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IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
(Edited by H. B. Adams, 1882-1901)

J. M. VINCENT
J. H. HOLLANDER W. W. WILLOUGHBY
Editors

APPRENTICESHIP IN AMERICAN
TRADE UNIONS

BY

JAMES M. MOTLEY, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Economics in Leland Stanford Jr. University.

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PREFACE

This monograph is one of a series of investigations into various phases of American trade unionism undertaken by the Economic Seminary of the Johns Hopkins University. In addition to the large collection of trade-union publications now in the Johns Hopkins University, the author had access to materials at the national headquarters of many of the more important American trade unions. The documentary information thus secured has been supplemented and corrected by personal observation and by interviews with labor leaders and employers in the chief centers of industry in the United States.

The author desires to acknowledge the assistance received in every part of the work from Professor Jacob H. Hollander and Associate Professor George E. Barnett.

J. M. M.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION	9
--------------------	---

PART I.

HISTORICAL.

CHAPTER I. GOVERNMENTAL REGULATION OF APPRENTICESHIP..	12
CHAPTER II. CUSTOMARY APPRENTICESHIP RULES.....	18
CHAPTER III. TRADE-UNION REGULATION OF APPRENTICESHIP..	31
CHAPTER IV. APPRENTICESHIP DETERMINED BY TRADE AGREEMENT	42

PART II.

DESCRIPTIVE.

CHAPTER I. EXTENT OF PRESENT UNION APPRENTICESHIP REGULATIONS	53
CHAPTER II. APPRENTICESHIP REGULATION AND ITS PURPOSE..	66
CHAPTER III. CHARACTER OF APPRENTICESHIP REGULATIONS....	75
CHAPTER IV. ESTIMATE OF UNION APPRENTICESHIP RULES....	100



APPRENTICESHIP IN AMERICAN TRADE UNIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

From the beginning of industrial development in the United States to the present time apprenticeship regulations have been successively determined by four different methods :

(a) In the colonial and early state period, apprenticeship was regulated by statute law or indenture. Every master, journeyman or other person receiving an apprentice was to conform to the requirements of the law of indenture of the state in which he resided. The apprentice boy was likewise bound under oath to fulfill his part of the contract. This contract was agreed to and signed in the presence of a magistrate. Although effective during certain periods of its existence, the legal indenture became offensive to the apprentice and unsuited to the changed conditions of industrial life, and was finally abandoned.

(b) Coexistent with the law of indenture, and doubtless in some of the older industries preceding it, each trade developed certain customary rules governing apprenticeship. These practices were effective in many communities, and in fact were observed throughout entire trades. Still, at a later date, when the means of communication and travel fostered a more severe competition, employers did not hesitate to break any customary or unwritten regulations observed by the journeymen and to substitute their own rules governing apprenticeship.

(c) Before the rapid development of the different industries and the growth of trade unionism, while individual bargaining was still the method used by the employees in dealing with their employers, the journeymen realized the weakness of the indenture and of customary rules as ade-

quate methods for regulating apprenticeship. Moreover, the large number of boys received by some employers tended to reduce the wages of the journeymen. To eliminate this and other evils, the employee undertook, through his trade union, to determine all regulations governing apprenticeship.

During the early stage of unionism, each local union adjusted its apprenticeship rules according to its immediate environment. This practically precluded complete uniformity among the locals throughout each trade. When possible, the union limited the number of apprentices received. Later, the international unions in some well-organized industries assumed control of apprenticeship regulations throughout the entire trade, and made them uniform. The union was impelled to take this step, in the first place, because, as competition developed between employers in different parts of the country, the advantage obtained by an employer who secured extra apprentices at a reduced wage was keenly felt by such of his competitors as were unable to secure this privilege. In the second place, since the market for labor had become national, the journeymen of a trade in all parts of the country were interested in limiting the large number of apprentices received in certain shops.

The employers never conceded the claims of the unions to determine all apprenticeship regulations, especially the right to place a restriction upon the number permitted, and opposed attempts to enforce such limitation. A bitter struggle followed. When the union was strongly organized, its regulations prevailed; when weakly organized, the employers put to work in their non-union shops as many boys as they desired. Moreover, neither party felt especially concerned to demand thorough training for the apprentice.

(*d*) Finally, as the growth of trade unions and the development of employers' associations has continued, in some trades practically all disputed questions, including those relating to apprenticeship, have come to be submitted to a joint board for settlement. With the more general recognition

and acceptance of the principles of conciliation, apprenticeship regulations are in many cases mutually determined in this manner and heartier coöperation is secured in enforcing them.

In the following study, the four methods of securing apprenticeship regulations, above mentioned, will be considered; the causes leading to the failure of one and the substitution of another and the conditions of the apprentice under each will be pointed out; the extent of apprenticeship rules in trade unions of the present day will be noted; and the purpose and scope of such rules will be discussed. Since this study is primarily concerned with apprenticeship and trade unions, only a brief statement of the law of indenture seems necessary. The previous training of foreign journeymen engaged in this country and the customary rules gradually developed to meet the peculiar native environment influenced materially the apprenticeship regulations of the early trade unions. A brief study of these influences enables us the better to follow and appreciate later union apprenticeship regulations.

It should be noted, however, that, while different methods for determining apprenticeship regulations were used, no precise period other than the general historical sequence following the change of industry can be assigned for each. For example, the old indenture laws have not been entirely removed from the statute books. Again, in many small or unorganized shops, customary apprenticeship rules are observed at the present time; and, even though conciliation has proved to be the most satisfactory method for enacting and enforcing these regulations, as a matter of fact they are determined in many cases exclusively by the local or international union.

PART I.

HISTORICAL.

CHAPTER I.

GOVERNMENTAL REGULATION OF APPRENTICESHIP.

The underlying purpose of early apprenticeship laws in the United States was twofold, (*a*) industrial and (*b*) philanthropic.

(*a*) The general custom prevailed—inherited from European industrial conditions—for every boy of the artisan class to learn a trade. The ordinary mechanic desired to have his own son thus equipped. For, without such training, he was handicapped in carrying on his life work. Under the law, it was possible for any master to receive an apprentice with the assurance that the boy would remain in his charge until he became of age, and the boy was likewise certain that he would be taught a useful trade.

(*b*) Secondly, the law guaranteed to poor, unfortunate or neglected children the opportunity to learn a trade, so that they might, in time, become useful citizens and not public charges. This intention is clearly set forth in the preamble to "An Act for the Better Regulations of Apprentices," passed by the State of Maryland in 1793. "Whereas it has been found by experience that poor children, orphans and illegitimate children for want of sufficient system have been left destitute of support, and have become useless or depraved members of society; and whereas it would greatly conduce to the good of the public in general and of such children in particular, that necessary instruction in trades and useful arts should be afforded them; therefore be it enacted,"¹ etc.

¹Laws of Maryland, 1793, Chapter 14.

The apprenticeship laws varied from state to state, but the main features were essentially the same:

Those permitted to bind out children were parents, who might indenture their own children; justices of the peace, who were empowered to bind out orphans, children suffering through negligence or poverty of parents, children of beggars, illegitimate or destitute children; trustees or guardians, to whose care orphans or other poor children had been intrusted; institutions or benevolent societies, under whose jurisdiction dependents had been placed.

Any manufacturer, mechanic, mariner, handicraftsman or any other person acceptable to the one having the child in charge and to the court officials was permitted to receive an apprentice provided satisfactory terms could be arranged. The mode of procedure or ceremony followed when indenturing an apprentice was simple. The father, trustees, or other person having control of the boy, together with the one receiving the apprentice, appeared in court with the written indenture, wherein were embodied the terms previously agreed upon. Each party took an oath to abide by the conditions of the indenture, and a copy of the instrument was placed on file in the records of the magistrate, for which service the latter received a small fee paid by the master. In case the child of a beggar or other non-supporting parent was about to be bound out, the latter was consulted in a general way as to the person to whom the child should be bound. Moreover, if any relative or other person desired to provide for the child and furnished an acceptable bond for faithful performance of such duty until the apprentice became of age, the child could not be bound out.

The conditions under which the apprentice served were in the main uniform. As a rule, no definite period of apprenticeship was stated in the contract other than that the apprentice was required to serve until of age—twenty-one years in case of males and sixteen in case of females, thus making the term of service entirely dependent upon the age at the time of indenture. No apprentice could be bound for

a period extending beyond this limit. When a father bound out his own son, he was free to make any reasonable terms with the master mechanic; but justices of the peace, binding out upon their own authority orphans or other children committed to their charge, were directed by the law to insert in the contract the provision that when possible the master of an apprentice should, in addition to the instruction given in some useful art or trade, provide opportunities whereby the apprentice could obtain a reasonable education in the primary branches—reading, writing and arithmetic. Except in rare or special cases, no attempt was made to specify the particular kind of work in which the apprentice should engage during each year of his term, this being left to the discretion of the employer.

Both the apprentice and the employer were bound by law to observe certain stipulated conditions; and, in case the contract was broken, the guilty party might be summoned before the court and punished. For offences committed during the term of service the apprentice was subject to the same penalty imposed upon any other citizen for a similar offense, and, in case the master paid the fine and costs of the trial, the court, to compensate his employer, could adjudge the extra time the boy should serve after the completion of his regular term. In some states the master was prohibited, under penalty of discharging his apprentices, from taking them into another state or beyond the boundary of his own state.

In case the master died during the term of apprenticeship, the widow was given power to transfer all rights and interests in the apprentice to another master of the same trade, for a sum agreed upon by them. This amount was considered as belonging directly to the widow and not as a part of the estate of her deceased husband. Moreover, after the death of the master, until some disposition was made of the apprentice, he was to remain at home and continue his usual work under direction of the widow.

As a rule, the employer was not forced to take an appren-

tice, and, on the other hand, if he did desire to use apprentices, was not limited as to the number he might put to work. In some states, however, every master pilot was compelled to take at least one apprentice and to give him the necessary instruction. The complete control given to the employer over apprentices caused the latter in some cases to be grouped with servants and slaves, and the same laws were sometimes made applicable to both.

The contents of the indenture were largely matters of contract between the master mechanic and the apprentice or parent, and the terms thereof varied according to the conditions and desires of the parties concerned. Some employers were exacting and demanded pledges of the boy. The state, also having in mind the general welfare of the apprentices—for one object of the law was to provide poor, neglected and orphan children with homes and opportunities to learn trades—not only protected him by restrictions placed on the employer, but also exacted promises of good behavior from the boy himself. Thus, an indenture entered into by a master boot and shoe maker and a boy who engaged himself to learn that trade, provided that “During all which term, the said Apprentice, his said Master well and faithfully shall serve, his secrets keep, and his lawful commands everywhere at all times readily obey. He shall do no damage to his said Master nor wilfully suffer any to be done by others, and if any to his knowledge be intended, he shall give his Master seasonable notice thereof. He shall not waste the goods of his said Master nor lend them unlawfully to any. At card, dice, or any other unlawful game, he shall not play. Fornication he shall not commit, nor matrimony contract, during the said term. Taverns, alehouses or places of gaming he shall not haunt or frequent. From the service of his said Master he shall not absent himself, but in all things and at all times, he shall carry and behave himself as a good and faithful Apprentice ought, during the whole term aforesaid. And the said Master on his part doth hereby promise, covenant and

agree to teach and instruct the said Apprentice, or cause him to be taught and instructed in the art, trade or calling of a Boot and Shoe Maker by the best way or means he can, and the said Master agrees to give the said Apprentice three months schooling to wit, Reading, Writing and Cyphering as far as the Rule of Three Inclusive and shall well and faithfully find and provide for the said Apprentice, good and sufficient meat, drink, clothing, lodging, and other necessities fit and convenient for such an Apprentice, during the term aforesaid and at the expiration of the said term to have the Customary freedom due."

