day that he appeared before the Board of Trustees, and although he was distinctly questioned as to whether he had any thing to report beyond what he then complained of,—defective ventilation and drainage,—he observed a profound silence as to his having made any, or having been requested by any one, to make any report to the Poor-Law Inspectors.

Upon examining this Report, it was found to contain what he had never hinted to the Trustees, a melancholy description of the wretchedness of the Tramp Wards; that typhus fever had broken out upon two occasions with great severity; that it was in the Men's Wards where many of the typhus cases had occurred; that the lodgings and rooms for the Officers of the establishment were unhealthy in the extreme, &c.; but he omitted to state what the Trustees had done by fitting up another Men's Sick Ward, and making arrangements with the Fever Hospital to receive the fever cases: he entirely omits the fact of a new Dispensary, being then nearly completed, and also the fact that the House Committee was then engaged in devising the best means to secure a more permanent provision for the sick poor.

The principal statements contained in the report so made to the Poor-Law Inspectors, were:—

1. The continual increase of buildings around the Workhouse itself, impeding ventilation.
2. The absence of any system of ventilation within the Workhouse.
3. The over-crowded state of the Sick Wards, and that there were only two Men's Sick Wards.
4. The faulty construction of the Tramp Wards.
5. The entire absence of spare Wards for unforeseen emergencies.
6. The utter impossibility of devising any means for the classification of cases.
7. That he had been obliged to suspend the dispensing for the present.

The Special Committee requested the attendance of Dr. Semple, and his evidence was taken very fully upon the medical questions involved in his report. Is it not remarkable that, after this, Dr. Semple should complain that no medical evidence was taken, and that the evidence of the Master and Matron was taken upon medical questions? It is obvious, that upon all medical questions arising upon his report, no other medical man could be so competent as the Doctor himself to give the required information to the Committee; where then was the necessity for the examination of three or four other medical men upon the same subject?

The duty of the Committee was to inquire fully into the statements made by Dr. Semple in his report to the Poor-Law Board; it will be seen from the enumeration of the several points contained in it, that they professed to be *statements of facts*, with the single exception of the impossibility alleged by Dr. Semple of devising any means for the classification of cases—upon which point the Master gave no evidence; he was questioned as to matters of fact,—not medicine, and his answers were to matters of fact only.

But if the Committee had even been guilty of the folly of asking the Master's medical opinion, and he had been unwise enough to give it, Dr. Semple would have no right to complain: for he states in his second report to the Poor-Law Board, that he had seen the Master's corrected evidence, and when fairly examined, it would be found to corroborate, rather than contradict his, Dr. Semple's, statements. And the Master's evidence before the Committee is, "I shewed Dr. Semple my evidence, as corrected, and "he said my evidence confirmed his report."

We must, therefore, take the Master's evidence (as corrected by him) to be true. Without entering into every allegation on the one side or the other, just let us take a few instances, shewing that the Master's evidence is in direct opposition to the facts reported by the Doctor to the Poor-Law Board.

Dr. Semple says there are two Men's Sick Wards, small and ill-ventilated.

The Master says there are three: two 30 feet by 17 feet, for ten beds each, 9 feet high; one 26 feet by 19 feet, for ditto, 10 feet high.

Dr. Semple states that cases of typhus fever were continually occurring. The Master says, "I am not aware of typhus fever continually occurring; if it had been so, the Doctor ought to "have informed me, that I might have been upon my guard."

Dr. Semple says that "there is only one Children's Ward, and the consequence is that isolated cases of Hooping Cough have been brought in, and have immediately communicated that disease to nearly all the other children."

The Master says, "If children are sick with some infantile disease, they are placed with nurses in the sick wards; if we know them to be in that state when they come in, we don't put them in the children's ward." "As to Hooping Cough, a single woman was admitted last winter, and one of the children had a cough. Dr. Semple saw them; they were then in the nursery (the children's ward); one of the children began to whoop, and was then removed, but the other children took the cough:— that is the only case I remember."

Dr. Semple says, the Tramp Wards, and the whole of the arrangements connected with the tramps, vagrants, and casualties, are open to the most serious objections. The Master says, the Tramp Wards and the accommodation is as good as any in London. The Inspectors of the Poor-Law Board examined them, and made no complaint.*

Dr. Semple says, there are no wards available for the reception of Lunatics. That persons labouring under violent maniacal excitement are necessarily placed among the other sick paupers to the great danger of the latter. The Master says, on the admission of Lunatics, they are placed in Receiving Wards until transferred to an asylum; they are placed under a Keeper, but the *violent or refractory* are under the Doctor's orders placed in the Padded Room. Lunatics and sick persons are never kept together.

