

After a consideration in camera the PRESIDENT announced that the Committee had found the facts to be proved to their satisfaction.

Mr. LEIGH TAYLOR then put in a number of testimonials on the doctor's behalf and asked the Committee to take account of the circumstances, the doctor's position in a small community, and his service to it.

After a consideration in camera, the PRESIDENT announced that the Committee had found Dr. Livingston guilty of serious professional misconduct and had directed that his registration be suspended for a period of six months.

Dr. Livingston had 28 days in which to appeal.

Pethidine Addiction

DR. WILLIAM DAVID SMITH, of Belfast, appeared on the charge that in January 1971 he was convicted (after pleading guilty) on 31 charges of unlawfully procuring pethidine, and fined £280. The conviction was admitted, and the PRESIDENT announced that the Committee found it proved.

Mr. A. P. P. HONIGMANN told the Committee that the conviction arose out of an observation of the registers of dangerous drugs of Belfast chemists during 1970. The police noticed that Dr. Smith was prescribing considerable quantities of pethidine in ampoule form (100 mg) for a Mrs. G. Bennett, and on two occasions also for a Miss Bennett who lived at the same address.

Dr. Smith had obtained these drugs personally, writing out prescriptions in the chemist's shop and later collecting the drugs. When Mrs. Bennett was subsequently interviewed she said that she was Dr. Smith's sister and confirmed that she had not obtained any of the drugs.

Following the conviction the Ministry had withdrawn Dr. Smith's authority to possess, supply, and prescribe dangerous drugs.

Mr. Honigmann informed the Committee of Dr. Smith's earlier history of abuse of drugs and alcohol, there having been an erasure in 1960.

Mr. N. LYELL, counsel instructed by Messrs. Le Brasseur & Oakley, solicitors to the Medical Protection Society, said that Dr. Smith had sought treatment at a hospital clinic in October 1970, and he had obtained a successful cure, as one of the testimonials before the Committee showed. Since 1967 Dr. Smith had developed an interest in psychiatry and passed Part 1 of the D.P.M. He had continued his studies and was at the present time taking Part 2. After telling the Committee about Dr. Smith's recent medical history, including a severe road accident in 1967, Mr. Lyell invited it to consider a postponement of judgement.

After a consideration in camera the PRESIDENT announced that the Committee had seriously considered whether it should again erase Dr. Smith or suspend him from the Register. The members were, however, prepared to take into consideration the assurances given as to his future conduct, and, in order to give him a further opportunity

to satisfy them that he was no longer addicted to any drug, had postponed judgement until July 1972.

Civil Service Medical Officers

Following the announcement of increases in pay for the lower grades of the Administrative Class of the Civil Service consequential amendments for doctors in the medical officer and senior medical officer grades are under discussion. It is expected that these should be agreed within the next two or three weeks. The pay of doctors in the senior principal medical officer and higher grades stands as a reference to the Review Body under the chairmanship of Lord Boyle. The position of those in the principal medical officer grade will need to be examined in the light of both these circumstances.

CORRECTION

Central Committee for Hospital Medical Services

In the *Supplement* of 12 June 1971, p. 127, centre column, the top seven lines should have read as follows: "... with the General Medical Services Committee and the Department, and the alternative possibility of ad hoc arrangements, without a new grade, for hospital doctors had been considered."

Association Notices

A.R.M. Motions Affecting Policy or Association Constitution or Involving Special Expenditure

The following motions which, if adopted, will materially affect the policy or constitution of the Association or involve special expenditure have been submitted for inclusion in the 1971 Annual Representative Meeting Agenda. Four weeks' notice of these Motions is hereby given in accordance with the provisions of Article 40(2) and Bylaw 52.

DEREK STEVENSON,
Secretary.

Hospital Medical Services

HOSPITAL MEDICAL STAFFING

Motion by CONSETT: That this Meeting feels that it is essential to establish the principle of a permanent non-consultant career grade in the Hospital Service in order to retain the services of those persons who are interested in hospital work, but do not particularly wish to become consultants, or have been unable to obtain the necessary qualifications.

CONSTITUTION OF C.C.H.M.S.

Motion by EAST SUFFOLK: That the constitution of the Central Committee for Hospital Medical Services should be altered by the elimination of specialist groups, and by an increase in the proportion of regional consultants.

Motion by EAST HERTS: That 85% of members of the

C.C.H.M.S. should be elected from the regional consultant committees.

Motion by ENFIELD AND POTTERS BAR: That the constitution of the Central Committee for Hospital Medical Services be amended so that at least 80% of the members are elected by regional committees for hospital medical services.

Medical Ethics

CONFIDENTIALITY

Amendment by SOUTH MIDDLESEX: That the Association's policy on confidentiality (approved by the Representative Body in 1959) be amended by the deletion of the second paragraph and the substitution of the following:

"The complications of modern life sometimes create difficulties for the doctor in the application of the principle, and on certain occasions it may be necessary, in the public interest, to acquiesce in some modification.

"If, in the opinion of the doctor, disclosure of confidential information to a third party seems to be in the best medical interests of the patient, it is the doctor's duty to make reasonable effort to persuade the patient to allow the information to be given. Always, however, the overriding consideration must be the adoption of a line of conduct that will benefit the patient, or protect his interests."

Amendment by RUGBY: That the decision of the Representative Body on professional secrecy 1959 be amended thus: (a) In the first paragraph delete the words "(save with statutory sanction)" and substitute: "(save on statutory compulsion or for the purpose of cancer registration, or other research project specifically accepted by the B.M.A. for such exemption)."