Under such conditions, the early manufacturer, often a hard worker, having in view the future welfare of his business, and in many cases, desiring to equip his own son, or a boy in whom he was interested, for his life work, gathered one or more lads about him and gave them, often in person, the instruction needed to make of them competent workmen. Except in so far as the indenture prescribed the manner in which apprentices were to be received and compelled each party to abide by the terms of the contract, the employer and the parent or guardian of the apprentice were practically free to arrange all details of the agreement.

The failure and final abandonment of the indenture system is to be attributed to several causes. It was peculiarly suited to domestic or small-scale manufacture in which personal contact between the master and apprentice was emphasized, and it became correspondingly an ineffective system, with the emergence and final establishment of the modern factory or large-scale production. In fact, apprenticeship regulations, like other trade rules, depend largely upon the methods under which the industry is operated, and must be adjusted from time to time according to the new conditions arising.

Again, the artisan class insisted that their children be taught a trade, and the master was likewise anxious for a legal contract in order that he might be assured of con-

stant service until the end of the stated term. The indenture afforded the beginner such an opportunity to learn the trade, but at a distinct sacrifice of personal liberty. This was specially true in the case of poor, neglected and orphan children, who were often bound to masters whom they did not select and upon terms not of their own choosing. Theoretically, the master and the boy assumed equal positions before the law—each being bound to perform certain clearly defined duties—and the relations between them were often mutually pleasant and profitable. Nevertheless, the master naturally exercised the larger influence, and the apprentice was at a corresponding disadvantage. In practically every industry, the boy was compelled to perform odd jobs entirely distinct from trade activities. Accordingly, his term of apprenticeship was unduly extended. Thus, entirely apart from the industrial changes in the methods of production which rendered the indenture system less desirable, it tended of itself to become more and more objectionable to the apprentice boys. They became restless under the heavy restraint imposed upon them, often ran away from their masters, and sought employment elsewhere as journeymen. They refused to be grouped before the law with servants and slaves; and their continued opposition to the system contributed in no small degree to its final abandonment.

Finally, it is perhaps not entirely fanciful to suggest that the gradual growth of feeling against the law by which the slave was bound to his master operated to bring into disfavor the statute under which the apprentice was held by his employer. Journeymen who have been long at their trade, especially those whose term antedates the Civil War, assert that such was undoubtedly the case, even though the influence was not always visible nor tangible.

CHAPTER II.

CUSTOMARY APPRENTICESHIP RULES.

Indenture laws gradually became ineffective in the various trades. Yet, even after employers and journeymen experienced difficulty in enforcing them, in the absence of more efficient methods such laws were retained on the statute books.

Even, however, during the existence of the indenture itself, and previous to the organization of trade unions, artisans engaged at the various trades developed certain customs in connection with apprenticeship which, while not rigidly observed at all times, nevertheless were more or less binding, and were the rules most generally practiced. These early customs adopted by the journeymen themselves in dealing with the apprentice were in a great measure influenced (*a*) by foreign trade customs introduced by artisans coming from other countries and (*b*) by the conditions existing in the new country.

(*a*) The words "berkshire" and "two-thirder," designating beginners in the iron molding and printing industries respectively, were brought from England, where the same terms were widely used, and suggest the direct influence of English customs upon apprenticeship regulations in this country. This is readily understood when the large number of foreigners engaged in American industry is considered. It frequently happened that employers, even though permitted to receive a large number of apprentices, found the supply of artisans inadequate to meet the legitimate demands of the trade, and sent representatives abroad to urge skilled workmen to take up residence in this country. In some instances, state legislatures, acting upon the urgent appeal of prominent employers, who claimed that more trained mechanics were needed, sent agents abroad to urge

immigration to that state. In 1863 the Legislature of Missouri, urged by prominent employers of the commonwealth, sent an agent to Europe for the express purpose of inducing skilled mechanics to seek employment in that state. Mr. Giles Filley, a prominent stove manufacturer of St. Louis, claimed that the supply of well-trained iron molders was entirely inadequate to meet his legitimate business demands, and urged the agent to send him a large number of Prussian iron molders. This request was speedily complied with, and twenty-five molders, having accepted the offer of the American agent by contract, dated Berlin, March 8, 1864, started for St. Louis. Upon their arrival, they were approached by members of the local union of iron molders, who explained that the supposed deficiency in the supply of workmen was not caused by any unfair and rigid apprenticeship rules of the union nor by any unwillingness upon the part of the journeymen to work, but, as they stated, by the very low wages offered. Upon this information, the Prussian molders disregarded their contract signed in Berlin, became members of the union, and through the influence of that body succeeded in obtaining employment in other cities.

The methods used by employers in the printing industry to secure foreign workmen are made clear in a statement prefacing the printed constitution of the New York Typographical Association, issued in 1833. After reciting the depressed condition of the trade, it adds that "among the means made use of to depress the business by those who withhold from the workmen their just demands, has been advertising in several of the newspapers in Scotland, and elsewhere in Great Britain, that a great opening for printers existed in New York, thereby inducing many to leave the comforts of home in the old country for a precarious subsistence on this side of the Atlantic. Many to their regret can testify to the truth of this assertion; and the feelings of the man, by whose unprincipled conduct this breaking up of kindred and subsequent disappointment in obtaining

the means of support have happened, are not to be envied. Perhaps the day may come, when remorse, like a subtle poison, may lurk about his heart, and cause him to do an act of justice to those who have been swindled by his deception. When the Association was informed of the means taken by unprincipled men to injure the business, a circular was immediately addressed to the Printers of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and dispatched by one of its members. The Association has since learned, by letters from Europe, that the appeal has had an extensive circulation, and has tended in a great measure to counteract the evil contemplated by the original advertisements."

In response to these and other inducements, foreign mechanics came in large numbers to the United States. They prided themselves upon their skill, which, as a rule, was superior to that of native Americans who had received little training, and that of inferior quality. In order to make competent workmen of his own sons or of the apprentice boys placed under his charge, it was natural for the newly arrived journeyman to adopt the same methods under which he had learned his trade at home. European example thus influenced, if it did not entirely determine, American apprenticeship customs.

(*b*) The dominance of simple rather than complex industry during the early period of our national history, and even after the formation of the first labor unions, directly influenced trade conditions generally, including rules governing apprenticeship. The industrial unit was comparatively small, ordinarily the small shop, sometimes even the family group.

The period was also marked by the absence of a widely extended market, rapid communication and easy means of transportation. These conditions made it necessary for each household or community to produce for itself, without any special knowledge of the means and resources of other districts, and without even the stimulus of competition.

The cigar making industry, for example, was largely carried on in small local establishments. The following passage from the first annual report of the Ohio Bureau of Labor Statistics summarizes the early condition of the cigar industry. "Previous to 1861, no class of employes was more independent of employers than cigar makers. Few large manufacturing establishments existed, and as a rule, the manufacturer was the retailer. Whenever the journeyman became dissatisfied with his condition, he withdrew from the employer and set up a shop of his own."² Every large city was well supplied with many such shops, where the journeyman, aided by members of his family or by apprentice boys, made all his goods by hand. Even the small cities had their own cigar manufacturers, who made and retailed to the general public the larger portion of the local supply.

Similar early conditions affecting the machinists' and blacksmiths' trade are clearly set forth by one long identified with the trade in organizing unions and in managing their affairs. "Young men whose majority dates since 1861 can form a very imperfect idea of what the craft was twenty or twenty-five years ago. It is still within the recollection of gray-headed machinists and blacksmiths, the days when a machinist was a compound of handiwork, a kind of cross between a millwright and whitesmith, a fitter, furnisher, locksmith, etc. . . . In the early days of mechanism in the country but few shops employed many men. Generally the employer was head man, he knew his men personally, he instructed his apprentices and kept a general supervision of his business. By that means every workman knew his employer, and if aught went astray there was no circumlocution office to go through to have an understanding about it. But as the business came to be more fully developed, it was found that more capital must be employed and the authority and supervision of the owner or owners must be delegated to superintendent or foreman."³

Moreover, the precise relations existing between the ap-

² Cigar Makers' Journal, May, 1878, p. 12.

³ Machinists and Blacksmiths' Journal, February, 1872, p. 521.

prentice and his master were affected by the nature of the trade itself and the manner in which it was conducted. The building trades, for example, were easily "picked up;" or at least the opportunities for acquiring them were abundant. In these trades the beginner was apprenticed to his employer.

On the other hand, the conditions existing in such an industry as stove molding were quite different.⁴ Considerable capital was required to establish the industry, which was conducted in fewer localities and afforded opportunities for a much smaller number of apprentices. The boy was often apprenticed to neither the proprietor of the furnace nor the real stove manufacturers, that is, the employer who furnished the patterns and had his stove molded, but to the journeyman, who paid him by the piece for what he made. Every journeyman engaged at least one "berkshire," as the apprentice boy was called, and oftentimes four or five. "These berkshires were a peculiar institution. They were boys employed by molders to assist them at their work, nominally as helpers, but in reality they were apprentices, and every molder had to use at least one of them."⁵ Finally, when the casting of the stove plate came under the control of the employer who furnished the designs and molded the stoves, boys were generally apprenticed to the employer, though the journeymen continued the practice of taking apprentices until the custom was forbidden by the union.

Many trades early became overcrowded because of the large number of apprentices who were allowed to learn the trade. The right of the employer to engage as many apprentices as he desired was a custom of long standing, and was regarded as an undoubted right, not to be surrendered without a struggle. Indeed, trouble began with the first attempt of the locals to restrict the number going to the trade, so that the unions found it necessary to act slowly and to make the change gradually.

⁴The first foundry designed exclusively for the manufacture of stoves and hollow ware in this country was erected in 1820. Previous to this date all stoves were cast at block furnaces. See *Iron Molders' Journal*, January, 1904, p. 7.

⁵*Iron Molders' Journal*, August, 1876, p. 1

In an industry such as that of cigar making, where the producers were small, each manufacturer engaged apprentices according to the needs of his own individual shop, regardless of the general welfare of the trade. In consequence, the trade was always becoming overcrowded, and, after the formation of unions,⁶ one of the most difficult problems was how to control the supply of apprentices. After the movement towards concentration of the industry had begun,⁷ the larger factories were fairly well organized by the union, and a regular course of training could be required of all beginners.

In certain cities, however, the trade came to be carried on in a large measure by tenement-house workers, with the familiar attendant evils. This system of production has continued even to the present time, though state laws have been enacted against sweat-shop work, and, in many instances, the evil has been eradicated. But in the tenement houses, which were generally owned by the manufacturer and filled entirely with tenants who promised to engage in cigar making, no accurate estimate of the number learning the trade could be secured, for the material was taken to and from the house by the employer, and the women and children aided in the making. It was from this source that the trade was recruited, and it was estimated that, at one time, about four fifths of the cigars manufactured in New York City were made in these tenement houses by workers who were almost entirely non-union.