Dr. Semple says, "the rooms allotted to the Resident Medical Officer and Dispenser and myself, while at the Workhouse, are in a most unwholesome condition." The Master says, "I consider the Dispenser's rooms" (the Dispenser is the resident medical officer), "the most healthy about the building."

* In Dr. Semple's report to the Poor-Law Board, he speaks of Charles Hierons, the then Porter of the Workhouse, as a well-informed man, having held several similar appointments, under the control of the Poor-Law Commissioners. Hierons was examined before the Special Committee, and gave the following evidence:—

"We have had a great many (Tramps) here very bad characters; I know them and they know me: one has been here seventy times since I've been here, (five months). The Tramp-sheds are as good as any I have seen anywhere. There is plenty of space in the boxes, pretty-well ventilated; the Tramps will stop ventilation if they can. The diseases of the Tramps are not worse than at other places. Accommodation and ventilation as good as any place I know,—a great deal too good for many of them. We give them bread at night, and bread and gruel in the morning. We keep them quite as well as any other parish I know. Can't suggest any improvement, except adding a camp pillow to each box."

Many other equally striking contradictions by the testimony of the Master to Dr. Semple's Report might be adduced, but what has already been stated is sufficient to shew that the Special Committee were fully justified in reporting to the Board "their unanimous opinion, that the Report of Dr. Semple to the Poor-Law Board contains a most exaggerated statement of the condition of the Workhouse not warranted by facts."

On the 16th of August another report, made by Dr. Semple to the Poor-Law Board, dated 28th July, having been forwarded to the Trustees, it was referred to the Special Committee to take the same into consideration, and to report thereon.

Upon the examination of this report by the Special Committee, they found that it contained the most extraordinary statements and very insulting language, as well towards the Board of Trustees as the Committee. It commences by an allegation that he (Dr. Semple) was threatened with dismissal, his only offence being that he had presented a report as to the Workhouse to the Poor-Law Inspectors. He charges the Committee, amongst other things, with having required him at once to give answers to questions extending over many years, and to many thousand patients, entirely from memory.

On being asked by the Committee what he meant by this statement, his answer was, "I was asked whether any buildings around the Workhouse had been erected within the last twenty years." Dr. Semple's report states, that he was not allowed (by the Committee) reference to books or papers. The Committee inquired what he meant by that statement, and his answer was this: "I mean that I had none."

He was then asked—"Did you request the Committee to allow you to refer to books or papers?"

Answer—"I did not."

Question—"Did they refuse to allow it?"

Answer—"They did not; I never asked."

But Dr. Semple further says in his report, that he offered to bring evidence in support of his statements, but was not allowed to do so; but he admitted, before the Committee, that no one said they refused to hear evidence.

He then states that Mr. and Mrs. Laman were compelled to state facts of which they were ignorant; that their evidence was purposely distorted; that the Committee suppressed and interpo-

lated evidence; that all persons in the establishment were in danger of dismissal if they gave evidence in opposition to the wishes of the Trustees; and accused the Committee of coarse vulgarity, and vulgar impertinence.

Dr. Semple was examined by the Special Committee upon these extraordinary statements for which there was no foundation, and his answers were very similar to those just before detailed, and equally absurd and inapplicable.

Let us now proceed to notice some of the prominent points put forth as grievances in Dr. Semple's Pamphlet, and the speeches of his medical friends at their meeting at Baker's rooms.

The Special Committee had reported to the Trustees that the statement made by Dr. Semple to the Poor-Law Board, that he had on the 8th June, 1854, been obliged to suspend the dispensing, *was wholly untrue*; and the Committee had thus accused him of falsehood; whereas, he contends, that the dispensing was suspended on the 8th June.

This subject was carefully investigated by the Special Committee, and it was found that Dr. Semple had, on the 8th June, attempted to stop the Dispensing* by desiring Mr. Field, the Dispenser, to leave, on the ground that he was ill with fever, and that the Assistant Clerk had, on hearing this, immediately engaged a Mr. Wakefield, who had been assistant to a chymist, and he actually commenced dispensing the very morning Mr. Field left. The Assistant Clerk, with Dr. Semple's concurrence, wrote to the Outdoor Medical Officers not to send more cases to the Dispensary for medicines than absolutely necessary. The Committee examined the Dispensing Book, and found Mr. Wakefield's entries on that day of the Medicines dispensed by him.

In Mr. Field's evidence before the Committee, he states:—

“ Mr. Wakefield has been here to assist. I found him a very good dispenser. Mr. Wakefield commenced the very morning I left.” This witness, in his evidence before the Committee, stated, that he left on the Thursday, and came back to his employment on the following Monday.

