

thinking very little of it. Later on, when the battalion moved back, they may have been still sick but not sick enough to go to a field ambulance or a casualty clearing station, which would mean that the records would not show the fact that they had been gassed, although that fact was well known to the men themselves and to their comrades.

In such cases the result was often apparent very shortly afterwards, but in my experience I have found many cases in which the result did not show up for ten or twelve years after the first infection. Then there are cases such as that of a man of whom I kept track after the war. He was working in an abattoir and complained of his shoulder; because of the fact that in his work he went from extremes of heat to extremes of cold it was thought he had contracted rheumatic trouble. The pain became so bad that he found it necessary to secure medical advice, and it was found that a piece of shrapnel the size of his thumb was in his shoulder; he had been carrying it there for ten or eleven years. He had been discharged as A-1 and had been suffering all that time, losing day after day from work during the whole period. That piece of shrapnel was removed and a cure made; the man got his back pension so that everything was all right, but it goes to show that there are cases which are cropping up now which were not thought of when we passed the original legislation and the later amendments.

Unfortunately matters have come to a head in one particular type of disability, and that is the type which has resulted from some trouble which cannot be traced directly to the war. Such cases are multiplying, and I think it was last year that General Sir Arthur Currie, emphasizing a general complaint, brought to the notice of the Canadian legion the plea that some effort should be made to have the procedure amended so that these cases could be covered, since in many instances the result could not be traced directly back to the cause. We all know that when the men started the return from France the only thought in every mind was to get home. Each man was boarded, of course, before he left England; if the man was not lucky and could not get by the medical officer he was sent to a camp and had to see his comrades go home some three or four months before he could get away himself. It was a cause of great dissatisfaction at that time to be sent to a camp; the overwhelming desire of every man was to get home, and he did not mind falsifying, or at all events minimizing, his difficulty so that he could get an A-1 certificate and get on the

boat with the rest of the men. That should not be held against him to-day; the A-1 certificate of discharge does not necessarily mean what it says, and it should not be an estoppel or a bar in any way to a claim resulting from something which happened before that discharge certificate was given.

Again, there are the cases of men who have had successive operations. It runs in my mind that in one case a man had thirty-one or thirty-two operations, but in my own experience I have known men to undergo six, seven or eight operations, and perhaps even more. I do not want to disparage the work of the surgical profession in any way; however, it is not every surgical operation which is a success so far as the patient is concerned. The man undergoes his operation; then in a short time he is sent back to the hospital and has to go through the same thing again. Later on he returns again and in time has perhaps four or five or six operations, so when it gets to the seventh time and the poor fellow is not better, he gets fed up with it. He believes no longer in surgical operations, but when he goes for his pension he is told that he must have still another operation. He says "I will do no such thing," and then the record goes back endorsed "Unreasonably refuses to submit to operation," and his pension is cut down say fifty per cent.

The Board of Pension Commissioners must work according to their rules—I do not know what they are; but if I were to say anything about the members of the board I should say that they are gentlemen of sincerity, honesty and ability in the carrying on of their functions. But I am rather afraid they stand so straight that they lean over backwards. Possibly this is brought about through their desire to follow strictly what they conceive to be their statutory duty and not to allow their natural sympathy for the man whose case is under review to influence their decision. If that is the case; if the members of these boards feel themselves restricted by certain definite regulations from which they cannot get away, I think it is the business of this house to see that they are left more free.

When my hon. friend the leader of the opposition introduced a resolution in 1927 to the effect that where a reasonable doubt existed the doubt should be decided in favour of the applicant for a pension, the solicitor general, not from any ill-will or desire to do the soldier any harm, found himself bound to advise this house that it was unnecessary legislation. He took the position that the legislation as to pensions is remedial in character and must be interpreted in a gener-