Those trades were especially overcrowded in which it was

⁶ The first Cigar Makers' Union was organized at Baltimore, May 5, 1851. On May 10-14 of the same year a meeting of representatives from cities in the State of New York met at Syracuse for the purpose of establishing a uniform bill of prices throughout the state and regulating the apprenticeship system; see *Journal and Program of Cigar Makers' International Union*, twentieth session, held at Milwaukee, 1893.

⁷ In 1861 the United States Government placed a heavy tax on cigars, thus to a certain extent driving the business into the hands of large manufacturers and compelling the cigar maker to become an employee working for wages. *First Annual Report of the Ohio Bureau of Labor Statistics*, Columbus, 1878; see *Cigar Makers' Journal*, May, 1878, p. 12.

possible to do piecework, and hence in which both employers and employing journeymen found it profitable to engage the services of many apprentices. In the iron molding industry "the 'Berkshire' system, as it was called, was a standing grievance, as it operated to create an overcrowded market of stove molders with its logical and pernicious results."⁹ Whether the journeyman was paid by the piece or so much for each completed stove, for both methods were practiced at different times and at different places, the greater the number of apprentices directed by him, the greater the output, and consequently the larger his wage. Later on, when the number of "berkshires" allowed each journeyman was limited by union regulation because of the rapidity with which the trade was being recruited, many of the older members complained bitterly, and evaded the intent of the regulation by adopting a boy, for the union recognized the right of the journeyman to teach the trade to his own or adopted son.

Somewhat similar economic conditions brought about an oversupply of apprentices in the printing trade. During the early years of the printing industry the editor or proprietor of a newspaper or job printing office was also a practical printer. It was the cherished ambition of the journeyman printer to master the trade as soon as possible, that he might become the proprietor of his own establishment, from which he could edit and issue his own paper. This important position enabled the occupant to wield considerable influence and power in the community, but required a long period of training upon the part of the one filling it. It also gave the journeyman master or proprietor an excellent opportunity to use with profit a number of apprentices. The number of apprentices employed in certain shops often exceeded the total number of journeymen engaged therein. In fact, instances are recorded where the proprietor was compelled to close his shop during a strike of apprentices because the number of journeymen remaining was insufficient to continue the business.

⁹ *Iron Molders' Journal*, August, 1896, p. 1.

At no time during the early period was the trade free from "two-thirders," that is, those who had not served a full apprentice term, or runaway apprentices. Moreover, the typographical unions in combating the "two-thirder" system were, like the iron molders' unions in opposing the "berkshire" system, compelled to oppose not only the employers, but also many of their own members.

The evils arising from the employment of "two-thirders" or "half-way journeymen" are suggested by a circular letter sent to the trade in 1809 by the New York Typographical Society. Among other grievances cited, the letter sets forth that "the practice of employing what are termed 'half-way journeymen' in preference to those who have served their time, while it holds out encouragement to boys to elope from their masters, as soon as they acquire a sufficient knowledge of the art to be enabled to earn their bread, is a great grievance to journeymen, and almost certain ruin to the boys themselves. Becoming masters of their own conduct at a period of life when they are incapable of governing their passions and propensities, they plunge headlong into every species of dissipation, and are often debilitated by debauchery and disease before they arrive at the state of manhood. And it also tends to an unnecessary multiplication of apprentices, inasmuch as the place of every boy who elopes from his master is usually supplied by another; while at the same time the runaway supplies, after a manner, the place of a regular journeyman, and one who probably has a family dependent upon his labor for support. We would also beg leave to call your attention to a practice as illiberal and unjust as the former and attended, perhaps, with evils of a more aggravating motive; we mean that of taking grown men (foreigners) as apprentices to some twelve or fifteen months, when they are to be turned into the situations of men who are masters of their business, which men are to be turned out of their places by miserable botches because they will work for what they can get. By these means numbers of excellent workmen, who ought to be ornaments to the

profession, are driven by necessity to some other means of support."⁹

Similarly, among the machinists and blacksmiths, the idea of limiting the number of apprentices entering the trade did not appear until late. The early employers of journeymen were at liberty to engage as many boys as the demands of the business would warrant, or, in case of the journeyman, as many as he was personally able to direct. "The taking on of as many apprentices as could be worked was considered the indubitable right of every employer, the peremptory dismissal of workmen was another; hence, in dull times, men with families to support would find themselves out of work, while the shops, whose doors were closed on them, were filled with apprentice boys. This inordinate rush of apprentices was remonstrated against in vain. The writer of this was one of some twenty young men kept at work after the great financial crisis of 1857, while there were sixty apprentices employed."¹⁰

The wages of the apprentice, especially at the beginning of his term, consisted in many cases of mere board and lodging, ordinarily obtained at the home of the employer. However, when the boy was bound out to the journeyman, who had no desire to increase the number of workmen in his trade, but received apprentices mainly in order to increase his own wages, especially when engaged at piecework, the boy frequently paid a stated amount to the journeyman, who taught him the "art and mysteries" of the craft. Various attempts were made by different unions to demand extra pay for journeymen who spent a portion of their time in teaching an apprentice. Thus, in the scale of prices drawn up by the New York Typographical Society in 1815, an article was inserted which provided that "a pressman shall receive for teaching an apprentice presswork, for the first three months, five cents per token, and for the three months following three cents per token."

⁹ Early Organizations of Printers, by Ethelbert Stewart, in Bulletin of the Bureau of Labor, No. 61, November, 1905.

¹⁰ See "Early History of Our Organization," in *Machinists and Blacksmiths' Journal*, February, 1872, p. 520.

In common with the journeyman, the apprentice worked long hours each day. "The hours of labor were long, it being not uncommon for molders to start to work at four o'clock in the morning, and the spectacle of a molder trudging through the streets at that hour on his way to work, with his 'berkshire' at his side bearing a lantern, was not an unusual one to the night watch of those days."¹¹

The feeling between the apprentice and his master was, in some cases, more like that existing between father and son than between employer and employee. If the apprentice was not really adopted by the master, he often enjoyed the pleasure and advantage of the latter's home, to which he generally had free access, and in which he did many things entirely separate and distinct from the duties connected with learning the trade. Likewise, at the shop, he ran errands, cleaned the premises, arranged the tools, and, in fact, became a general factotum about the place. While it was conceded that the boy was indispensable to the employer, still the idea prevailed that, when the master agreed to teach his trade to the beginner, he did so at a personal sacrifice, at least during the first few years of the term, and, to compensate in a manner for this loss, the apprentice agreed to perform these various services apart from his regular trade. Doubtless many employers did their utmost to make the boy a paying investment from the very beginning, and, if we may judge from the numerous runaways recorded, especially from the emphasis given to this portion of the apprentice question in the early laws on the subject, employers were sometimes hard taskmasters.

The close personal relation, which often existed between the old master and his apprentice during the early times, was clearly described to the present writer by an old printer, who spoke freely of the conditions under which he served his apprenticeship term, more than forty years ago, as well as of the interest taken in him and the opportunities afforded him to obtain a thorough knowledge of the trade. He and his employer labored together in a small printing office from

¹¹ Iron Molders' Journal, August, 1896, p. 1.

which the weekly newspaper was issued to the people in the immediate community. During press days he was employed from early morning to late at night. But then an interval of several days followed, during which time work was practically suspended, and the apprentice enjoyed leisure. The house of the employer was the home of the apprentice, though the latter frequently visited his own parents on Saturday night, returning on the following Monday morning. At the beginning of each day he performed his regular assigned tasks about the house, after which he set off with his master, ready for the day's work at the office. The conditions under which he labored as an apprentice were far more pleasant than those enjoyed in after years, when he had completed his term and went out as a journeyman upon his own responsibility.

The length of the apprentice term, while to some extent fixed for each trade by general custom, really depended upon the will of the employer and the ability of the beginner. A competent journeyman was an all-round workman, and, when possible, the apprentice was retained at the trade until he had mastered all parts of it and was able to turn out a complete, finished product. However, no evidence is found that he was compelled to make and exhibit a masterpiece before he was admitted into the ranks of the journeymen, nor did he wander about during the last year of his apprenticeship or the one immediately following it. He was in all cases, except during emergencies, required to serve what was known to be the customary term, sometimes longer.

As the boy rendered the most profitable service during the latter years of his apprenticeship, the master was anxious to retain him as long as possible. It seems clear that the term of apprenticeship, determined under such conditions, was generally a long one, and, being fixed by custom for each trade, was at a later date accepted by many unions and embodied in their written constitutions.

The hatting industry, a trade requiring skilled workmen

and one in which the apprentice question has always been of much importance, both before and since the formation of unions, may serve as an illustration of the slow change in the length of the term service. During the early years of the industry in this country the work was performed entirely by hand and each journeyman was required to perfect his skill in all branches of the trade; that is, at making, blocking and finishing. The well-trained apprentice was able at the end of his term to take the raw material and work it up into a finished product. The usual term of service for the apprentice was four years. About 1840 machinery began to be perfected whereby hats could be manufactured far more rapidly. The hand-maker could make from two to three dozen hats per day, but the same number of workmen, with the aid of the machine, could turn out many times that number.

Notwithstanding the extensive introduction of machinery in this trade, subdivision of the work has not followed accordingly, so that at the present time the same parts of the work as blocking, sizing and finishing are accomplished by machinery, but the trade still requires highly skilled labor. It maintains rigid but well-enforced apprenticeship rules, though the term of service has been reduced from four to three years.

Whatever uniformity existed in connection with apprenticeship among the various shops in the same trade was largely that secured through force of custom. Moreover, the lack of ready communication between different parts of the country made it practically impossible for masters or journeymen to secure anything like concerted action in regulating apprenticeship or other trade rules, so that those carrying on these industries gradually developed certain customs and practices, which, of course, were local in application and extent.

Finally, the growth of the industrial unit, in which the large factory was substituted for the small manufacturing plant or family; the improvement in means of communication

and transportation, which permitted a keener competition among manufacturers; the control of large amounts of capital by the employers and the acceptance of the principle of individual bargaining, all tended to render less efficient the former trade customs and to increase the power and influence of the employer to the disadvantage of the journeymen. Accordingly the indenture fell into disfavor, and, whenever possible, the employer brushed aside all trade customs, including apprenticeship regulations.

CHAPTER III.

TRADE-UNION REGULATION OF APPRENTICESHIP.

The trade union was cautious, oftentimes secret in its early efforts to regulate apprenticeship. The requirements which it attempted to secure were largely a continuation of established usage, and the provision that applicants for membership must have previously served a term as a regular apprentice was the chief method of enforcing them.

The experience of the printing trade in this respect is typical of early trade-union activities. The first printers' unions in this country were formed about 1800. By 1839, they existed in practically all of the eastern cities, and as far south and west as Louisville and St. Louis. Up to that time, however, no attempt had been made by any local to limit the number of apprentices, other than the mere requirement that applicants seeking membership must have completed their term of service.

