

if a satisfactory report is obtained. In other departments of the Technical College there have been instances of local firms paying fees for promising apprentices to attend day classes. At the Bradford School of Art there is a class composed of apprentices in the painting and decorating trade, in which the Association of Masters and the majority of masters take a great interest. Many send their apprentices to day classes five afternoons a week for one year. The apprentices also attend three evenings a week during the year, and until the end of their apprenticeship. The masters pay the wages of those attending day classes at the same rate as if they were in the shops, and they are admitted to day classes without fee. It is noted that apprentices who attend day classes make far greater progress than those who attend in the evening.

“**LEICESTER.—Boot and Shoe Trade.**—At the Leicester Technical School there is a full day course extending over two years. The departmental trade instruction is given in the afternoons, and employers send students on one, two, or even three afternoons a week for special subjects.

“**Building Trade.**—Apprentices are sent for one afternoon per week. At present carpenters and joiners only are taken, but arrangements are to be made in future for bricklayers.

“**House-painters.** Apprentices come for a full day a week during the four months when trade is slackest.

“**MANCHESTER.**—At the Manchester School of Technology a special course of day instruction has been arranged to meet the needs of engineering apprentices. The classes are held on Mondays for eight hours. They continue throughout the whole session of forty weeks. The employers pay wages as if at work. The apprentices are not expected to attend evening classes, and consequently have time for home-work and reading.”

The foregoing are typical examples of the interest which English employers are taking in the education of their apprentices, and it is to be hoped that something of a similar nature will be possible in the near future at the larger centres of population in New Zealand. If only a few employers were to combine and inaugurate a suitable scheme, others would doubtless follow. Such a step would go a long way in solving the attendance problem. There are, for example, a large number of young apprentice-mechanics employed in the Addington, Hillside, Petone, Aramoho, and Newmarket Railway Workshops, but few, if any, of them attend the well-equipped technical schools which are within easy reach of them. There is little doubt that the controlling authorities of these technical schools would gladly arrange suitable courses of instruction at convenient hours to meet their requirements. If a simple workable scheme were arranged, it would undoubtedly have the effect of giving a marked impetus to technical instruction generally throughout the Dominion.

The foregoing remarks are not intended to suggest any depreciation of the standard of work done in the several schools. They are rather to be taken as an indication of a present unavoidable element of weakness in the scheme of technical instruction.

The following extract from the *Daily News* (London and Manchester) is here inserted as bearing on another phase of the relation of technical education to employment. It deals in an interesting and instructive manner with the question of boy-labour:—

“Perhaps the gravest of all the grave facts which the Poor-law Commission has laid bare is the perpetual recruitment of the unemployable by tens of thousands of boys who, through neglect to provide them with suitable industrial training, may almost be said to graduate into unemployment as a matter of course.

“It is found that from the age of eighteen boys begin to crowd into the ranks of the unemployed at an alarming rate, and chiefly for the reason that they have no trade. When they leave school they go as van-boys, messenger-lads, errand-boys, and into warehouses and factories, where they learn nothing save, perhaps, one mechanical operation. At eighteen they are either turned adrift to make way for younger boys, or refused any further increase in salary; and then, in their own words, they chuck the job to seek for something better, which never turns up.

“The London lad frequently is without an idea up to the day he leaves school as to what he is going to be. He is always glad to get free from the discipline of school. He leaves, as a rule, on the first day the law permits. Then he looks for a job. His parents are with him in making wages the first consideration. It nearly always happens that the work that pays the highest wages to boys fresh from school is the work that leaves them stranded without industrial training at eighteen. Thus you get thousands of lads every year thrust down among the unemployed, doomed, many of them, by the very nature of their unskilled training to drift into the ranks of the unemployable. It is nothing short of a national scandal that a Government Department like the Post Office should contribute so largely as it does to this industrial demoralisation of boys. The evil might be checked either by raising the school-age, or by the establishment of compulsory continuation schools, the obligation being with employers rather than with parents. Such schools are in operation in Germany, and employers offer considerable facilities to their boys to attend the classes. It is certainly time that the evils of boy-labour in this country were faced. Something is wrong with the educational system or industrial system, or both, since shoals of lads are thrown on the industrial scrap-heap in the very prime of life.

“The better class of employers would probably welcome the change. Many already voluntarily allow not only boys, but girls, in their service to attend technical classes during factory hours. Of course, other employers would say that they could not run their factories if boys under eighteen were compelled to spend half the time in continuation schools that is now devoted to labour. This objection was offered in the early days of Factory Act reform. It was said that factories could not be run without child-labour. Experience has since brought wisdom. So probably would the experience of limiting boy-labour.

“Such schools should be largely technical in character. The apprenticeship system is dying out. It is no longer adapted to modern industrial developments. Boys are rarely taught a trade nowadays. Not that continuation schools should teach them trades. What such places should do would be to