

## THE POOR-LAW MEDICAL SERVICE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

### MIDWIFERY FEES UNDER THE CONSOLIDATED ORDER OF THE POOR-LAW BOARD.

ACCORDING to Article 182 of the above order, it appears that, in cases in which any medical officer either for the workhouse or a district shall be called on by order of a person legally qualified to make such order to attend any woman in or immediately after childbirth, or shall, under circumstances of difficulty or danger, without any order, visit any such woman actually receiving relief, or whom the guardians may subsequently decide to have been in a destitute condition, such medical officer shall be paid for his attendance and medicines by a sum not less than 10s. nor more than 20s., according as the guardians may agree with such officer. It is provided by Article 183 that, in any special case in which great difficulty may have occurred in the delivery, any district medical officer shall receive the sum of £2.

The term childbirth, to which this order refers, is interpreted to apply only to those cases in which the child was or might be born alive. Hence the delivery of a seven months' child comes within the term childbirth. Attendance in a case of miscarriage, or in consequence of symptoms of premature labour, or if the woman were only four or five months gone with child, does not entitle the medical officer to the extra fee.

### FEES FOR CERTIFYING TO PAUPER LUNATICS.

DR. BOTHWELL of Woolwich has sent to the guardians a claim of one guinea for certifying to a pauper lunatic. The guardians state that other medical men have only charged half a guinea. The Chairman said that they should not pay a guinea for what they could get done for half the money. The certification of pauper lunatics is not included under the list of extra fees in the consolidated order of the Poor-law Board. The fee is not fixed by the Poor-law authorities; it is fixed by the magistrate or justice of the peace before whom the case is investigated. The customary fee is from one to three guineas, according to the trouble and difficulty of the case. The order for payment from the magistrate is imperative on the guardians. The terms of the clause under which provision is made for the payment of the medical man, in 8 and 9 Vict., c. 126, are as follows. The justices causing any person to be examined by any physician, surgeon, or apothecary, may make an order upon the guardians of the union or parish, or overseers of the parish, to which such person is chargeable, for the payment of such reasonable remuneration to any such physician, surgeon, or apothecary, for the examination of such person, and for all other reasonable expenses in or about the examination of such person. The lunatics that may be sent to a lunatic asylum by order of the justices, in pursuance of Stat. 8 and 9 Vict., cap. 126, are either lunatics chargeable to the parish from which they are sent, or wandering lunatics, or lunatics who are not chargeable, but are neglected or ill-treated by their friends. The medical officer of every parish and union, who shall have knowledge that any person chargeable is deemed to be a lunatic, shall give notice in writing to the overseer or relieving officer, and either the overseer or the relieving officer shall within three days give notice to a justice of the county or borough; and, if he neglect so to do, he is liable to a penalty of £10. The overseer takes the lunatic before the justice; and the justice calls to his assistance a physician, surgeon, or apothecary. Wandering lunatics are to be treated in like manner. Lunatics not chargeable, but neglected or ill-treated by their friends, must also be examined in like manner. Any medical officer, relieving officer, constable, or overseer, failing in their duty as expressed in this Act, incurs a penalty or £10.

### A DISPENSARY DOCTOR CALLED ON TO RESIGN.

A FEW weeks since, Mr. Horsley, Poor-law Inspector in Ireland, was authorised by the Commissioners to hold an inquiry into a charge brought against Dr. Spottiswood, the dispensary physician, and also the workhouse medical attendant at Cahirciveen, by the guardians of that union. The complaint was as follows. A man named Shea, belonging to the neighbourhood of that town, was returning from the Cahirciveen September fair, when he was thrown off his horse, a rather spirited animal, opposite the workhouse-gate. He was at once taken into the workhouse, and a messenger was despatched with a red ticket

to Dr. Spottiswood. The doctor refused to attend until the following morning. On his visiting Shea the following morning, he was dead. The circumstance was reported to the Board of Guardians in that town, and they communicated with Mr. Horsley, requesting him to hold an inquiry. On the receipt of the evidence, and of Mr. Horsley's report, the Commissioners have decided on calling on Dr. Spottiswood to resign. We understand that the guardians are getting up a memorial to the Commissioner asking him to withdraw the request.

