

"General Council of the Bar?" The witness replied that he had asked the Law Society, upon which his Lordship shook his head, "Ah, that's quite another thing." One saw in Chancery Court III an exhibition at its best of the British way of settling a dispute. But as the chairman of the General Medical Services Committee remarked when he came into court on the first day, "What a pity that these two parties, both interested in the health of the people, are on opposite sides!"

## SUPERANNUATION

### MEDICAL SCHOOLS AND M.R.C.

Members of hospital medical staffs who, within twelve months of leaving superannuable employment in the Health Service (or within six months of completing National Service if contributions have been paid during the period of that service), take up temporary employment in a medical school or with the Medical Research Council can continue contributing to the N.H.S. superannuation scheme.

Contributions are based on the remuneration attaching to the new post and are deducted by the employing body, which pays the employer's share.

To take advantage of these arrangements the officer must complete Form S.D. 65 (obtainable from the medical school) or S.D. 66 (obtainable from the Medical Research Council) and return it to the employing body within three months of taking up his new employment.

Further information may be obtained from the Superannuation Division of the Ministry of Health, Government Buildings, Honeypot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

## N.O.T.B. ASSOCIATION

The N.O.T.B. Association held its twentieth committee meeting on February 29, when reports from two sub-committees were considered and adopted.

### "Non-tolerance"

The question of charges made to ophthalmic medical practitioners in non-tolerance cases was discussed, and two cases were mentioned where demands had been made for a refund of the fees concerned. The committee took the view that only in instances of gross professional negligence should the error be rectified at the practitioner's expense.

### Special Medical Certificates

The committee noted some spread of demand from patients who, having been examined through the supplementary ophthalmic service, required a special certificate for their employers. The committee was strongly of the opinion that ophthalmic medical practitioners should decline to provide such certificates free of charge, as this was outside their terms of service.

### Report on the Future Eye Services

The committee approved a confidential report on the future eye services for circulation to all members with the annual general meeting agenda.

The next meeting of the committee was arranged to take place before the annual general meeting, held on March 28.

**Correction.**—We regret that Professor R. G. D. Allen's initials were given incorrectly in our report of the adjudication in the *Supplement* of March 22 (p. 108).

## Questions Answered

### Dispensing During Confinements

**Q.**—As a dispensing doctor receiving 6s. 6d. per patient per annum for drugs, am I entitled to claim extra for drugs used on my patients during confinements when they have completed Form E.C.24 (application form for maternity medical services)?

**A.**—A practitioner may claim on the executive council for those expensive items which are included in the special list and/or the list maintained under the medical aid arrangements. Inexpensive drugs are borne by the doctor, for which he is paid by capitation fee. The supply of inexpensive dressings is still under discussion with the Ministry.

### Allowable Expenses

**Q.**—What is the position for income-tax allowance of (1) B.M.A. subscription, (2) defence society subscription, (3) medical library subscription, (4) purchase of medical textbooks, (5) purchase of instruments, (6) telephone expenses in the case of (a) principal, (b) assistant in general practice?

**A.**—To the doctor assessed on Schedule D all the above are allowable, subject to the exception that to the extent to which they represent capital outlay they are not allowable. For instance, the expense of replacing worn-out or obsolete instruments and books is allowable, but not the expense of adding to the existing equipment or library.

For the doctor assessed on Schedule E the position here is different. The statutory rule requires allowable expenses to have been incurred wholly, exclusively, and necessarily in the performance of the duties of the office, etc., and the rule has been strictly construed in a number of High Court decisions. Broadly speaking, the expenses listed are not allowable unless the employing authority specifically requires the individual concerned to incur the expenses as a condition of his employment.

### TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

The following is a list of local authorities which are understood to require employees to be members of a trade union or other organization:

*Metropolitan Borough Councils.*—Fulham, Hackney, Southwark, Stoke Newington.

*Non-County Borough Councils.*—Crewe.

*Urban District Councils.*—Droylsden, Houghton-le-Spring.

The National Insurance Advisory Committee has been asked to consider and report upon the preliminary draft of regulations which would amend the existing National Insurance (Determination of Claims and Questions) Regulations. The need for the regulations arises from the recent amendment to Overlapping Benefits Regulations. A person awarded an unemployment supplement to an allowance under the Pneumoconiosis and Bysinosis Benefit Act, and who is at the same time entitled to any National Insurance benefit, has his National Insurance benefit reduced by the amount of the supplement. The amending regulations would enable the local insurance officer, when an unemployment supplement is back-dated to cover a period for which a National Insurance benefit has already been paid, to require repayment of that benefit to the extent that benefit and supplement overlap. Power would also be given to recover the benefit from the arrears of the unemployment supplement. Copies of the preliminary draft of these regulations (the National Insurance (Determination of Claims and Questions) Amendment Regulations, 1952) can be purchased from H.M. Stationery Office (price 2d.) or any bookseller. The committee will consider written objections if sent before April 15, 1952, to the Secretary, National Insurance Advisory Committee, 30, Euston Square, London, N.W.1.