No regulation of apprenticeship is found in the written constitution adopted by any of the unions previous to the above date. The first constitution of the Philadelphia Typographical Society, adopted in 1802, contains the requirement that "no person shall be eligible to become a member of this society, who shall not have served an apprenticeship satisfactory to the board of directors, to whom he shall make application in person, and they shall thereupon proceed to the election by ballot, and, if the candidate shall obtain a majority of two thirds of the board present, he shall then be declared a member of this society, and receive a certificate thereof."¹² The Columbia Typographical Society of Washington, D. C., had practically the same requirement, while the Baltimore Society, in its constitution adopted in 1832, declared that "the indispensable qualifica-

¹² Constitution of Philadelphia Typographical Society, Philadelphia, 1802, Art. XV. Printed in Stewart, *op. cit.*

tions of all persons hereafter admitted as members of this society are, a good moral character, industrious habits, and a practical knowledge of the art and mystery of letterpress printing, having acquired the same by an apprenticeship of at least four years' minority."¹³ At a meeting of the Columbia Typographical Society held on November 1, 1834, a committee was appointed to consider the apprenticeship question. After seeking information from various employers and journeymen in different sections of the country, the committee reported an elaborate set of laws, with the following comment upon the limitation of apprentices:

"A rule directly limiting the number of apprentices in our printing offices was thought to be, on examination, so liable to injustice and abuse between the larger and smaller offices, so difficult in its maintenance, on account of anticipated objections on the part of the employers, so embarrassing in its adjustment, on account of this constant fluctuation of the business, that the committee unanimously determined to abandon it."¹⁴

The constitution of the Nashville Typographical Society, adopted as late as 1837, contained only the statement that "the qualifications for membership shall be a good character, industrious habits, and a good practical knowledge of the art of letterpress printing. No person shall be admitted to membership in this society who is known to be a runaway apprentice."

The Typographical Society of New Orleans was the first local printers' union to place a limit upon the number of apprentices. The constitution adopted by that body in 1839 contains the following provision as to apprentices. "No member of this association shall work on any English daily morning paper, on which any apprentice may be employed. (This article is not considered applicable to any apprentice now in such office). No member of this association shall work on any English paper or in any book

¹³ Constitution of Baltimore Typographical Society, Baltimore, 1832, Art. VI.

¹⁴ See Minutes of Columbia Typographical Society, February 7, 1835, quoted by Stewart, *op. cit.*

or job office, where any apprentice is employed, who may not be bound for a term of not less than four years during minority. (This clause is not to apply to existing contracts.)"¹⁵ This practice of limiting apprentices initiated by the New Orleans union was in time imitated by all other local unions, and was finally adopted as a fixed policy by the International Typographical Union.

The experience of the printing trade thus illustrates the general trend of development. At first, the local union accepted the custom prevailing in regard to apprentices. Beginners at the trade were merely required to satisfy the union that they had served the ordinary time. The next step taken, represented by the rules of the Baltimore Society, was an attempt by the union to determine exactly how long this customary term should be. In most cases the four year rule was adopted, though some unions accepted members after they had served three years, provided the individual desired to engage at but one of the two divisions of the trade, namely, composition or presswork. Either because the unions were weak and consequently unable to enforce this qualification in the case of all applicants for membership, or because they found it expedient at times to yield somewhat in the matter of its application, "two-thirders" and runaway apprentices found their way into the unions in such large numbers that the craft as a whole suffered much from poor workmanship, and the wages of the regular journeymen were seriously threatened. To meet this emergency and to avoid the bad effects of such a policy, the third step was taken, that is, the locals, led by the New Orleans union, actually limited the number of apprentices in proportion to the number of journeymen employed.

With the local serving as the unit in forming apprenticeship rules, and with each union acting independently, it followed both from the weakness of the union and from the absence of ready communication between far distant

¹⁵ Constitution of New Orleans Typographical Association, 1839. Art. XII, secs. 1-2.

places that each local, as affected by its environment, developed its own peculiar apprentice rules. Some unions, gaining control of the trade within the surrounding country, made rigid requirements, and these tended to serve as models for the smaller and weaker unions.¹⁶

Experience, however, soon made it clear that a uniform and effective set of apprenticeship regulations could not be secured in many trades without the coöperation of all locals, and the regulation and enforcement of apprenticeship regulations became one of the forces leading to the formation of international unions. The principles enunciated by the iron molders when forming the first local bodies, namely, fraternity and protection against reduction of wages and against the evils of the "berkshire" system, were enumerated as the objects in view in forming the larger organization.

At the convention called in 1850 to form a National Typographical Union, "the apprentice question caused a prolonged discussion. It came up in the form of a recommendation that the number be limited, and, after a general concurrence in the idea that 'too many printers had been manufactured of late years,' a recommendation to the societies, it was hoped would be organized, as well as to those already in existence, to limit the number of apprentices was adopted, and the employing printers were urgently requested to have apprentices indentured for a period of not less than five years."¹⁷ The same convention, meeting in New York City, December 2, 1850, issued an address to the journeymen printers of the United States, in which it was urged that the local bodies should secure "the en-

¹⁶ Several years previous to the formation of the Iron Molders' International Union, some locals gained control of almost the entire trade within their respective cities, and for some time were able to enforce their demands against the "berkshire" system. At Albany, New York, the ratio was one apprentice to every ten journeymen, not including the sons of journeymen. This rule was rigidly enforced, but gave constant trouble, and finally the demands of the union in this respect led to the great strike of 1859, in which the local was badly beaten.

¹⁷ McVicar, *Origin and Progress of the Typographical Union, 1850-91* (Lansing, Michigan, 1891), pp. 6-7.

forcement of the principle of limiting the number of apprentices; by which measure, a too rapid increase in the number of workmen, too little care in the selection of boys for the business, and the employment of herds of half men at half wages, to the detriment of good workmen, will be effectively prevented."

But of more significance still is the fact that perhaps the chief motive which started the movement in 1834 toward the formation of the National Typographical Society, was the desire to prevent proposed radical abuses of the free and unlimited use of apprentices and to secure a more uniform and better regulated rule governing them. The "two-thirder" printers were to be found in most localities, and had, from the very beginning, been the cause of much dissatisfaction and of many difficulties. No attempt had, however, been made by any local in the trade to limit the number of apprentices, and the practice was continued for many years later. In fact, it seems evident that, while the union protested vigorously against admitting members who were unable to prove that they had served the required term, nevertheless, at this time, they did not even claim the right to actually limit the number of apprentices entering the trade, and it is doubtful whether any strike had been called by the journeymen in the trade solely to uphold an apprentice rule.

About 1834 the apprenticeship question was raised to importance by an announcement made by the proprietor of an influential paper in Washington, who was also printer to the United States Senate, that he proposed to establish an institute in that city, in which he would engage a large number of boys at a rate much lower than that received by regular journeymen. The Columbia Typographical Society of Washington was intensely excited by this new proposal, and prepared a circular letter of protest to be sent to other leading unions. The agitation continued, and, on March 7, 1834, the Columbia Society passed a resolution "that a committee of seven members be appointed by the

chair, whose duty it shall be to confer with each other, and report to this Society at their next meeting what, in their opinion, would be the most proper and effectual course to pursue to bring about the establishment of a national typographical society." Some of the most prominent unions responded to the letter and condemned, in strong terms, the proposed institute.⁶⁸

Finally, in 1836, delegates from Baltimore, New York City, Washington, Harrisburg, Philadelphia and New Orleans met in Washington and organized the National Typographical Association, adopted a constitution, and issued addresses to the societies and printers throughout the country. In the address to local societies these bodies were urged to reject any applicant for membership who had not served six years at the trade, also to make it unlawful for any member of the union to work in a shop where boys were taken to serve as apprentices for less than six years. While it is true that the various locals had many other grievances in common, such as the regulation of wages and treatment of members who had "ratted," and while many printers desired the formation of a national union for the discussion and regulation of these grievances, still the agitation of the apprentice question, coming in the precise manner that it did, undoubtedly hastened the movement by causing the unions to see more clearly the necessity of concerted action, if their objects were to be accomplished. In so far, it was largely responsible for the formation of the National Society in 1836.

In commenting upon the importance of the apprentice question, the president of the International Union of Bricklayers spoke to the delegates of the second annual convention as follows: "The system of apprenticeship is the very corner stone of our institution, and it received the earnest attention of the previous convention, and, if the article in our constitution is carried out, it will be a monument that we will be proud of. But the question will be in your hands,

⁶⁸ For a fuller account of the controversy between General Duff Green and the Columbia Society, see Stewart, *op. cit.*

and whatever you in your wisdom think will be beneficial to it, I hope will be adopted."

The cigar makers did not formally enumerate the control of the apprenticeship system as one of the main purposes to be obtained by the formation of an international union. But, in accordance with the spirit of the period, the following clause was inserted in the first constitution of the international union: "No person shall be eligible to membership in the union unless he be a white male of the age of eighteen years, and has served an apprenticeship of not less than three years."¹⁹

We have seen that the apprentice question was an influence both in the formation of local unions and in the organization of international unions. In some cases, indeed, it was a chief factor, and, in all the skilled trades, it played an important part. As the locals accepted well-established apprenticeship customs as rules of the union, so international unions continued in the main the apprentice regulations in force in the locals. Frequently, a few local unions embrace a large percentage of the membership of the international union, and the apprenticeship rules worked out by these large and influential locals are usually accepted by the central association as indicating the needs of the craft as a whole.

After the international unions had been organized a sufficient length of time for them to see clearly their needs and define accurately their policy, two distinct methods of dealing with the apprentice question developed.

(a) In some crafts, such as the building trades and cigar making, the local unions formulated apprenticeship rules and adjusted them according to local environment; and the international union exercised only a general supervisory power, the rules adopted by the local union being submitted to it for approval.

(b) In other trades, such as iron molding and glass blowing, the international union early formulated detailed ap-

¹⁹ Journal and Program of the Twentieth Convention of the Cigar Makers' International Union of America, Milwaukee, September 25, 1893, p. 47.

prenticeship regulations which every local union in any way connected with the international organizations was bound to accept and enforce. In some cases the transition was more gradual; thus full power to determine apprenticeship regulations was not granted the Iron Molders' International Union until 1867, twelve years after it was organized. During that interval the locals made and enforced their own regulations.

Unions regulate apprenticeship by either one of these two methods, according to the nature of the trade, the degree of competition between the employers and the efforts of the employers to control wages. In some industries the different shops were so located and the cost of operation so adjusted that the finished product could be placed in the market at practically the same cost to each manufacturer. Therefore, the right to receive an extra number of apprentices at a wage very much below the rate received by regular journeymen gave a distinct advantage to the competitor possessing this privilege. When the firm was powerful or the union weak, this was not difficult to accomplish. For, although the locals insisted upon the apprenticeship rules as laid down in the local constitution, it was and has always been a matter about which the union hesitates to strike except for continued flagrant abuse. The result was that many employers found it easy, when dealing with the local alone, to engage a far greater number of boys than was allowed under the rules of the union. The consequences were the admission of a large number of poorly-equipped workmen into the trade, a decrease in current wages, and a movement on the part of the leaders of the international union to secure uniform apprentice laws.

In a different class of trades, represented by the cigar makers and the building trades, the local was the unit in regulating all matters in connection with apprenticeship. Because of the character of the industry and the widely differing environments in which it was carried on, a uniform apprenticeship ratio was less desirable than in the trades of

the preceding group. Little, if any, machinery was used; only a small amount of capital was needed; the work was carried on in practically every locality; and the article manufactured by members of different locals never came into direct competition. In addition, many unions of these trades were small, and located in parts of the country where the trade could be "picked up" in non-union shops.