Mr. Wakefield was examined by the Committee, and stated:

“ I entered the surgery on 8th June, 1854, at 10 A.M. The first prescription I made up was under the direction of Dr. Semple. As soon as I got in he gave me a prescription to make up, to test my competency. I did so, and he said he was satis-

* See the Evidence of the Assistant Clerk, Mr. Cooper, on this head, in the Appendix.

“ fied I was competent. I have been going on ever since, day
 “ by day, and hour by hour, making up and dispensing medicines ;
 “ and from the time I entered, the Dispensing has never been
 “ stopped during the usual hours of business. Mr. Field was
 “ there when I first entered on the 8th June.”*

Dr. Semple's statement, therefore, as to the dispensing having been suspended on the 8th June, and his being without an Assistant on the 9th June, is contradicted by the above evidence. These are the simple facts as to the alleged suspension of the dispensing ; and the Rate-payers will thus be able to judge how far the Committee was warranted in reporting that Dr. Semple's statement in this respect was wholly untrue.

Another prominent charge against the Special Committee is, that there were only *five* members on that Committee, three of whom were known to entertain a personal animosity against himself.

The Committee consisted of *seven* persons, viz.

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. NAYLOR.

The Vice-Chairman, Dr. GRABHAM.

Mr. TIPPETTS, of Lonsdale Square.

Two Churchwardens, Messrs. SAVAGE and SHADGETT.

Two Overseers, Messrs. VOUSLEY and YOUNG.

With a Committee so constituted, one would have thought all reasonable persons might have been satisfied. It is needless to add more respecting it, except that the Report of which Dr. Semple so bitterly complains, was read, and clause by clause put, and *unanimously carried, every member of the Committee being in attendance.*

As to the three members represented by Dr. Semple as known to be his personal enemies, but whose names are not divulged, the Committee, one and all, deny the charge as utterly without foundation ; the unanimity of the Committee is an ample refutation of so unjust an accusation.

* The services of Mr. Wakefield, as temporary Dispenser, having ceased, he has since been elected porter to the Workhouse. In Dr. Semple's Pamphlet, quoting the Report of the Committee, he adds, in a note, rather ungraciously and unfairly, in order to make an erroneous impression as to the appointment of Mr. Wakefield as a Dispenser, “ *the present porter to the Workhouse.*”

Upon the second and third reports, made by Dr. Semple, being received from the Poor-Law Board, they were by a resolution of the Board of Trustees referred to the consideration of the same Committee, with the substitution of Mr. Sawbridge, in the place of Mr. Tippetts, who was unable to attend.

A third accusation, brought by Dr. Semple in his Pamphlet, at pages 20, 21, 22, is, that the Committee (to whom his second and third reports had been referred) were guilty of a *flagrant act of meanness and dishonesty* in suppressing a letter copied into the Doctor's Pamphlet, page 21, but without a date.

Now as to the foundation for this very serious charge, the facts are ascertained to be these.

The following letter was addressed by Dr. Semple to Mr. Sparling.

“ 25, Cross-street, Islington,
“ October 5th, 1854.

“ Dear Sir,

“ The sole object of my Reports to the Poor-Law Board was
“ to obtain better accommodation for the Sick Poor; and being
“ now fully convinced that the Trustees are anxious to afford it,
“ I gladly withdraw them altogether, and trust that the discussions
“ to which they have given rise having terminated, I shall not
“ have lost the confidence of the Board.

“ I remain, Dear Sir,

“ Yours very truly,

“ R. H. SEMPLE.”

“ W. Sparling, Esq.”

The Committee met the next evening, Friday, the 6th October. Mr. Sparling, who attended that Committee, was not informed that any such letter had arrived, and therefore it was not produced. He was not informed of it until the next day, and it was produced at the next meeting of the Committee, on Monday the 9th.

In the course of that day the following letter was delivered at the Parochial Offices:—

“ 25, Cross-street, Islington,
“ October 9th, 1854.

“ Sir,

“ Upon referring to the copy of a note forwarded to you by
“ myself, on Tuesday last, by the hands of Barker, the porter, and

“ endorsed ‘ W. Sparling, Esq., Special Committee, Thursday
 “ evening, October 5th,’ and consulting with my friends upon it,
 “ it has suggested itself that your Committee would be more fully
 “ satisfied, as to my desire to put the matter right with the Poor-
 “ Law Board, if I offer to send a copy of that note to the Board,
 “ and wait upon them if they wish it.

