

to December, 1950, and July to December, 1951, he had submitted to the N.H.S. pricing bureau for the North of England, with a view to obtaining payment from the Cumberland Executive Council, prescriptions which he claimed had been dispensed by him in respect of persons on his list (but not included in his dispensing list or for whom he had no authority to dispense), or who were not on his list and could not be traced, or who were deceased at the date of the prescriptions; that he had also submitted to the pricing bureau prescriptions which were duplicates of those he had already submitted; that in the case of prescriptions relating to a quantity of drugs or appliances he regularly divided them into two or more scripts with a view to obtaining additional dispensing fees to which he was not entitled; that either he did not in fact dispense all the prescriptions for which he claimed payment or prescribed recklessly, excessively, and without regard to the needs of the patient or his duty to have reasonable regard to the financial liability imposed upon the executive council, and "by your conduct as aforesaid you deliberately sought to, and in fact did, enrich yourself improperly."

Dr. Rowland, who was not present, was represented by Mr. E. B. McLellan, instructed by Messrs. Le Brasseur and Oakley, solicitors to the Medical Protection Society. It was understood that Dr. Rowland was now occupying a position in South Africa.

Mr. J. G. S. HOBSON, instructed by the solicitors to the Council, said that some nine months after Dr. Rowland first went to practise in Cumberland he obtained permission to open a surgery at Distington and to dispense for patients there, as there was no chemist. The expansion of his dispensing activities was remarkable. His earnings exceeded by some £1,400 what he might have been expected to make on the highest estimate. The finding of the tribunal was that in respect of the first six months' period it was impossible that the patients should have consumed all the medicines prescribed and in certain cases the prescriptions were duplicates. In the second of the periods he had dispensed prescriptions for some 500 patients who were not on his dispensing list, and of whom 430 were within a mile of a chemist; for 100 persons who were not on his N.H.S. list at all, and for at least two people who were deceased at the time. The tribunal had ordered the withholding of £1,000 from his remuneration.

Dr. ROWLAND said that the alleged improper division of prescriptions was done to obviate the necessity of repeated visits to the surgery by patients, and was in accordance with a notification received from the Ministry of Health that two or more prescriptions might be issued to a patient on the same day but dated differently. An apparent duplication was produced which was in fact purely accidental. Regarding the allegation that payment was claimed for prescriptions which were not dispensed at all, the only proof of the incorrectness of this charge that he had was offered to the medical service committee at the original hearing in Carlisle in December, 1952. All prescriptions that he had ever submitted for pricing were still held by the pricing bureau and were not available. Without this knowledge of the total quantity of materials for which payment had been claimed by him, he had offered to supply all the invoices for drugs purchased by him since he started to dispense, thus proving that they had been purchased. This offer was refused by the medical service committee, and again at the hearing by the Tribunal in 1953 he actually produced the invoices for inspection, but they were again refused.

The Committee found the facts proved. The CHAIRMAN said that they regarded these facts with the gravest concern. They were unable to accept the explanations as providing an excuse for Dr. Rowland's conduct, but in all the circumstances they had determined to give him an opportunity to rehabilitate himself professionally and had decided to postpone judgment until May, 1955.

Convictions for Driving Offences

The Committee considered the case of Robert John Gordon Williams, registered as of Abersoch, Caernarvonshire, against whom it was charged that in February, 1948, he had been convicted at Pwllheli of being in charge of a motor-car when under the influence of drink, and in August, 1953, again at Pwllheli, of a similar offence. On the first occasion he was fined £20, disqualified for 12 months, and

ordered to pay £5 15s. 6d. costs, and on the second occasion he was fined £30, disqualified for two years, and ordered to pay £35 17s. 8d. costs.

Dr. Williams stated that on the occasion of the second offence the accident was due to the car in front pulling up suddenly and his own car having a broken cable. He himself had telephoned for the police, and if he had thought himself under the influence of drink he would hardly have done that.

The Committee found the convictions proved, but postponed judgment until May, 1955.

Notes and News

S.H.M.O.'s Meeting.—A meeting of the S.H.M.O.s of the North-east Metropolitan Region will be held at B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, Room B, on July 31.

Correspondence Chess.—An American physician, of Indiana, U.S.A., who has had extensive city experience during his career would like to correspond and possibly play some correspondence chess with a British physician. Would any member interested please write to Brigadier H. A. Sandiford, International Medical Visitors' Bureau, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1?

Yorkshire Branch Council.—The annual meeting was held at Harrogate on June 17. The president elect, Mr. T. VIBERT PEARCE, who has made a lifelong study of Rabelais, entitled his presidential address "François Rabelais, M.D." The Harrogate Division entertained the Branch Council to lunch, and Mr. Pearce made himself responsible for the menu, which was remarkable in that the name of every course was contrived from the works of Rabelais. The *chef d'œuvre* was *Quatre horribles pasteux de jambons*—four enormous cold ham pies with the pastry modelled in the shape of medieval castles complete with turrets and battlements.

Failure to Supply Medical Records.—Warwickshire Executive Council decided at a recent meeting to adhere to its decision to "fine" a doctor £100 because he had failed to supply medical records for 25 of his patients. The Ministry of Health had advised that only £50 should be withheld from the doctor's remuneration. The clerk to the executive council said it was the fourth time that the doctor had failed to make returns of medical records—penalties of £20, £25, and £50 having previously been imposed. One member asked: "Why does he do this? Has he ever appealed against the 'fines'?" "Never," replied the clerk. Deciding to overrule the Ministry's suggested fine of £50, the council referred to its medical health services committee a report that since last September the doctor had failed to send in a further 130 medical records, despite countless requests to do so.

Corrections.—Dr. I. C. MUNRO (Elgin) writes: In your report of the Annual Representative Meeting, under the heading "Salaries in the Public Health Service" (*Supplement*, July 10, p. 36), my name is given as Dr. G. J. Munro, and not as printed above. The motion I proposed was that of my Division, where I proposed it originally, and the originating Division was that of Banff, Moray, and Nairn. It was supported by Aberdeen, Dundee, and others. What I said is correctly reported, except in one particular: "and in 1948 were both senior registrars" should be "and in 1948 were both paid in the lower part of what is now the senior registrars' range," or words to that effect.

In the report of the proceedings of Council on July 5 (*Supplement*, July 17, p. 64) it should have read that Dr. A. Beauchamp and Dr. F. Gray were appointed as the Association's representatives on the council of the Society of Medical Officers of Health, and not Dr. A. Beauchamp and Dr. W. Woolley.