Attempts have been made at different intervals in several of the trades in this class to introduce a national apprenticeship rule, but without success. In at least one of the building trades such regulations were enacted by the international union during the first years of its existence. This was the Bricklayers' International Union, which immediately upon its organization on October 16, 1865, assumed entire control of the apprentice question, and made uniform provision for all local unions. In his report to the convention, held at Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1867, the president recognized the importance of the system and stated that apprenticeship was "the very corner stone of our institution," and that, if the article of the constitution could be carried out, the union would have achieved a great success. That the law was not successfully enforced was due, at least in part, to the locals themselves. For, in his report to the third convention of the International Union, held in 1868, the president complained that the apprentice question had caused much trouble, because many unions, doubtless in keeping with the old custom of "patrimony," permitted journeymen to receive their sons at the trade in addition to the two apprentices allowed each workman. Furthermore, he stated that, for a long time, it had been the custom in Boston to allow each employer three apprentices, and that, in attempting to reduce the number so that it would conform to the union rule, the local had been greatly weakened, in fact, almost destroyed. At this and the following conference an effort was made to transfer the power of regulating apprenticeship from the International Union to the local bodies, so that it might be adjusted "to suit the contingencies existing in

their different localities." However, it was not until some time later, when it was seen that the International Union could not successfully enforce the uniform apprentice rule, that all efforts in this direction were abandoned, and the locals assumed entire control, as is the case in all the other unions in the building trades.

Those trades in which the local union has determined the apprenticeship regulations have been recruited in only a small degree by journeymen who have undergone the prescribed course of preliminary training. On the other hand, in the crafts in which the international union enacts these rules, a much larger per cent. of the members have served an apprenticeship under terms prescribed by the union. Having once established a uniform apprenticeship for all union shops of the same trade, the international union has sought to have each local enforce the same within its own jurisdiction. While these rules have been modified from time to time, the international unions have striven to maintain a uniform law, fixing the number of apprentices, the length of service and the method of instruction. The same desire for uniformity has also manifested itself in those trades in which the local formulated the laws; but, under this system of decentralized control, far less progress toward securing it has been made.

In general, we have noted that the unions in the skilled trades early began the struggle for effective apprenticeship regulations, and that two distinct methods in dealing with the subject were developed. But the particular method by which apprentice rules were passed, whether by the international or the local union, was less important than the degree of enforcement. When the international union enacted such laws, final authority as to interpretation, or specific application thereof, was reserved to that body; and the charter of any local could be revoked in case it refused to comply with this decision. Yet, in the last instance, the international union depended upon the local alone to enforce them. This was from the beginning a weakness in the old system of

apprenticeship and was one cause of its ultimate failure. Moreover, the mere fact that the union alone assumed the right to control apprenticeship regulations, especially to limit the number received, caused the employers to oppose them and to prevent their enforcement whenever possible. A long, bitter struggle ensued. Under such circumstances, it was impossible for either side, acting independently, to maintain an adequate apprenticeship system.

CHAPTER IV.

APPRENTICESHIP DETERMINED BY TRADE AGREEMENT.

The continued growth and development of trade unionism and the gradual substitution of collective for individual bargaining rendered less potent the advantage of the employer over the employee. If, at any previous time, employers were unwilling to unite with their journeymen in order to change unsatisfactory conditions, or refused to grant the demands of employees, they were at a later date compelled to do so or to take issue with a strongly organized union. At this stage employers formed associations, after which intelligent representatives from both sides met in joint conference and adjusted, as far as possible, all controversies.

Among the questions thus considered was that of apprenticeship. The adoption of apprentice rules by conciliation, while but fairly begun in many trades, marks the final method of their enforcement, and again emphasizes the fact that, in order to be effective, trade rules must be revised from time to time to meet new conditions.

Collective bargaining has been successfully carried on in the stove branch of the iron molding industry. In connection therewith, apprenticeship has been discussed to a greater extent than in any other trade. In order to clearly understand the far-reaching effect of apprenticeship, the difficulties encountered in regulating it, and the futility of either side independently attempting such regulation, it seems desirable to give in some detail the remarkable struggle over the apprentice question waged by the Stove Founders' National Defense Association, *i. e.*, the employers' association, and the Iron Molders' International Union. This example of conciliation is perhaps a distinctive rather than a typical experience. The struggle carried on by the two organizations in their attempts to reach a satisfactory apprentice

ratio is, perhaps, without a parallel in the history of any other union. But it indicates, possibly, the future method of regulating apprenticeship.

At the nineteenth session of the Iron Molders' Union, held in 1890, the following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, That it is the sense of this convention that the incoming executive board be empowered to confer with an executive board of the National Defense Association for the purpose of taking into consideration a discussion of the apprentice question as requested by said association. Resolved, That if after said conference it is the unanimous opinion of the executive board that the ratio of apprentices should be in the proportion of twenty per cent. to eighty per cent. an amendment should be submitted to the local unions, said local unions to vote 'aye' and 'nay,' and it shall require a two-thirds vote to carry said amendment."²⁰

The only feature of apprentice regulation considered at the first joint conference, held in Chicago, March 25, 1891, was the limitation of the number of boys; and this question remained the dominant issue in all subsequent discussions of apprenticeship. At the first conference neither side possessed adequate data upon which to base a just ratio, and, after passing the following resolutions, the subject was dismissed. "Whereas the average term of a molder's productive capacity is found by statistical information to be not more than fourteen and a half years and that the law of the Iron Molders' Union restricting the proportion of apprentices to one to eight, with one for each shop, compels manufacturers by necessity to disregard such proportion and operate open shops in order to supply the demand; therefore, it is requisite that the question receive an immediate investigation and readjustment upon a reasonable basis."

At the second conference, in 1892, the first measure considered was one designed to change and liberalize the apprenticeship rules of the union. The principles which the members of the conference decided should be incorporated

²⁰ Proceedings of the Nineteenth Convention of the Iron Molders' Union, 1890, p. 83.

in an agreement between the two organizations were set forth in three different articles. The first of these had reference to the limitation of apprentices, and the second and third related to the term of service and to the manner in which instruction should be given those received. In commenting upon the proposed changes, the editor of the *Iron Molders' Journal* said that "the three above clauses were unanimously agreed upon after the most careful consideration as a measure that would tend to harmonize differences between the two organizations on account of the restrictions and exactions under our present system."²¹

Although considerable pressure was brought to bear by the leaders of the union when urging their members to grant the proposed increase of apprentices, nevertheless, when a circular calling for a vote thereon was submitted, the second and third articles were accepted, but the first article, providing for additional apprentices, was rejected.

When addressing the twentieth convention of the *Iron Molders' Union*, held in 1895, President Fox of that organization stated that, by special inquiry on his travels, he had found that, in some places, fewer apprentices than allowed by the union ratio, that is, one to every eight journeymen, were at work; in other places there were as many apprentices as journeymen, and in still other localities apprentices were largely in the majority. Furthermore, a general average of the number at bench and stove molding revealed a ratio of one to four. The ratio of one to six could, he thought, soon be allowed by the union. But the convention did not meet again until March, 1899. All negotiations were conducted at the conference, where both parties yielded on the apprentice ratio only when other concessions were granted in connection with wages. At one time, Mr. Castle of the *Defense Association* offered a resolution to abolish the "berkshire" system, provided an apprentice ratio of one to four were allowed. President Fox replied: "The 'berkshire' system exists in very few of the stove shops today, and I believe the day is near at hand when it will pass

²¹ *Iron Molders' Journal*, February, 1892, p. 5.

away entirely. For the sole purpose of securing its abolition, I do not feel justified in advocating a change in our ratio, but in order that our position might be strengthened and to demonstrate that ours is not an arbitrary and unjustifiable one, I would suggest that statistics be secured from all local unions and on the line of those asked for in the editorial columns of the June Journal, and that they be submitted to the executive board to take such action or make such recommendations as in their judgment seems necessary. Should they determine that a change of the ratio be advisable, a suitable amendment ought to be drawn up and submitted for the referendum vote."²²

In the spring of 1901, after the collection of much evidence by both sides, it was agreed by those at the conference that the legitimate needs of the trade demanded an apprentice ratio of one to five, and accordingly, after much favorable comment and persuasion through the columns of the Journal, the proposition was submitted to members of the union for action. Returns were not made by more than two fifths of the membership. Still the one to five proposition was overwhelmingly defeated by a vote of 15,842 to 504. A proposition submitted at the same time to establish a ratio greater than one to five and less than one to eight met a similar fate by a vote of 12,314 to 3,978.

This vote manifested an extreme conservatism which was hardly short of stubbornness on the part of the members of the local unions, who thus refused for a second time to sanction a proposition based upon data collected by both sides; one, moreover, which every leader of the union advocated, and the rejection of which threatened to cause a serious rupture in the friendly relations existing between the Iron Molders' Union and the Defense Association. The ratio of one to eight had been embodied in the laws of the union for about forty years. Moreover, since the beginning of the conferences in 1891, the supply of workmen ordinarily received during strikes had been largely cut off. In fact, there was little doubt that, if the union ratio had been strictly adhered

²² Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1899, p. 162.

to, the supply of journeymen would have been inadequate to meet the legitimate demands of the trade.

It would seem that such a decisive expression of opinion as the recorded vote indicated would have settled the matter for at least a few years; but President Fox, undaunted by the result, presented a most vigorous report on the subject to the convention of the iron molders, which convened in 1902. He not only expressed his disappointment at the defeat of the proposition, but, in a measure, attacked the system of referendum voting, and ventured the opinion that the matter should be placed in the hands of the leaders of the union, who are always most active in bringing about the needed reforms. He declared that "while the referendum vote is undoubtedly founded upon correct principles, the result of its use in labor organizations has not always been in harmony with progressive thought. It is an unfortunate fact, but truth compels me to say it, that our members do not give important questions submitted to their decision the careful study and intelligent thought they should, but allow themselves to be swayed by their prejudices or their fears, or display by their indifference and their failure to record their opinion their lack of interest in propositions submitted. In my experience with the Iron Molders' Union—and it is the experience of nearly every labor organization—it has devolved upon the higher intelligence of the leaders of our membership in convention assembled to initiate important reforms or take advanced ground in our movement. It seems to me our laws should be such as would permit us to adapt them readily to extraordinary emergencies. In this connection I was deeply and favorably impressed by a statement of Brother D. A. Hays, president of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association, in a recent article. Referring to the agreement of his organization with the Manufacturers' Association on the regulation of apprentices, he says that, 'in 1893, owing to the general depression in business, many of our men were idle, and the Manufacturers' Association, realizing that to increase the number of blowers would be

to put an additional burden upon us, voluntarily agreed to take no new apprentices for that year. In like manner, we last year, finding that under the prosperous condition of the glass industry, the number of apprentices to which the manufacturers were entitled under the former agreement between the two associations would not be sufficient to meet their requirements, voluntarily increased the number of apprentices.' This to my view is a very equitable arrangement."

These strong words of the president were addressed to the convention of iron molders held in 1902, at which meeting special efforts were made to increase the ratio of apprentices. A committee from the Defense Association attended the session, and stated upon the floor of the convention the conditions of the trade and their imperative need for additional apprentices. The remarks of the employers were supplemented, enforced and recommended by the officers of the Iron Molders' Union. The committee appointed to consider the apprentice question reported that, after hearing the representatives of the Defense Association and believing that trade conditions warranted such a change, they recommended the adoption of an apprentice ratio of one to six. A minority report of the committee recommended a ratio of one to seven. An additional resolution was introduced granting power to the national officers to negotiate an agreement with the employers, but, on the final vote, the three propositions were voted down, and the ratio of one to eight continued in force. Two reasons may be given for this action. In the first place, the employers had asked for the radical change of ratio from one to eight to one to four. At no time was there any hope that the convention would grant such an increase, while the mere asking aroused the suspicions of the delegates as to the good intentions of the employers. Again, the impracticability of administering a law of limited application, for the ratio voted upon was to apply only to members of the National Defense Association, was recognized, and it was

urged that the application of such a law would lead to serious difficulties.

