

Section 5 (4) (g) : To order the attendance of apprentices at technical schools, either in their own time or, if sufficient facilities for complete training are not provided by an employer, in the employer's time. In five trades, mostly building, the Committees ordered all apprentices to attend technical schools (in their own time), extra remuneration being provided for in two trades upon their obtaining satisfactory certificates showing progress made. No orders appear to have been made requiring employers to give time off to their apprentices to attend technical schools. The furniture trade Committee in Wanganui has, however, agreed to two hours on Saturday morning being given for the purpose in the employers' time.

Section 5 (4) (h) : To order the examination of apprentices (no orders yet issued.)

Section 5 (4) (i) : To order that any increase in wages due to an apprentice may be withheld. (In one case—painting trade—the Committee made such an Order.)

Section 6 (2) : There is a right of appeal by any party affected against the decision of a Committee. There has been only one such appeal. This was against the action of the Christchurch Bricklayers' Apprenticeship Committee in fixing the term of a special apprenticeship of an adult with some previous experience of the trade at three years : the full period is five years. The Court upheld the Committee's decision.

The Act applies generally to all apprenticeships hitherto covered by awards and industrial agreements under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, but the Court may extend the Act to other cases. Four industries in the Westland District—viz., boilermaking, engineering, moulding, and motor-engineering—have accordingly been added.

The Act does not apply to females unless specially ordered by the Court in any case. In one instance (hairdressing) females have been included in the order covering that trade. This is apparently due to the latest development in women's hairdressing.

Other provisions : Section 8 requires that every apprenticeship to which the Act applies shall, if in order, be registered by the District Registrar of Apprentices. There are now 3,301 contracts registered. The District Registrar may refuse to register in any case if he considers the Act or any regulation or order of the Court or Committee has not been complied with. Eight applications have been refused on these grounds. He may also, if he thinks fit, withhold registration and refer the question to the Committee (or to the Court if there is no Committee), and shall be guided by its decision. In two instances applications for registration were referred to the Committees and finally refused.

There is a right of appeal to the Court against all refusals to register. (There have been no such appeals.)

Section 11 empowers a Committee (or the Court) to authorize special contracts of apprenticeship in the cases of adults or other persons already possessing some knowledge of an industry. The duty of the Committee or Court is to see that an employer does not obtain an undue advantage by thus securing the services of an adult at the wages and other conditions fixed for boys. Thirty-eight special contracts have been approved.

One other direction in which valuable work may, it is thought, be done by the Committees is by way of co-operation with the Directors and instructors at the respective technical schools, so that the courses of training in the skilled trades may be made complementary to those in the workshops, and so be made of the utmost value to the boys, to employers, and to industry generally. Steps to this end have already been taken in several places ; for example, at Wanganui. At the instance of the Department's representative, a meeting of all the Apprenticeship Committees in the district (of which there are nine) was held, and by agreement with the Director of the Technical College an Advisory Committee was set up representative of the plumbing, masonry, carpentering and joinery, painting, furniture-making, and engineering trades. Representatives for bricklaying, plastering, and electrical working will also probably be appointed. One desirable result of such co-ordination is that already a representative employer there has stated that while in the past the tuition at the technical schools has not been valued by employers the position is now changing, and the employers are encouraging their apprentices to attend the classes, knowing that the work being done is of real value. Addresses have also been given at this centre to a joint meeting of the apprentices themselves, pointing out the advantages to them of qualifying as efficient tradesmen with a prospect of ultimately becoming foremen or employers on their own account, also to the local Rotary Club and other bodies interested in the welfare of boys. It might be mentioned here that in the Government Service the Railway Department has taken steps to arrange for a comprehensive scheme covering the technical training of apprentices in the railway workshops. The Public Works Department has also recently inserted a clause in the indenture papers of apprentices to the carpentering and joinery trade to the effect that they must attend technical colleges or some similar institutions for at least three years of their apprenticeship.

Section 21 of the Act provides that if the majority of employers in an industry or locality desires that young persons may receive technical training in an institution the Court of Arbitration may order a levy towards the cost of such training to be paid by all the employers in an industry or locality. The first case of the kind arose in Auckland in the motor-mechanics industry, where it was felt that the apprentices in the industry could not be satisfactorily trained in ordinary garages. Since the order in the motor-mechanics trade was made similar orders have been made in Auckland in the tinsmithing and sheet-metal working and the plumbing trades. In the two former each employer (unless any particular one is exempted by the Court) is required to pay 10s. a year for every apprentice employed. In the plumbing trade the sum of 5s. is similarly levied.

The duty of taking proceedings for breaches of the Act, regulations, orders, &c., is vested in the Registrar and District Registrars. There have been fourteen prosecutions under the Act.

An amendment of the Act was passed during the year, but this was merely to give fuller effect to the intention of the original Act.