“ *It may also tend to that which I wish to cultivate, namely, a
 “ proper feeling between the Board and myself, if I now say, that
 “ if the Committee are of opinion that any statements in my first
 “ Report to the Poor-Law Board are exaggerated, I most cheer-
 “ fully withdraw them, although maintaining, at the same time, the
 “ substantial accuracy of the Report itself; and, as I have re-
 “ peatedly declared, that I have no personal feeling whatever in
 “ anything I have done, I wish to retract any expressions which
 “ may appear offensive to any person; and I can but again express
 “ my regret, that the deep responsibility under which I was labour-
 “ ing, in June last, from the prevalence of unusual disease in the
 “ Workhouse, should have compelled me, very reluctantly to urge,
 “ with some warmth, the necessity of adopting such steps as should
 “ place the Workhouse in a better position for the due reception of
 “ sick persons, and for the prevention of future attacks of disease.*

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Yours very truly,

“ R. H. SEMPLE.”

“ W. Sparling, Esq..”

It will be at once seen that this is the letter referred to in Dr. Semple's Pamphlet; as no other letter containing the passages set forth in page 20 was ever received at the Parochial Offices. This was not a letter *to the Committee without any date*, as would appear from the Doctor's Pamphlet; but was addressed to Mr. Sparling, as the Clerk, to be laid before the Committee. It was received on the day of its date, the 9th of October. It was laid before the Committee at their meeting *on the same evening*, and ordered to be entered upon their Minutes; but that meeting was the last ever held by the Committee, and therefore, all the curious circumstances assumed by Dr. Semple, as to the loss and suppression of the letter, and the meanness and dishonesty of the Committee in their share of the transaction, have really no foundation in fact.*

* As the statement of Dr. Semple, on this subject, casts a heavy imputation on the Clerk, or the Assistant Clerk to the Trustees, it is considered right that their own letters in reply to the charges of the Doctor should be published; and they will, therefore, be found in the Appendix.

It is by no means wished to put too harsh a construction upon so unjustifiable a charge against the Committee, and the Clerk to the Trustees; but the remark cannot be suppressed, that the date of the letter, if Dr. Semple had allowed himself to state it, would have shewn the utter fallacy of the accusation; and it is hoped that he will now have the good feeling to regret having attacked, in such unwarrantable language, a number of gentlemen, who were perfectly innocent, and incapable of being guilty of the trickery and meanness so confidently imputed to them, by the statements made in his Pamphlet.

In a former part of this Statement, reference was made to the contradictory evidence given before the Committee, by Dr. Semple and the Master, as to the number of men's sick wards, it will be seen on reference to his Pamphlet, page 5, that he there states there are only seven Infirmary Wards, each made to contain ten beds, making in the whole number 70; but according to the Master's corrected evidence, which was actually seen and approved by Dr. Semple, there are twelve Infirmary Wards, (including two for convalescents,) containing in all 124 beds, (ten being appropriated to the Nurses,) and in the second Report of the Special Committee, is the following passage on the subject: "There were in the
 " Workhouse, on the 9th June, 112 beds appropriated to the sick,
 " and your Committee believe, that had Dr. Semple been desirous
 " of making the best use of the means at his disposal, he would
 " have found sufficient accommodation; however, instead of so
 " doing, he appears at a time, when cool deliberation and calmness
 " of mind should have possessed him; when sickness was on the
 " increase, and Cholera threatening, to have lost his temper, and
 " determined to aggravate, by erroneous and exaggerated state-
 " ments, a state of circumstances (admitting them to exist, as your
 " Committee do not,) which it was his duty, and should have been
 " his will, to grapple with and surmount."

After his erroneous statement as to the number of beds for infirmary patients, Dr. Semple proceeds to state, "Hence the
 " patients are dispersed among the healthy inmates, or left in the
 " receiving wards."

On this subject the following extract from the second Report of the Committee will shew their opinion:

"With reference also to the statement of Dr. Semple, as to the
 " overcrowding of the receiving wards, and the mixture of several
 " diseases therein, your Committee remark, that the very term
 " 'receiving ward' indicates that all persons labouring under all
 " sorts of diseases must first be placed there, and they regret to

“ state their belief that Dr. Semple has, in some instances, kept
 “ cases in the receiving wards, which ought not to have been kept
 “ there, and in others for a much longer period than there was
 “ occasion for.”

“ Take the following case as an example :—

In Dr. Semple's second Report to the Poor-Law Board, and again in his Pamphlet, he annexes the evidence of Sophia Wright, one of the nurses, in which is the following passage :—“ M. A. C.,
 “ who had the venereal disease, was in the Receiving Ward three
 “ months ; and the smell proceeding from her was dreadful, and
 “ enough to poison any one.”

As to this case, he was asked the following question by the Committee—“ Why was M. A. C. kept in the Receiving Ward
 “ for three months ?” To which he replied, “ Because there was
 “ no place to remove her to. I never reported this case to the
 “ Board, or the House Committee : I did not consider it my duty.”

