riences—experiences conducted by men deeply engaged in other pursuits, and all having, however directed, one intention, the reduction of medical science to positive truth, an intention, in this case, largely fulfilled.

In congratulating Dr. Parkes on his labours as a classical narrator of science, we congratulate also those who, however humbly, have worked for him. We ask the attention of all scoffers of physic to this epitome of science; and we direct the observation of every professional man to the work, not only that he may learn from its pages, but may feel elevated in his life by the knowledge that he possesses the brotherhood of the grand phalanx of original inquirers, whose philosophical and beneficent labours are now, for the first time, so ably marshaled by our English physician and scholar.

Smith's Visiting List, Diary, Almanack, and Book of Engagements for 1861. Fifteenth year.

THIS useful little book maintains its claims to the patronage of the profession. In addition to the Diary, &c., it contains a mass of very useful information on various subjects relating to the duties of medical practitioners.

The Dentist's Handbook and Appointments' Register.
London: Baillière.

A VALUABLE little work for the dentist.

POOR-LAW MEDICAL RELIEF.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Griffin has been at considerable expense in printing a proposed Bill for the administration of medical relief, and, I fear, will lose his labour, as it will certainly be objected to by boards of guardians and the ratepayers generally. Would it not be practicable to endeavour to obtain from Parliament some simple alterations without the machinery of an entirely new Act? With this hope I send you a draft of a proposal submitted to some members of Parliament and to the Poor-law Board, and likely to meet with less opposition than Mr. Griffin's Bill. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
December, 1860. W.

1. Appointments of medical officers to be permanent, with power to resign on giving three months' notice. All medical officers must be registered under the Medical Act. The qualifications to remain as at present.

2. Every medical officer must appoint a registered practitioner to act as his deputy in case of absence or illness.

3. The contract with a medical officer shall be made for a period of three years, renewable by permission of the Poor-law Board, on a fresh calculation of the three preceding years.

4. The medical officer shall, on application, attend any poor person in his district or parish.

Without an order:—

(a) If in receipt of permanent relief.

(b) If in receipt of temporary relief, either for the head of the family, or any member of it.

A list of persons comprised in the above two classes shall be furnished to the medical officer, and revised every three months.

(c) Urgent cases, where an order cannot easily be obtained without much loss of time.

With an order:—Any person named in such order.

5. Every guardian or overseer of the parish, and the relieving officer, may give an order for medical relief; such order to be on a printed form, and the person giving such order will be liable to pay for such medical attendance if the board of guardians, at their next meeting, shall decide that such order ought not to have been given.

6. A salary shall be fixed by the guardians, with the sanction of the Poor-law Board, for a period of three years, upon the following basis:—

For workhouses: At the rate of — per head on the average number of inmates.

For parishes: At the rate of 2s. 6d. per case on the average annual number of cases attended by the medical officer, and returned in the half-yearly report—where the parish is within one mile of the residence of the medical officer; at the rate of 3s. 6d. per case, as above, where the parish

exceeds one and is less than three miles distant; at the rate of 4s. 6d. where more than three miles distant.

The above payment shall include attendance on all medical and surgical cases, except puerperal cases; and the medical officer shall provide all proper medicines and ordinary surgical appliances,* except cod-liver oil, leeches, and quinine, which shall be supplied, on the order of the medical officer, by a chemist appointed by the guardians.

Midwifery and puerperal† cases are to be paid for at the following rates:—

(a) For each case at a distance of less than one mile from the medical officer's residence, 10s.

(b) Beyond that distance, £1.

7. For the better treatment of the poor, a medical officer shall be allowed to obtain a consultation with any duly-registered practitioner, the consent of a guardian or overseer of the parish being first obtained; and the guardians shall pay the practitioner so consulted the sum of 10s., if the consultation is held within one mile of his residence; £1, beyond that distance.

R A P I D L A B O U R.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I see recorded in the last two numbers of your journal some cases of rapid labour; will you allow me to mention two which have happened in my experience?

About eleven years since, while officiating as surgeon to an emigrant ship, I was summoned from the deck to a female passenger who was taken in labour. Before I could get to her, or she could be removed to the hospital cabin of the ship, the child was born; and at the time I saw her she was standing with the child (a small one) hanging by the funis between her legs. There was no hæmorrhage, and both the mother and child did well.

The other case occurred about three years since. I was called to a patient residing scarcely a stone's throw from my house, about twelve o'clock one night. When I arrived, I was told that she and her husband were sitting by the fire, when, without any previous warning, both child and placenta were expelled on to the hearth-rug. The babe was living, and the mother, who had been immediately removed to bed, recovered without an untoward symptom.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Ixworth, Jan. 1861.

HENRY TAYLOR, M.R.C.S.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having read two extraordinary cases of rapid labour reported in your journal,—one by Dr. Wordsworth Poole, of Birmingham, and the other by Dr. Smallman, of Liverpool,—perhaps you will be good enough to spare me space to narrate a similar case which occurred to my own wife.

On the 4th of October, 1859, my wife retired for the night at eleven o'clock. She had not been in bed more than a quarter of an hour when she experienced, as she said, a slight pain in the stomach. I got up to procure a light, feeling convinced that her labour was approaching. I hurriedly attempted to dress myself for the purpose of calling my groom to ride to Canterbury for Mr. Major, a distance of three miles and a half, as I had engaged him to attend; but her pain increasing so much and so quickly, she begged me not to leave her. I then called my servant-maid to run for the nurse, who was then living not more than three hundred yards off; but before she and the servant arrived, I had the infant nearly dressed—a fine boy, who is now running alone. The whole process of labour, including the expulsion of the placenta, was under a quarter of an hour by my watch; and my wife had no unfavourable symptom of any kind, and was up at the end of a fortnight as though nothing had occurred. She has many times told me that she did not know what labour was. Her age at that time was thirty-nine. With her first child, in 1857, she was not more than one hour in labour, from the commencement to the termination. I think it right also to mention that the length of the funis of the second child was four feet two inches.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

GEO. SELWYN MORRIS, M.D., M.R.C.S., &c.

Summerhill-road, Tottenham, Dec. 1860.

* Such as splints, bandages, oiled silk, and the use of surgical instruments, catheters, bougies, &c., exclusive of special apparatus for the treatment of deformities, &c., trusses, suspensories, pessaries, elastic bandages, stockings, &c.

† Puerperal cases will include removal of the placenta, or any portion thereof; attendance in cases of hæmorrhage where the woman has been pregnant more than three months; and attendance for any puerperal affection occurring within two weeks from the date of confinement; or for attendance in case of hæmorrhage, convulsions, or other puerperal affection, either before or after childbirth.