ASSOCIATE (Carmarthen) asks whether a certificate of proficiency in vaccination is a *sine qua non* for an M.R.C.S. and L.S.A. applying for an appointment under the Poor-law Board? By looking in the *Medical Directory*, our correspondent will see at page 952 the list of authorised persons, and the nearest place at which it can be obtained.

## OBITUARY.

### JOHN SAMUEL SNOOK, M.R.C.S.L., COLYTON, DEVON.

MR. J. S. SNOOK died on October 15th, at Colyton, where he was well and favourably known as a practitioner. As a student at the Middlesex Hospital, his career was highly creditable; and on the completion of his studies, thirty-two years since, he settled in his native place, where with uniform success and credit he carried on a large country practice till his death, at the age of 57. The estimation in which he was held has been shown by the universal sympathy and respect manifested to his memory and towards his widow and family.

### FREDERICK COOKE, M.R.C.S., ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

IT is our painful duty to record the death of Mr. Frederick Cooke, of Ashton-under-Lyne, which happened on Thursday, October 19th. Mr. Cooke was in his sixty-first year. He was a native of the township of Denton, and was apprenticed to Mr. Cheetham, surgeon, of Ashton. He became a student at Grainger's School, and at Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals. He obtained the diploma of Member of the Royal College of Surgeons and the licence of the Apothecaries' Society in 1832. Mr. Cooke practised as a surgeon in Denton for about ten years, and during this period he married a sister of Mr. Cheetham. On the death of Mr. Cheetham in 1843, Mr. Cooke removed to Ashton; and in 1846 was appointed Medical Officer for the No. 10 District, which office he energetically filled up to the time of his decease.

Mr. Cooke was recognised in his own immediate locality as a surgeon of great ability, and his kind and sympathising manner to his patients earned for him a name which will long be remembered. His practice in Ashton and the neighbourhood became very extensive; and, although his constitution was very strong, the labour of a professional life impaired it, the result being a severe attack of hæmatemesis, from which he never entirely recovered. For the last three months he complained of a pain at the base of the left lung, and had some difficulty in breathing. He was, however, able to carry on his duties, with the assistance of his son, to October 12th, when he was compelled to remain at home. On the following morning, acute pleuropneumonia set in. He was visited by Dr. S. D. Lees of Ashton, and Dr. Simpson of Manchester; but their efforts were unavailing.

In 1862, Mr. Cooke was elected a member of the Town Council. Although a strong politician, he always took an independent part, and was never known to oppose any measure which might be calculated to conduce to the real welfare and benefit of the inhabitants of the borough at large.

### CALEB WILLIAMS, M.D., F.R.C.S., YORK.

DR. CALEB WILLIAMS died on November 5th, after an illness of a few days, at the age of 72. His early professional education was under Dr. Travis, of Scarborough. He afterwards attended Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals in London, and spent a short time in Paris. At the age of 25 he commenced practice in York; in the same year he was chosen as Visiting Medical Officer to the Friends' Retreat. On the ground of declining health, he resigned this appointment in April 1871. In 1864, he succeeded Dr. Thomas Simpson as Consulting Physician to the York County Asylum. From 1838 to 1858 he was Lecturer on *Materia Medica* and *Therapeutics* in the York School of Medicine. Dr. Williams had a large experience in the treatment of the insane. He advocated a wide application of the plea of insanity in criminal cases. In 1856, he made known his opinions on this subject in a work on *The Criminal Responsibility of the Insane*. Dr. Williams's course as a practitioner was one of constantly increasing reputation. His skill and judgment in his medical career, of which his success is some guarantee, was united with