Here is his own admission, on this “ *extraordinary case,*” that he did not report it to the Board, or the House Committee, nor did he think it his duty to do so. And yet this is one of the gravest charges made by him against the Trustees. The Doctor's ingenuity never leaves him : he converts his own neglect into a heavy charge against the Board of Trustees.

On the 7th August, 1854, Dr. Semple made a third Report to the Poor-Law Board, in which occurs this passage. “ I found
 “ that *four patients labouring under various forms of disease,*
 “ *had been dismissed, or persuaded to go from the Infirmary with-*
 “ *out my orders,* the reason being that the wards were all full ;”
 but the evidence of the Master taken on this subject is as follows :—

“ These four men referred to, were Street, Cantell, Trevellyan,
 “ and Robert Smith. Street was out for the day, on Sunday, 6th
 “ August, *by permission of Dr. Semple ;* his bed, it is believed,
 “ was used by Mr. Tucker, (the Dispenser), for the man, Richard
 “ Watson. Cantell and Robert Smith were also out for the
 “ day, *under the same sanction ;* and each of the two last men
 “ returned intoxicated : their respective beds were directed to be
 “ used by patients ordered into the Infirmary by Dr. Semple
 “ previously. On Monday, the 7th, (the date of his Report),
 “ the cases of intoxication were *proved before Dr. Semple,* who
 “ wrote the word “ *off* ” in the margin of the diet book, thereby
 “ approving the course pursued. The man, Trevellyan, volun-
 “ teered to give up his bed ; no influence was used, directly or
 “ indirectly, by the Master or Matron.”

It is difficult to understand why patients should have been kept in the Infirmary, who were able to go out for a holiday, and get drunk.

Dr. Semple, in his Pamphlet, page 13, states that the Committee terminated their labours, by a recommendation to dismiss him from his office.

This statement is wholly untrue. No such recommendation was made by the Committee either in their first or second Report, or otherwise.

Again, (Pamphlet page 22,) he writes :

“ On the 8th of November, 1854, the Trustees of St. Mary, Islington, by a majority of *one* vote,* determined to dismiss their medical officer, because he had performed too faithfully his duties to the sick poor;” and again, “ I had no official notice of this meeting, and although I attended, and sent in my name to the Board, I was not admitted.”

It is true, the Board was not unanimous as to the dismissal of Dr. Semple. Several of his friends at the Board thought that a more lenient course was desirable; but their views of his conduct will best appear, by the language of the following amendments moved, on the motion that Dr. Semple be requested to resign, and also on the motion for his dismissal.

On the motion that Dr. Semple be requested to resign, the following were moved as amendments, and negatived.

1. “ That Dr. Semple be informed, that in the opinion of this Board, he was guilty of great indiscretion in sending Report on the state of the Workhouse to the Poor-Law Inspectors, without apprising the Trustees; and that by repeating such conduct, he would completely forfeit their confidence.”

2. “ That this Board considers the conduct of Dr. Semple, in making a Report to the Poor-Law Inspectors, without the knowledge of this Board, highly improper and inconsistent with his duty as one of its officers; and regret that that Report, instead of being a fair, honest, and faithful one, was, in some parts, untrue, and in others, greatly exaggerated; and that Dr. Semple should have allowed his zeal, in the discharge of his duties, to permit him to make a statement so unjust and injurious to the credit and character of the Trustees.”

* The majority was in fact two.

On the 8th November, on the motion that Dr. Semple be discharged, the following amendment was moved:—

“ That Dr. Semple having fully acknowledged his error in making any Report to the Poor-Law Commissioners, without acquainting the Board, having also fully apologized for any mis-statements or hasty expressions contained in his Reports; and having declared his willingness entirely to withdraw those Reports; the Board, taking into account too, his highly useful services, as their In-door Medical Officer, rescind the resolution of the 26th July, desiring him to resign his appointment; and, while restoring their confidence to him, feel assured he will avoid all future ground of complaint.”

The original resolution for his dismissal was however carried; the feeling of the majority being that, after the course Dr. Semple had thought proper to pursue, the confidence of the Trustees in him was so shaken, that it was impossible for them to act together with that cordiality, without which the interest of the sick poor and the Parish generally would most probably suffer.

As to the statement by the Doctor, that he had no official notice of this last meeting, and although he attended and sent in his name to the Board he was not admitted; the fact is, that no application to be admitted was received by the Chairman, from Dr. Semple, at that meeting.