When the proposition to allow the ratio of one to five met an overwhelming defeat in the vote of 1901, the friendly relations between the Iron Molders' Union and the Defense Association were seriously threatened, as the employers frankly stated that the legitimate business demands necessitated additional apprentices. However, the crisis was happily though illegally averted, for, in March, 1902, temporary arrangements were made whereby employers who under the existing ratio could not secure enough molders were given the privilege of taking on additional boys, provided a careful investigation had been made and the claims of the employer confirmed. In making such an agreement, the officers of the union exceeded their legal authority. But since the members had been obstinate in refusing a more liberal ratio, it was in their opinion a case of the end justifying the means, so that instead of severing relations with the Defense Association, they arranged to evade the law and grant the much needed apprentices. In reporting this agreement to the convention, the president urged that body to approve the action taken, but without success.

At the conference held March 19, 1903, the employers presented a resolution which provided that the limitation of apprentices should be discontinued for one year, that the president of each association or their representatives should be given the power to determine the number of apprentices to be received by an employer, and that all apprentices should serve four years. The molders introduced a resolution to the effect that, when an employer suffered from an insufficient number of journeymen, he should report to the president of the Defense Association. If he found the condition as represented, he should call the attention of the president of the Iron Molders' Union, whose duty it would be to take up the matter with the local concerned and urge them to give relief. Both propositions were finally withdrawn.

At the Chicago conference held in March, 1904, a resolution was unanimously adopted, which stated "that in view of the fact that no agreement has been reached by and between the Defense Association and the Iron Molders' Union on the apprentice question and because of the fact that there is a possibility of more or less friction, it is agreed that, whenever a member of the Defense Association finds he cannot secure the molders he may require for the needs of his business, the question shall be referred to the presidents of the two associations or their representatives for investigation and relief. If it be found that the foundryman is entitled to relief, he shall be allowed to employ such additional number of apprentices as shall be mutually agreed upon."

The conference in March, 1904, was called by the employers to consider a reduction of fifteen per cent. in wages. No reduction was granted, but the concession on the apprentice ratio was agreed to. Statistics given by the employers at this conference demonstrated that the ratio in foundries operated by their members was slightly above one to five, and in independent shops a fraction above one to four. These data had been verified by officers of the Iron Molders' Union, and were regarded as correct by both parties. At a meeting of the executive board of the Iron Molders' Union, June 18, 1904, the conference agreement of one to five was approved, but it was to apply only to Association foundries. In September, 1904, a circular was issued from the headquarters of the Iron Molders' Union calling for a vote on the question of empowering the conference committee of the Iron Molders' Union to enter into an agreement with the Stove Founders' Defense Association in order to establish an apprentice ratio of one to five in foundries controlled by members of that Association. The leaders of the union exerted all possible influence within their power to carry this proposition. It was approved by the executive board, by a meeting of business agents, by prominent ex-officials. The September and October num-

bers of the journal were also devoted to its discussion with the result that, in December, 1904, it was carried by a small majority. Thus ended a long weary struggle of thirteen years, carried on by the Defense Association and by officials of the Iron Molders' Union to increase the number of apprentices in shops devoted to stove molding.

The policy of the Iron Molders in submitting the apprenticeship rules to arbitration is typical of the present treatment of such rules in many leading trades, especially in those crafts in which the employers have formed organizations. Perhaps the most striking feature of the plan in the Glass Blowers is the businesslike manner in which the ratio may be adjusted to the actual needs of the trade.

Another important development, doubtless brought forward by submitting the apprenticeship rules to conciliation, was the collection of data concerning apprenticeship from the shops in active operation. This practice undoubtedly arose out of the need of the board of conciliation for exact information on which to base the apprentice ratio. As there is no evidence that any systematic collection of information was attempted by the early unions, it seems clear that the early unions did nothing more than make a guess at the number of apprentices needed in each trade. In commenting upon the subject, a prominent member of the union remarked that "the apprentice ratio was of our own creation, of arbitrary construction, and could not even plead scientific exactness as an excuse for its existence. Those who were responsible for the one to eight ratio could not defend it save as an arbitrary limitation. It was a mere guess at what would be a fair thing."²³

The same can be said of practically every trade, for the union leaders admit that no adequate collection of data nor scientific study as to what should be the real ratio has been made. As a result, the ratio established was often unfair, and in many cases was disregarded by the employers. In fact, it was argued by those desiring a rigidly enforced

²³ *Iron Molder's Journal*, September, 1904, p. 663.

uniform ratio that such a law, even though the ratio were low, would produce no more journeymen than would be allowed where the ratio was high but not enforced. In commenting upon the desirability of establishing a uniform ratio of apprentices, the editor of the *Iron Molders' Journal* gave as his opinion that "a careful reading of the various articles bearing upon the apprentice question, in the September and October Journals, will remove the opinion held by some that changing the ratio from one to eight to one to five would increase the number of apprentices employed in the stove foundries. The change, if made, would only be a change of figures and not a change in reality, as the average ratio in existence to-day is practically one to five. It has been at this ratio for the past forty years, and, before that time, it was even larger. It would mean, however, that the stove manufacturers, who to-day employ one boy to every two or three journeymen, would be reduced to one to five, while the manufacturer, who employed one to eight, would be given the opportunity of increasing the number of apprentices in his employ. The total number of apprentices employed in the country would not be increased, but, instead of the present unsatisfactory condition that exists where one employer has a ratio of one to two while the other is limited to one to eight, all stove manufacturers would be placed upon an equality."²⁴

The general purpose of the apprenticeship system, namely, to provide an adequate supply of competent workmen, has been practically the same from the beginning of the trades in this country to the present time, but special phases of it have been emphasized at different periods. During the early period, the master was not restricted in employing apprentices, and often engaged a large number in order to receive the benefit of their low wages. The opposite tendency was emphasized by the union; for the interest of the journeyman was largely considered, and a rigid limi-

²⁴ *Iron Molders' Journal*, October, 1904, p. 750.

tation made of the number received. The feature, greatly emphasized at the present time especially in those trades in which the finished product enters into keen competition, is the uniform ratio for all competing shops. In securing this object, conciliation has been the method most generally adopted.

PART II.

DESCRIPTIVE.

CHAPTER I.

EXTENT OF PRESENT UNION APPRENTICESHIP REGULATIONS.

Of the one hundred and twenty national and international trade unions with a total of 1,676,200 members, affiliated in 1904 with the American Federation of Labor, fifty unions, with a membership of 766,417, do not attempt to maintain apprenticeship systems. These fifty unions may be divided into four classes.

(a) Thirty-five unions of unskilled workmen form the first group.²⁵ The workmen in these unions, by serving

²⁵ Agents Association, American.

Bill Posters and Billers of America, The National Alliance of.

Blast Furnace Workers and Smelters of America, International Association of.

Brick, Tile and Terra Cotta Workers' Alliance, International.

Bridge and Structural Iron Workers, International Association of.

Car Workers, International Association of.

Clothing Makers, Special Order of.

Flour and Cereal Mill Employes, International Union of.

Garment Workers of America, The United.

Glass House Employees, International Association of.

Heat, Frost, General Insulators and Asbestos Workers of America, National Association of.

Hod Carriers and Building Laborers' Union of America, International.

Hotel and Restaurant Employees, International Alliance, and Bartenders' International League of America.

Interior Freight Handlers' and Warehousemen's International Union.

Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, International.

Letter Carriers of the United States of America, National Association of.

Longshoremen, Marine and Transport Workers' Association, International.

Maintenance-of-Way Employees, International Brotherhood of.

Mattress, Spring and Bedding Workers' International Union.

Mine Workers of America, United.

a short time with their fellow workmen as instructors, obtain a knowledge of the work which enables them to perform it in a satisfactory manner. Many workmen engaged in these industries were formerly employed in one of the more skilled trades, but through inability or misfortune, have been forced into places where less skill is demanded. For example, the membership of the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers' Union includes many workmen who were previously employed as sailors, ship builders, or in one of the building trades. The short period of training required of the structural iron worker and the high wage usually paid to him, due to the risk involved and the effective organization maintained, induce those who have not thoroughly mastered their own craft or have lost their former position to enter the trade. Apprentice requirements are not demanded of applicants seeking admission to these unions for the obvious reason that men of ordinary ability and physical endurance are, after a very short period of training, sufficiently competent to perform the required work.

(b) The second group numbers eleven unions, including four not affiliated with the Federation of Labor.²⁰ Seven

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- Oil and Gas Well Workers, International Brotherhood of.
 - Paper Box Workers' International Union of America.
 - Paper Makers of America, United Brotherhood of.
 - Quarry Workers' International Union of North America.
 - Rubber Workers' Union of America, Amalgamated.
 - Seamen's Union of America, International.
 - Shirt, Waist and Laundry Workers' International Union.
 - Spinners Association of America, National.
 - Street and Electric Railway Employees of America, Amalgamated Association of.
 - Switchmen's Union of North America.
 - Teamsters, International Brotherhood of.
 - Textile Workers of America, United.
 - Theatrical Stage Employees of the United States and Canada, International Alliance of.
 - Tin Plate Workers' International Protective Association of America.
 - Tobacco Workers' International Union.
 - ²⁰ Coal Hoisting Engineers, National Brotherhood of.
 - Commercial Telegraphers' Union of America.
 - Locomotive Engineers, Grand International Brotherhood of.
 - Locomotive Firemen, Brotherhood of.

out of the eleven are railway unions. In these trades, highly skilled and well trained service is required; but the unions have never maintained apprenticeship regulations. Those engaged in any of the trades contained in this other class do receive a rigid and often a long training. The terms demanded of beginners, as well as any future promotion of employees, are, however, matters not under the direction of the union but entirely within the control of the employers. This is made imperative from the nature and importance of the work to be performed. The trades of this group represent activities that must, in order to properly protect human life and valuable property, be performed with great promptness and care. For example, the telegrapher must be so accurate in transmitting his messages and so prompt in reporting or dispatching his trains that all those desiring to learn the trade must not simply engage themselves for a stated term of years, as is required of regular apprentices in most other trades, but must serve until they have acquired sufficient skill to assure the employer that they are competent and may be safely trusted in responsible positions. Moreover, some of the trades in this group are recruited by promotion from a less skilled, but intimately associated craft. Thus the heavy physical labor performed by members of the International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen requires the strength and endurance of men rather than of boys, and, therefore, this union maintains no regular system of apprenticeship. But the constant intimate relations of the fireman and the engineer enable the former to gain gradually a practical knowledge of the duties of the latter, and it is in this manner that most engineers are trained. There is not the slightest opportunity for a boy to learn this trade as an

Railroad Telegraphers, The Order of.
Railroad Trainmen, Brotherhood of.
Railway Clerks, International Association of.
Railway Conductors of America, Order of.
Railway Expressmen of America, Brotherhood of.
Stationary Firemen, International Brotherhood of.
Steam Engineers, International Union of.

ordinary apprentice. A majority of the members in these unions began in a humble way with a railway company, and have gradually worked their way up to their present positions.

