

In some Australian States, however, under systems of insurance similar to our own, the principle of dependency has been recognized, and the Commission, being impressed by representations made and regarding such a system as more equitable, more particularly with respect to lower-paid workers, recommends a change in our system which introduces the principle of providing for dependency. In order to do this without imposing too great a burden on industry, we recommend that the present maximum of £4 should be reduced to £3, and additional allowances granted for dependants up to a maximum of £4 10s., but not in any case exceeding full wages.

**Medical, Surgical, and Hospital Treatment, including First Aid.** (See Recommendation No. 8.)

The payment of medical, surgical, hospital, and nursing attention, including first aid, has been stressed by a number of witnesses as most important in the interests of the injured worker, and subsection (10) of section 5 of the Act has been the subject of much criticism. The Commission has been impressed with the evidence, and it therefore recommends that provision be made to enable the injured worker to receive adequate medical treatment with a view to the early restoration of earning-capacity. Evidence was given to the effect that in many instances the cost of medical, surgical, and hospital treatment could not be met by injured workers, and in cases where this has been met it had a material effect in reducing the amount of monetary compensation due in accordance with the Act. Although it has been recorded in evidence that the intention of the Amendment Act of 1926, by which the weekly payment for total incapacity was increased from 58 per cent. to 66 $\frac{2}{3}$  per cent. of the worker's average weekly earnings, was to afford relief to injured workers to defray the cost of medical and hospital treatment, it is the opinion of the Commission that further relief should be granted. While it is admitted that the expense of such treatment should be provided by industry, it is felt to be necessary and prudent in the interests of employers and workers alike that the cost of such treatment should be limited, and we would refer to the opinion expressed by Mr. Justice Frazer in that connection, which is as follows:—

“ I make the suggestion that if you think of making a recommendation that the present first-aid allowance of £1 be increased you could fix a limit and provide that the fees charged for medical and hospital treatment shall not exceed those that would have been charged for similar treatment in the nearest public hospital.”

This suggestion appealed to the Commission as worthy of its serious consideration, and, as a result of further evidence and investigation, the Commission is convinced that effective control of cost is essential.

**Industrial Diseases.** (See Recommendation No. 9.)

Lengthy evidence was given in regard to industrial diseases which affect workers in many industries, and strong claims were made to have all such diseases brought within the scope of the Act.

Some witnesses advocated abolition of the gazetting of diseases as provided in section 10, subsection (6), and the payment of compensation in all cases where evidence established that a disease of any kind was caused by a worker's occupation. The Commission, after due consideration, decided that to adopt this procedure would have an uncertain and far-reaching effect, resulting in a considerable increase in litigation. This conclusion is in line with that of the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the British Government in 1919 to inquire into the system of compensation for injuries to workmen, as follows:—

“ The extension of the Act to cover any disease or injury which is not specific to the employment would, we are satisfied, give rise to constant and irritating disputes, and involve employers and workers in a great deal of costly and fruitless litigation, and would not, except in rare instances, secure any benefit to the disabled workman.”

We therefore recommend that a schedule be incorporated in the Act in a similar manner to that provided in the English Act.