It having been insinuated by Dr. Semple, in his Pamphlet, that the proceedings of the Committee had been sanctioned by a section only of the Trustees, it may be necessary to add, that upon the presentation of the second Report of the Committee, at a full meeting of the Board, it was *unanimously resolved*,

“ That the best thanks of this Board are due, and are hereby presented to the Special Committee appointed to investigate the several matters referred to in Dr. Semple’s Report, for the calmness of their investigation, and for the labor which they have bestowed in order to come to a satisfactory conclusion on so painful a subject.”

The Committee having recommended that a copy of their Report, accompanied by copies of the minutes of all the evidence taken before them; and also a separate copy of the evidence of the Master and Matron, as corrected by them, and copies of the Master’s statements upon the second and third Reports made by Dr. Semple, should be sent to the Poor-Law Board: it was also

resolved, "That the recommendation of the Committee be complied with;" and the same were made and forwarded accordingly to the Poor-Law Board.

But the gravamen of Dr. Semple's complaint is, that he has been dismissed from the situation he held, of Medical Officer to the Workhouse, without having ever been heard in his own defence. He puts his case thus, for the purpose of shewing that he was not fairly dealt with. In doing so, he not only states what is contrary to the fact, but he has assumed a false position. The Special Committee were not appointed to try Dr. Semple, but "to inquire fully into the statements contained in his Report to the Poor-Law Board, and to report thereon." This was all the Committee had to do. This was all they did. They made the inquiry. Dr. Semple was examined before that Committee at considerable length; he attended once on his first Report, and several times on his second and third Reports, and was fully examined as to the facts stated in them; and in a letter from Dr. Semple, to the Clerk to the Trustees, dated 2nd October, 1854, he says, "I beg you will communicate to the Committee my thanks for the patient investigation they have bestowed upon the evidence lately presented to them."

The facts proved before the Committee, (who held eighteen meetings for the examination of witnesses), were duly reported to the Board of Trustees; and this is called, the "arraignment, trial, and condemnation" of Dr. Semple; whereas, the resolution of the Board to dismiss him from his office, was founded on the statements made in his Reports to the Poor-Law Board, and the result of the inquiry thereon. Dr. Semple was not *tried*; he was the accuser, not the accused.

The notion of a trial and condemnation, without due form, has been adopted by those members of the medical profession who have stepped forward to defend Dr. Semple; and the Trustees have seen, with surprise and regret, the publication of some resolutions passed at a meeting of those gentlemen, with reference to the discharge of Dr. Semple, and denouncing the conduct of the Trustees as unjust, arbitrary, discourteous, disingenuous, despotic, &c., &c., for having dismissed him without giving him an opportunity of being heard in his defence.

It is much to be lamented, that although Dr. Semple has appealed to the Christian sympathies and feelings of the inhabitants, he has not in his Pamphlet set them a good example of Christian charity, as he might have done, by avoiding the most

abusive epithets; and describing the Special Committee as guilty of "meanness and dishonesty," "baseness and treachery," "coarse vulgarity and personal malice," "suppression of letters," and "transposition of dates."

It is also to be regretted, that the medical gentlemen whose names have transpired, should have adopted the statements contained in Dr. Semple's Pamphlet, without due inquiry into their truth, as to the real cause of his dismissal, and without asking the Trustees a single question on the subject; and that they should subsequently, by an appeal to the Poor-Law Board, to reverse the decision of the Trustees, and to restore Dr. Semple to his office, have attempted to diminish, if not to destroy, the independence and local self-government of this important Parish.

The facts proved before the Committee (who held eighteen meetings for the examination of witnesses) were duly reported to the Board of Trustees; and this is called the "arrangement, trial, and condemnation" of Dr. Semple; whereas, the resolution of the Board to dismiss him from his office, was founded on the statements made in his Reports to the Poor-Law Board, and the result of the inquiry thereon. Dr. Semple was not tried; he was the accuser, not the accused.

The notion of a trial and condemnation, without due inquiry, has been adopted by those members of the medical profession who have stepped forward to defend Dr. Semple; and the Trustees have seen, with surprise and regret, the publication of some resolutions passed at a meeting of those gentlemen, with reference to the discharge of Dr. Semple, and denouncing the conduct of the Trustees as unjust, arbitrary, discretionary, dangerous, despotic, &c.; for having dismissed him without giving him an opportunity of being heard in his defence.

It is much to be lamented, that although Dr. Semple has appealed to the Christian sympathies and feelings of the parishants, he has not in his Pamphlet set them a good example of Christian charity, as he might have done, by avoiding the most

APPENDIX.

