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Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men.

Mahatma Gandhi

Apprenticeship and Statistics

CHARLES E. THÉRIEN,

Statistician, Building Trades Apprenticeship Commission of Montreal

The Apprenticeship Assistance Act, of the Province of Quebec, assented to May 24, 1945, sets forth an apprenticeship formula which appears by far superior to the average. Its merit, no doubt, stems from the fact that its origin lies in the tripartite cooperation of capital, labour and the state. This plan, leaving the direction of apprenticeship to industry under the supervision of the state, has already proved its worth.

Indeed, in less than two years more than fifteen apprenticeship commissions were established in all corners of the Province. Apprenticeship schools were opened and the training of apprentices was begun.

In the region of Montreal alone, the Building Trades Apprenticeship Commission has trained over 3,500 apprentices and journeymen since the opening of its center. The table below illustrates in a concrete manner the activities of this center.

We may well remark that the system of apprenticeship of the Province has already borne fruit and we have reason to rejoice. However, it is possible to render it still more productive by perfecting it. One of the drawbacks to the healthy development of our system today is the lack of statistics and essential data.

In order to direct the training of our apprentices in a reasonable fashion, we must first become acquainted with the manpower needs of industry from the statistical point of view; secondly, we must keep in sight the number of apprentices we are training in our centers.

With the aid of this basic information, it will be much easier to develop a training program for apprentices according to a system based on the actual needs of industry and on an exact knowledge of the productive capacity of our apprenticeship centers.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that all those concerned with the question of apprenticeship freely furnish their active cooperation in this field. It is of first importance that employers and union leaders, as well as the members of apprenticeship commissions and parity committees concerned, make it their duty to supply the different bureaus of statistics with these data so vital to the cause of apprenticeship. In so doing, all will substantially aid to perfect it.

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