

Medical Officer of the Board is a layman. I was told by the Chairman of the Board, when his attention was drawn to this very anomalous condition, that, from his knowledge and experience, he very much preferred the opinion of this layman to that of any medical man of his acquaintance. As long as such an opinion is maintained it will be very difficult for us to gain sane legislation. One influential member of the Board should be an experienced surgeon, who would be the judge in cases where compensation for maiming was demanded. Why it is that lawyers compose the majority of most commissions is not quite clear, unless it be that there are more members of this than of any other class for whom the Government must find lucrative positions. The advice of Medical men has been most systematically disregarded by the Board. In consultations between Employer, Employed and the Board, not once has any Medical man been present officially. True, when the schedule was being discussed, at the Council's suggestion, a Committee did meet the Board, but nothing of any material value was changed from the draft schedule submitted for consideration. The Board gathered together schedules from various States in the Union, and drafted one from these. This was sent to the Council, who, on motion, said that in most part it was acceptable. It is not the schedule that is most at fault, but the interpretation placed upon it by the Board.

Another aspect of the situation which renders the doctor helpless is the treatment afforded by the Board to communications. Letters from doctors are treated with silent indifference, not being granted so much as an answer,—a courtesy which is tendered by any business firm. If a reply is deigned, it is couched in such terms that one at once recognizes that one is being dealt with by autocratic body, which is, so far as the Medical man is concerned, without appeal. A Board or Commission entrusted with the carrying into effect of a special law, should make an effort to avoid an independent and autocratic attitude. It should realize its position as a public servant, and should always be ready to give ear to difficulties experienced by the public which it could remedy. It may be argued that too much time would be taken up if appeals were made in person. This is not an answer. The subject matter for such appearance would always be known beforehand, and if the importance of the subject were not sufficient, a courteous letter would explain why such an appearance seemed unnecessary. Such a system has been carried out successfully in one of the hospitals of the city for some time past.

There is another feature of the attitude of the Board in which again it has shown itself to be working against the interests of Medical men. I refer to the use they make of Hospitals. These institutions in their Out Departments are encouraged to do dressings for injured workmen at