*The Evidence of Mr. G. A. COOPER, the Assistant Clerk,
taken before the Committee, 26th September, 1854.*

“I was at the Parochial Offices on the 8th June. About Ten
“o’Clock A.M. Dr. Semple called in with the draft of a note proposed
“to be addressed to the District Medical Officers; the effect of it
“was, that, in consequence of the illness of Mr. Field, the
“Dispenser, he was obliged to suspend the Dispensing; and asked
“me whether I would sanction that letter being sent to the
“Medical Officers. I told him I thought I had not the power,
“it was more the province of the Board; and suggested another
“course, that was, the appointment of some one until the Board,
“which would sit the following day, would have the subject
“brought under their consideration. To the best of my recollec-
“tion he said, he did not know where to get an Assistant. I
“hinted, he might get one at one of the hospitals: I think I did.
“It then occurred to me that a party who had been an applicant
“for a situation under the Board, and had represented himself
“to have been an assistant to a chymist and druggist, might be
“employed until some more efficient person could be engaged;
“and, with the concurrence of Dr. Semple, I sent for Mr.
“Wakefield, (the party alluded to,) he came, and saw the
“Doctor; he was engaged by myself, with the concurrence of
“the Doctor, to act for one week; that was about half-past Ten.
“I understood at first, from Mr. Wakefield, that he was not
“prepared to commence immediately. I then wrote to each of
“the District Medical Officers, with the Doctor’s concurrence, and
“requested them not to send more cases to the Dispensary for
“medicines than absolutely necessary. On the next day,
“Friday, 9th June, I reported to the Board that I had written
“to the District Medical Officers, and had engaged Mr. Wakefield
“for a week.”

“ TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.”

“ Gentlemen,

“ In reply to your inquiry, whether Dr. Semple ever made
 “ any verbal communications to me, or had written to me, ‘ suggesting
 “ ‘ a friendly conference with the Poor-Law Board, or the Board of
 “ Health, or both, in order to devise some efficient remedy ’ for
 “ the serious and alarming state of the Workhouse, as stated at page
 “ 10 in a Pamphlet lately published by him, I beg to state that ~~on~~ *no*
 “ *such verbal communication was ever made to me.*

“ As to Doctor Semple having written to me any letter
 “ ‘ suggesting a friendly conference with the Poor-Law Board, or
 “ ‘ the Board of Health,’ I never received any other letter from
 “ him, with such a suggestion, than the one he has copied in his
 “ Pamphlet, page 19, dated September 20th, 1854, (four months
 “ after the date assigned to it in page 10 of his Pamphlet,) in which
 “ you will find the following passage: ‘ Might I suggest as the best
 “ ‘ and most amicable method of settling the matters in question, to
 “ ‘ refer them to the Board of Health.’

“ The Doctor is equally unfortunate in the statement made in
 “ the 20th page of his Pamphlet, as to my having conveyed from the
 “ Special Committee, (or Sub-Committee as he calls them,) a semi-
 “ official communication ‘ that the Sub-Committee were tired of
 “ ‘ their work, that they were divided in opinion among themselves,
 “ ‘ and that they found it useless to struggle with the mass of evi-
 “ ‘ dence ’ which he ‘ was prepared to lay before them. It was
 “ ‘ therefore proposed that they should withdraw their Report,’
 “ and that he, on his side, ‘ should write a conciliatory letter which
 “ ‘ would be quite satisfactory ;’ and that in consequence of this
 “ communication, he wrote the letter to the Committee copied in
 “ page 21 of the Pamphlet.

“ *No such communication was ever conveyed or made by me.* I
 “ attended every meeting of the Committee and recorded all their
 “ proceedings, and no such communication was ever made, or
 “ authorised to be made by them. Dr. Semple must therefore have
 “ imagined, what never occurred, and thus have imposed upon
 “ himself, or he must have been grievously mis-informed by some-
 “ body else.

“ Then follows a serious charge, intended to involve, not only
 “ the Special Committee, but also myself, or my colleague,
 “ Mr. Cooper, or both of us, in the commission of a disgraceful
 “ fraud practised upon the Doctor, by the suppression or pretended
 “ loss of the letter, set forth in page 21 of his Pamphlet.

" This is another instance of the unhappy mistakes into which
 " Dr. Semple has fallen. No such letter was ever written by him
 " to the Committee. The only letter sent by him, containing,
 " (after some introductory observations) the same expressions as
 " those set forth in his Pamphlet, page 21, was one written by
 " him, not to the Committee, but to me ; not without any date, as
 " it appears in the Pamphlet, but dated the 9th of October, 1854,
 " the very day it was received by me at the Parochial Office. It
 " was produced and read to the Committee at their meeting on
 " that evening. This was the last meeting they held ; and at which
 " their Report was finally settled, and ordered to be presented to
 " the Board of Trustees.