(c) In trades of the third class, a minute subdivision of the processes of production has been made, accompanied in most cases by the introduction of machinery. The operation performed by each particular individual, instead of being complex or multiple as formerly, when one person completed the entire product, has become very simple. In the large plants, therefore, where the division of labor has taken place, all apprentice requirements have been abolished. About seven trades may be placed in this class.^{20a} However, it must not be inferred that in such trades no skilled workmen are employed. On the contrary, a part of the workmen develop remarkable skill, and are reckoned as high-priced men, although possessing slight, if any, ability in making other parts of the same article. If, however, the artisan possesses sufficient ability and is adept in the use of his tools, he is able to perform the work in a satisfactory manner after, at the greatest, one year's time.

While machinery is greatly used in these trades the old processes have not been entirely dispensed with. Thus, at the present time, in some places shoes are made exclusively by hand; in others, almost entirely by machinery; while, in still other factories, both methods are used. A beginner who wishes to learn the trade in a shop where only hand workers are employed is required to serve a long term as an apprentice that he may become an all-round, highly skilled workman. But the boy who enters a large factory for the purpose of learning the trade finds

^{20a} Boat and Shoe Workers' Union.

Carrriage and Wagon Workers' International Union of North America.

Garment Workers of America, The United.

Glove Workers' Union of America, International.

Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, Amalgamated.

Tack Makers' Protective Union of the United States and Canada.

Textile Workers of America, United.

an opportunity to acquaint himself with only one or two parts of it, and is not compelled to serve an apprenticeship. Certainly, it is true in the boot and shoe industry, and doubtless in all other trades of this group, that a very large percentage of the articles produced are manufactured in large factories, where the most important machinery is used. These plants disclose the real tendencies and conditions of these trades, and in such establishments the apprentice is no longer found.

In the wagon and carriage making industry, this tendency has been marked. So extensively has machinery been introduced in a certain wagon factory that, to quote the exact language of the informant of the present writer, "the chief duty of the wagonmaker in that factory is to carry material to and from the machine. Furthermore, the wages of practically every employee is scarcely above that of the ordinary laborer, for in reality subdivision has been carried so far that those engaged therein perform a grade of work hardly above that of the average laborer." Only a small number of carriage and wagon factories are operated on such an extensive scale as the plant mentioned; and the conditions in that factory are not typical of the trade in general. In smaller factories or in shops where the latest improved machinery has not been installed those engaged therein are required to perform not one but many different operations, and many skilled workmen are found in such places. But the Carriage and Wagon Workers' Union does not demand any special qualifications for its members other than that the applicant must be engaged at the trade and be of good moral character. Extensive use of machinery and minute subdivision of labor in the same way have greatly simplified the work of the textile worker, so that the labor used in this industry at the present time is supplied in the main by women and children, who are not required to serve an apprenticeship.

The general effect of the subdivision of labor and the introduction of machinery on all the trades of this group

has been to lower their members almost to the rank of unskilled workers. Certainly, the number of highly skilled workmen engaged in these industries is far smaller than formerly; and in consequence these trades have been reduced from their former position as highly skilled crafts.

(d) Finally, a few unions, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, represent professions rather than trades. This group includes the Actors' National Protective Union and the American Federation of Musicians. These unions maintain no apprenticeship rules.

It is evident, from the foregoing, that a majority of the unions in which apprenticeship is not a prerequisite to membership are composed of members who perform unskilled labor. Ordinary intelligence and physical strength are the qualities chiefly required from these workers. Apprenticeship rules have, therefore, never been enforced in these crafts.

As has been said, about fifty unions do not maintain a system of apprenticeship. The remaining national unions, that is, about seventy of the one hundred and twenty affiliated in 1904 with the American Federation of Labor, with a membership of 900,000, together with some half-dozen unaffiliated national unions, attempt, more or less successfully, to enforce apprenticeship regulations.²⁷

²⁷ Bakery and Confectionery Workers' International Union.
 Barbers' International Union of America, Journeymen.
 Blacksmiths and Helpers, International Brotherhood of.
 Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders of America, Brotherhood of.
 Bookbinders, International Brotherhood of.
 Bricklayers and Masons' International Union of America.
 Broom and Whisk Makers' Union, International.
 Brushmakers' International Union.
 Carpenters and Joiners, Amalgamated Society of.
 Carpenters and Joiners, United Brotherhood of.
 Cement Workers, American Brotherhood of.
 Ceramic, Mosaic and Encaustic Tile Layers and Helpers' International Union.
 Chainmakers' National Union of the United States of America.
 Cigar Makers' International Union of America.
 Cloth Hat and Cap-Makers of North America, United.
 Coopers' International Union of North America.
 Elastic Goring Weavers' Amalgamated Association of the United States of America.
 Electrical Workers, International Brotherhood of.

Of these seventy trades, only nineteen actually succeed in

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- Elevator Constructors, International Union of.
 - Flint Glass Workers' Union, American.
 - Fur Workers of the United States and Canada, International Association of.
 - Glass Bottle Blowers' Association of the United States and Canada.
 - Glass Workers' International Association of America, Amalgamated.
 - Gold Beaters' National Union of America, United.
 - Granite Cutters' International Association of America.
 - Hatters of North America, United.
 - Horseshoers' International Union of the United States and Canada, Journeymen.
 - Iron Molders' Union of North America.
 - Iron, Steel and Tin Workers of the United States, National Amalgamated Association of.
 - Lace Operatives of America, Chartered Society of the Amalgamated.
 - Machine Printers' Beneficial Association of the United States.
 - Machinists, International Association of.
 - Marble Workers, International Association of.
 - Metal Mechanics, International Association of Allied.
 - Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers, Brass Molders, Brass and Silver Workers' International Union of North America.
 - Metal Workers' International Union, United.
 - Painters, Decorators and Paper Hangers of America, Brotherhood of.
 - Pattern Makers' League of North America.
 - Paving Cutters' Union of the United States of America.
 - Photo-Engravers' Union of North America, International.
 - Piano and Organ Workers' International Union of America.
 - Pilots' Association, International.
 - Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada, United Association of Journeymen.
 - Potters, National Brotherhood of Operative.
 - Print Cutters' Association of America.
 - Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union of North America, International.
 - Saw Smiths' Union of North America.
 - Sheet Metal Workers' International Alliance, Amalgamated.
 - Shipwrights, Joiners and Caulkers' Union of America, International.
 - Slate and Tile Roofers' Union of America, The International.
 - Steam, Hot Water, and Power Pipe Fitters and Helpers, International Association of.
 - Steel and Copper Plate Printers' Union of North America, The International.
 - Stereotypers' and Electrotypers' Union of North America, International.
 - Stone Cutters' Association of North America, Journeymen.
 - Table Knife Grinders' National Union of the United States.
 - Tailors' Union of America, The Journeymen.
 - Tip Printers, International Brotherhood of.

enforcing apprenticeship as a prerequisite to membership.²⁸ Certain striking trade characteristics enable these unions to enforce their apprenticeship rules. (a) In the first place, there is a demand in these trades for highly trained workmen. Except in the hat and lace curtain industries, no inventions have revolutionized the methods of production in these trades, nor has the work been subdivided to any large extent.

(b) Secondly, many of these industries are highly localized, and the localization intensifies and perpetuates the customs and traditions of the trade. It has long been a custom for the apprentice boys in these trades to serve a long term;

Travelers' Goods and Leather Novelty Workers' International Union of America.

Typographia, Deutsch-Amerikanischen.

Typographical Union, International.

Upholsterers' International Union of North America.

Watch Case Engravers' International Association of America.

Window Glass Cutters' League of North America.

Window Glass Cutters' and Flatteners' Association of America.

Window Glass Snappers.

Wire Drawers, American Association of.

Wire Weavers' Benevolent and Protective Association, American.

Wood Carvers' Association of North America, International.

Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' International Union.

Wood-Workers' International Union of America, Amalgamated.

²⁸ Bricklayers' and Masons' International Union of America.

Elastic Goring Weavers' Amalgamated Association of the United States of America.

Flint Glass Workers' Union, American.

•Glass Bottle Blowers' Association of the United States and Canada.

Gold Beaters' National Union of America, United.

Granite Cutters' International Association of America.

Hatters of North America, United.

Iron Molders' Union of North America.

Lace Operatives of America, Chartered Society of the Amalgamated.

Marble Workers, International Association of.

Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers, Brass Molders, Brass and Silver Workers' International Union of North America.

Pattern Makers' League of North America.

Print Cutters' Association of America.

Saw Smiths' Union of North America.

Stereotypers' and Electrotypers' Union of North America, International.

Typographia, Deutsch-Amerikanischen

Window Glass Cutters' League of North America

Window Glass Cutters' and Flatteners' Association of America.

Window Glass Snappers

and the unions will not dispense with this practice, unless they are forced to yield by trade and economic conditions.

(c) In the third place, these unions are exceedingly well organized. They maintain strong locals in practically every community in which the industry is carried on, and have enrolled as members a large majority of those employed at the craft.

The small number of artisans employed in some of these trades undoubtedly makes possible the more rigorous and effective enforcement of the apprenticeship rules. The secretary-treasurer of the pattern makers states: "Now and then a man may work from another trade into ours; but the number is so small that it is practically nil and does not throughout the entire country and Canada average ten per year. Graduates from the trade schools also, as far as we can learn, go into the shops and serve a regular apprenticeship. This, in a great measure, is due to the fact that of all the trades, pattern making combines a greater amount of intelligence and skill than is required in any other, and, to follow it successfully, a workman must have a thorough knowledge of all kinds of molding and drafting. The number of apprentices working at the business is also satisfactory to the organization, as, during the last year, but one complaint was entered by a local as to any shops working more than our rules called for. There are, though, throughout the country some few shops in which the limit of apprenticeship as laid down in the rules is exceeded, but this is by tacit arrangement with the local organizations, as the number of journeymen employed in these instances is so out of proportion to the average shop that to enforce this rule would be an injustice. These shops (five in number) are, with no exception, in localities organized to such an extent that, were it found advisable to limit the number of apprentices, it could no doubt be done. I can state for our organization that so far as the apprenticeship system is concerned, both as relates to the serving of same and number concerned, it is satisfactory."

The print cutters, the elastic goring weavers and the German printers are established in only a very small number of cities. In all these trades the union controls practically the entire membership of each craft, so that a large majority of those beginning any one of these trades at the present time really serve the regular union apprenticeship term.²⁹

The elastic goring weavers and the German printers represent trades in which there has been a steady decline in the demand for artisans, resulting in a gradual decrease in the membership. The elastic goring weavers have, from the beginning of the industry in this country, succeeded in organizing practically all the skilled workmen employed at the trade. The membership has never been large; for, in 1895, when the trade enjoyed its maximum prosperity, the secretary of the union reported a total of only three hundred and fifty members; and he stated furthermore that only a few men were employed in the industry outside of the union shops. Members of this trade are employed in the manufacture of the elastic web used in congress shoes. With the passing of that style of footwear, this industry experienced a serious and steady decline, with the result that several factories were closed. No member of the union has been permitted for some years to receive an apprentice without the consent of the local union. This rule has excluded practically all apprentices from the trade.

