

THE DOCTOR'S PAY.

Leaving the Ministry of Health are representatives of Britain's doctors - including Sir Russell Brain. The Minister has just turned down their demand for a 24 per cent salary increase - for the present at least. Many people believe a large slice of their national insurance money goes to the doctors - but in fact, of the twelve-and-sixpenny stamp on a man's card, only 10d. goes to the whole National Health Service - doctors, dentists, hospitals, supplies, prescriptions, and everything.

The old "bob on the bottle" prescription charge has risen to a shilling per item - but the doctor gets no more. Costs are rising for all of us - for the healthy, for the sick, for the chemist, for the doctor; and the Government says the country cannot afford the 20 millions which the doctors' claim would cost the Exchequer.

For the well-to-do specialist, the problem is not so great; he has a much higher proportion of private patients, and can increase his fees to meet his rising costs; but the family G.P. is dependent on his Health Service pay. *Father News* visits a doctor in a North London borough, who shares with his two partners a large and mainly working-class practice.

More patients mean more pay - but they also mean more work, more assistants, more equipment, in a period of rising costs; and the G.P.'s are feeling the pinch. They feel they deserve a better deal from the National Health Service they have so loyally supported.

Outside the towns, the family doctor has even more problems. Our interviewer calls on a country G.P. to learn his views.

The public depend on the doctor, the surgeon, the nurse - and in these days of ever more scientific treatment, their knowledge and skill are a priceless national asset. With their devoted help, we have built a National Health Service second to none in the world. Now, promising young men and women are turning their eyes to other lands for greater opportunities. The thousands who stick to their jobs are disgruntled.

In the hour of disaster, the doctor is always one of the first on the spot. When minutes count, he has lives in his hands, and he does not pause to think of his own.

He does his job, according to his Hippocratic Oath - "To work for the benefit of my patients according to my ability and judgement and not for their hurt and any wrong". He does not regard himself as a hero, for this is the nature of his profession - be on call any hour of the day or night, wherever he is needed. He asks for a square deal - what do you think. Can we afford to refuse him?