" Dr. Semple does not inform us why he suppressed the date
 " of his letter of the 9th of October. He seems to have been very
 " particular in affixing a date to all his other letters copied in his
 " Pamphlet, and I cannot understand, without suspecting it was
 " intentional, why he should have omitted the date of this par-
 " ticular letter, especially, when that very date would have shown
 " the utter groundlessness of the charge so recklessly made by him.
 " If instead of printing and publishing a scandalous libel against
 " me, he had applied to me, instead of the Porter, for any ex-
 " planation as to the imaginary suppression of the letter, he would
 " have saved himself the disgrace of being thus exposed as a
 " slanderer.

" I am, Gentlemen,

" Your obedient Servant,

" W. SPARLING,

" 1st February, 1855."

" Clerk to the Trustees."

" Parochial Offices,

" Liverpool Road, Islington,

" 1st February, 1855.

" Gentlemen,

" With reference to your inquiry relative to a statement at
 " page 21, of a Pamphlet published by Dr. Semple, that a letter,
 " alleged to have been written and delivered here by him ' had
 " been suppressed, or, as was pretended, lost, by the Clerk,'
 " I beg leave to say, that if such statement is intended to apply
 " to me, it is erroneous. That I did not suppress any such letter,
 " and I never pretended that it was lost.

“ With regard to a further statement in the same page, that
 “ he, Dr. Semple, ‘investigated the matter, when finding the
 “ ‘evidence of the letter too strong to be resisted, it was pretended
 “ ‘that the letter was suddenly found;’ if such further statement
 “ be also intended to apply to me, I say that it is likewise erroneous.
 “ Dr. Semple did not make inquiry of me, touching the matter in
 “ question; he did not produce to me evidence of the delivery of
 “ the letter, consequently he could not have known from me that
 “ the *evidence* of the delivery was ‘too strong to be resisted;’ and,
 “ I never ‘pretended that the letter was suddenly found.’ Upon
 “ reference to the minutes of the Special Committee, at the last meet-
 “ ing they held, 9th October, 1854, I find that a letter of that date
 “ from Dr. Semple was read, and ordered to be recorded on the
 “ minutes.

“ Upon referring to the letter itself, I find, that the whole of it,
 “ including the date, is in the handwriting of Dr. Semple; it is
 “ addressed to Mr. Sparling, and not to the Committee; and, after
 “ a short introduction, is the same as the letter set forth in page
 “ 21 of Dr. Semple’s Pamphlet, except the address, and two or
 “ three verbal, but unimportant alterations. It is therefore quite
 “ clear that the letter could not have been suppressed, having
 “ been laid before the Committee on the day of its date.

“ I am, Gentlemen,

“ Your obedient Servant,

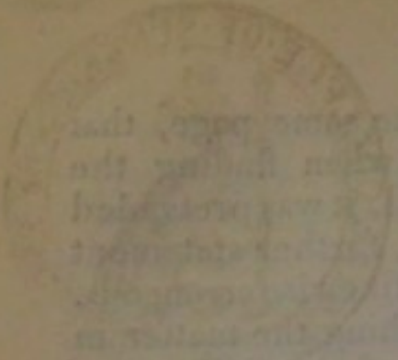
“ G. A. COOPER,

“ Assistant Clerk to the Trustees.”

“ To the Special Committee,

“ appointed by the Trustees of

“ Saint Mary, Islington.”



"This refers to a further statement in the same page, that
 the people investigated the matter, when finding the
 evidence of the letter too strong to be resisted, and
 that the letter was suddenly found; it was, however, a
 statement to try to get, I say that it is a
 statement that did not make inquiry of me, touching the matter in
 question; he did not produce to me evidence of the delivery of
 a letter, consequently he could not have known how and when
 the evidence of the delivery was too strong to be resisted; and
 I never pretended that the letter was suddenly found. Upon
 reference to the minutes of the Special Committee of the last year
 for the 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, I find that a letter of that date
 from Mr. Sample was read, and ordered to be recorded on the
 minutes, and that the date of the letter was given as the 12th of
 the month, referring to the letter itself, I find that the whole of it,
 including the date, is in the handwriting of Mr. Sample; it is
 addressed to Mr. Sample, and not to the Committee; and, after
 a short introduction, is the same as the letter set forth in page
 21 of Mr. Sample's Pamphlet, except the address, and two or
 three verbal, but unimportant alterations. It is therefore quite
 clear that the letter could not have been prepared, having
 been laid before the Committee on the day of its date.

"I am, Gentlemen,
 Your obedient servant,
 G. A. COOPER,
 Assistant Clerk to the Trustees."
 "To the Special Committee,
 appointed by the Trustees of
 Saint Mary's, Washington."