

Court has in several awards empowered apprentices to obtain technical school training during working hours, and thus placed apprenticeship upon more useful lines than hitherto. As the outcome of the Guild suggestion we would like to see set up a joint body of employers and employed for the purpose of keeping in touch with all apprentices, renewing their position at intervals so as to guarantee that the training given is adequate, and that the apprentice is doing his share by maintaining his studies and diligence at work. Under such a system of close supervision, the apprenticeship period could be appreciably reduced in the case of capable youths, and the "living wage" point reached so soon that the obligation of poor parents to the apprenticeship system would be overcome, and fewer boys turned into the avenue of unskilled employment where wages are comparatively high at first, but never appreciably advance.

#### Unfair Competition.

The Institute of Architects ought to firmly handle the question of unfair competition from salaried men in the Government service, and other people in private employ who provide at a cheap rate plans unsigned, for "cheap" builders. It was reported at the annual meeting of the Institute of Architects that it is the practice of some architects of drawing plans for builders instead of for employers, for whom buildings are to be erected, at a rate of 2½ per cent. There was grave doubt as to whether even 2½ was paid in many cases. It was decided to point out to members that the practice was not approved by the Institute, and that members should never issue plans without their signatures appended. It was decided also, to advise the Builders and Contractors' Association that the Institute disapproved of this class of business, and asked the assistance of the association in putting a stop to it. It was pointed out, however, that some of the work was done by draughtsmen in architects' offices, and that much more of it was done by employees of the Public Works Department and of local bodies. It was decided that a letter be sent to the Minister of Public Works, the Public Service Commissioners, and the larger local bodies, informing them that these employees were competing unfairly with architects who had to man offices and meet other expenses.

#### Fancy Holidays in War-time.

Friday, November 1st, was St. Andrew's Day, though most busy people probably failed to notice it. They went about their work as usual, for holidays in honour of patron saints are strangely out of place when the whole country is striving hard to keep pace with the demand of the times for the most strenuous activity among those who are left at home to work. But the Government offices, banks, and insurance offices closed their doors. The fact that they are short-staffed apparently was not allowed to interfere with the privilege of a spell on a saint's day, so business people who pay wages on Fridays, even though saints' days come on the same date, were obliged to carry large sums over from Thursday, because the banks made holiday on the busiest day

of the last week in November. Military Service Boards have been granting exemptions to the employees of hard pressed Government Departments, but what will they say to this stupid system of keeping up the fancy holidays of peace time after more than three years of war? Of all people, the Government should set an example to the community in taking seriously the responsibilities of those who remain at home to work. These fancy holidays, which upset the rest of the steady-plodding business community, are absolutely out of place at such a time as this. The Government has not even the excuse of saying it has not had attention called to the matter, for the National Efficiency Board, many months ago, reported to Parliament on Government holidays as follows: "The Board protested against the large number of holidays observed in Government offices, and submitted that the State should set an example in efficiency to the Dominion by reducing the number of holidays which are observed in the State Departments, and which, in the opinion of the Board, constitute a grave abuse."

#### "Touting" and Enterprise.

The building trade is in such a condition of restriction that it is not surprising to find keen competition among architects for the small amount of work obtainable. This has gone over the bounds of prudence and good taste in some instances, and at the annual meeting of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, a brisk discussion took place on the practice of "touting" for commissions. It ended in the passing of a resolution requesting every branch to form a Vigilance committee to confer with and report to the Discipline and Practice committee of the Council as to the best method of preventing unprofessional touting for business to the detriment of other architects. An instance was given of an architect in Wellington who had lost work from a client served for thirty years, through unsolicited sketches from another architect being accepted. In limiting the enterprise of architects the Institute is on delicate ground. Every decent professional man will deprecate "touting" to rob another architect of a commission, but there are many instances in which the architect gets a good idea for the utilisation of a piece of land, and submits suggestions to the owner, who may not have the knowledge or experience to decide for himself the best purpose to which to devote the site. Architects keep themselves conversant with the nature of the demand for buildings, and it can scarcely be regarded as unprofessional if business is induced as a result of a good suggestion, though this might prejudice the architect who does not get in first. Any idea that an architect is simply going to flourish because he has been in the profession a long time is likely to sap the best influences making for progress. The border line between legitimate enterprise and absolute poaching is not easy to define in general terms, and it will therefore be necessary, if the Institute is going to take effective and discreet action, to investigate specific complaints, and not try to evolve cast-iron regulations which will only serve as a protection to the more indifferent and unenterprising men in the profession.