However, the mere fact that only a small number are employed at a trade does not necessarily insure its control

²⁹The Lace Curtain Operatives, organized in 1892, show the power of a small, well-organized union. In 1893 it included eight locals with a total of five hundred and sixty members. But two non-union shops were operated at that date, and they furnished employment for about one hundred lace makers. Upon the passage of the McKinley tariff, this industry was greatly stimulated and the demand for workers was very much increased, but, as there were no unemployed and the regular term of apprenticeship required of all beginners at the trade was three years, it was impossible to supply them at once from this source, and employers were compelled to seek skilled workmen elsewhere. The secretary stated that in 1903 perhaps two thirds of the total membership were foreigners. At one time, when the union was unable to supply enough workmen to satisfy the legitimate demands of a large manufacturing company of Philadelphia, the firm was permitted to receive twenty additional apprentices. Three special journeymen were detailed to instruct them.

to the union. For example, watch case engraving, a highly skilled trade at which beginners are required to serve a long apprenticeship and one at which comparatively few can find employment, is also one in which it is very difficult for the union to exercise a rigid supervision over the entire industry. Any one wishing to learn the trade is often able to find an opportunity in special schools or in the small non-union jewelry shop, over which the union cannot exercise any control. The secretary-treasurer states that "some of the manufacturers have been in the habit of hiring a large number of boys and teaching them one small part of the engraving trade. The consequence is that there are a large number of so-called engravers traveling around the country who, if rated according to their ability, are nothing more or less than apprentices. As one of the objects of this association is the elevation of our craft, we have restricted the employment of apprentices, and, at the same time, have made it the duty of the shop committee to see that the members of the association do all in their power to teach the apprentices that are now employed in their respective factories the engraving trade in full, and try to turn out full-fledged artists at the expiration of the five years which they have to serve."

The inability of these unions to control completely the number of apprentices learning the trade is due (*a*) to the presence of non-union shops, (*b*) to the weakness of some local unions.

(*a*) Although the unions in these trades embrace a very large per cent. of the men engaged in each craft, still, in all of them, some non-union shops may be found. In such shops the number of apprentices is usually large.³⁰

(*b*) Some local unions in practically every trade are weak and unable to enforce apprenticeship regulations. These weaker unions always vigorously oppose any movement on

³⁰The Bricklayers and Masons, the Granite Cutters, the Saw Smiths and the Hatters are strongly organized, but much work is carried on in each trade entirely apart from union influence. The Saw Smiths' Union, which is composed of a very small number of locals, has not succeeded in organizing one of the largest shops in the trade.

the part of the employer that would in any way directly decrease the rate of wages or increase the length of the working day, but they are not always equally watchful and energetic to enforce the rule limiting the number of apprentices.

While fifty or more of the trades attempting to maintain apprentice rules are only partially successful in their design, many strongly organized local unions in each of these industries are able rigidly to enforce apprenticeship regulations within their own jurisdiction. This is well illustrated by locals in the building trades, the metal polishers, the machinists and the cigar makers. In each of these trades, as of all others in the same class, perhaps less than one half of those working as journeymen have served the prescribed apprenticeship term in union shops; but, in many strong locals, none are permitted to learn except under the rules of the union.

As previously noted, a few industries have been subdivided to such an extent that apprenticeship regulations have been dispensed with; and other trades, because of new inventions and minute subdivision of labor, are rapidly approaching this condition. In tracing the development in the methods of production and noting the reflex influence of these changes upon the apprenticeship rules, three distinct stages are revealed.

(a) During the early period, one or at the most a few journeymen, who had undergone a long apprenticeship and possessed detailed knowledge of the trade, worked by hand with a few simple tools and completed the entire article. The process of production necessarily proceeded slowly, and the output was comparatively small and could not be increased to any great extent until more journeymen were trained and equipped with tools.

(b) With the improvement of the instruments of production, so that steam or electrical power could be utilized in operating them, the employer found it more profitable to apportion the work among several journeymen rather than to have each artisan make the completed product. The old

apprenticeship rules were continued as long as possible; but, since many refused to spend several years in learning the entire trade, when in actual service they would be required to perform only a portion of it, the union soon experienced great difficulty in maintaining its rules. The term of service was rarely if ever shortened by the union. The result has been that neither party greatly respected the rules governing apprentices; and, as they could not be strictly enforced, many poorly trained journeymen gained entrance into the trade.

(c) The third stage, attained as yet by only a few trades, is reached when the subdivision of labor has been carried so far that skilled labor is largely supplanted by unskilled labor, in some cases by women and children.

Great difficulty is encountered in regulating apprenticeship for trades in which both the old and the newer methods of production are employed. For example, in carpentry the work performed ranges from that done by "hatchet and saw" workmen to the service rendered by the highly skilled artisan engaged upon the finest and most difficult work. Many years of training, together with more than ordinary native ability, are requisites for those who succeed at the latter branch of the work. The "hatchet and saw" carpenter picks up his trade in a short while.

At the present time a large majority of the trades which attempt with difficulty the enforcement of apprenticeship rules are passing through the second stage, some beginning it, others nearing the end, according to the extent and perfection of the machinery used. In still others, notably in the boot and shoe industry, shops may be found in which the old hand-methods are used side by side with large factories in which the latest improved machinery has been installed.

This study of the present condition of the apprenticeship regulations is not based simply upon the trades in which a very large percentage of the journeymen have completed their apprenticeship term in the prescribed manner, but also upon the seventy different trades in which the union attempts, whether successfully or not, to enforce rigid rules governing apprenticeship.

CHAPTER II.

APPRENTICESHIP REGULATION AND ITS PURPOSE.

Uniformity of Apprentice Regulation.—Trade-union apprenticeship regulations are formulated in some cases by the local branches; in others, by the national unions. In the building trades and among the jewelry workers and the cigar makers, for example, apprenticeship regulation is a local matter. Several reasons for this policy, especially in connection with the building trades, may be noted.

(a) In the first place, the principal crafts represented have retained much of the traditional idea of a trade. Each workman carries his tools with him as he journeys from place to place. In the older trades, such as carpentry, brick-laying, stone-cutting and lathing, many customs in vogue before the formation of unions have been preserved, and are still practiced.³¹ Again, although machinery or improved tools have been introduced in practically all these trades and subdivision of work has made rapid progress in some of them, notably carpentry, subdivision of labor has not reached the stage wherein the all-round workman is not needed. Both employer and union prefer the fully trained mechanic to the specialist. Neither the introduction of machinery nor subdivision of labor has caused any reduction in the nominal term of apprenticeship. Moreover, the uniform conditions found in other crafts, due largely to competition in the sale of the article produced, do not exist throughout

³¹ A peculiar practice of this character still survives among the paper hangers in the city of Cleveland. Each journeyman is required to provide himself with a small hand-cart, in which he pushes his tools and material from place to place over the city. In some cases this becomes a heavy burden, since the workmen may be compelled to walk ten or twelve miles in a single day. Old members are frequently allowed a helper, who pushes the cart from one job to another. The entire outfit for each journeyman costs about twenty-five dollars.

these trades; and, consequently, conditions in one community do not materially affect those in another. A distinction is, however, to be noted in these trades between the inside workman or shopman and the outside workman. The former has a fixed place of labor. The material comes to him in the rough, and is taken away as a finished product, ready for the market. In this branch of the industry competition in the article manufactured may to some extent regulate and make uniform the conditions under which it is produced; although, even here, competition is often prevented or seriously hampered by the rules of the international union.³² On the other hand, the outside workman goes wherever employment is to be found, but the product of his labor is not shipped. In some cases both classes exist in the same trade, notably in carpentry, stone-cutting and structural iron work. Mechanics pass easily from one class to the other, and have the same apprenticeship rules.

(b) Again, many of these trades are characterized by great irregularity of employment, resulting from the nature of the work done, variations in weather and changes of season. The journeyman is certain of a job only until the one upon which he is engaged is completed. At least a day or two must intervene between jobs, during which time no wages are received. Employment for seven or eight months of the year is a conservative estimate of the actual working time of the average journeyman in such industries. To this should be added the fact that, in these trades, there is a great need for quick, effective execution of a new policy or for the immediate enforcement of a shop rule. A short delay, and the particular job may be completed.³³

³² The Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association will not permit the transportation of cut stone from one place to another unless the wages and hours are equal, except in cases where the exchange between different branches is mutually agreed upon. More than this, provision is made that planer work is not to be shipped to the cities where the unions have succeeded in preventing the introduction of machinery. See Constitution (Washington, 1900), Article XII.

³³ So urgent has been the need in this regard that some unions have given the business agent power to call a strike. This policy in turn has led to flagrant abuses, and the authority has in some cases been transferred to a grievance committee.

The two conditions last noted are responsible for the absence of uniformity in this group of trades. Each local union has its own difficulties to be adjusted according to local circumstances. Shop rules under such conditions can, therefore, best meet actual needs where determined by the local unions; and the apprenticeship regulations are so framed. The international unions make provision for apprenticeship and submit general recommendations in regard thereto, but all details are adjusted by the local unions with reference to local conditions.³⁴

The characteristics of the trades in which the apprenticeship rules are formulated by the international union are well illustrated by the window glass workers, iron molders, glass bottle blowers, stove mounters and steel range workers.

(a) In the first place, the factories in these trades are usually large and localized. The number of unions is comparatively small, and, apart from these trade centers, it is practically impossible for a beginner to learn the trade, as little if any opportunity is afforded one to "pick it up." Moreover, the article produced is placed upon the general market, and thus the manufacturers are in direct competition. This makes it necessary to allow each employer the same number of apprentices, and uniformity can be best secured only when the international union assumes control of apprenticeship regulations.

³⁴ An exception to this statement is found in the apprentice rules of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association. While the locals are permitted to regulate the number of stone cutter apprentices, they may not go beyond certain limits prescribed by the Association. Explanation of this practice is found in the fact that most stone cutters are shopmen, and the product of their labor is to some extent in competition with that of other shops. This competition makes necessary uniform conditions of production if all contractors are to have a fair chance.

An apparent instance of national regulation is found in the constitution of the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, which provides that "where there is no agreement relative to apprentices, and a new agreement is being framed, the employment of helpers and apprentices shall be entirely prohibited." As a matter of fact, locals in this trade maintain whatever ratio they see fit or are able to secure. An excessive use of helpers in the past has resulted in a disproportionate number of journeymen finding their way into the trade, and the law of the international union abolishing apprentices and helpers was an effort to reduce the trade to normal conditions.

(b) Again, those national unions whose members are all of the same trade have less difficulty in formulating national apprenticeship rules. It is the plan of the United Brewery Workmen to organize locals, including engineers, firemen, brewers, maltsters, bottlers, coopers and team drivers, into one international union, but uniform apprenticeship rules could not be enforced by this national organization. At least one of the trades included in the United Brewery Workmen, namely, the coopers, represents highly skilled labor, maintains a strong international union, to which most workmen at the trade belong, and controls its own apprenticeship rules. The International Association of Car Workers, which includes persons employed as car builders, truck builders, car repairers, car painters, car inspectors, car oilers, air-brake inspectors, air-brakemen, car cleaners, roundhouse employees, some of which are skilled workmen, cannot because of the diversity of employment maintain uniform rules for beginners.³⁶

The apprenticeship regulations of four trades represented in the International Typographical Union, namely, the English compositors, the German compositors, the stereotypers and electrotypers, and the photo-engravers have their apprenticeship rules at least in part determined by the International Typographical Union, but these regulations do not apply to the three remaining unions, that is, the typesetters, the mailers and the newspaper writers.

The International Association of Machinists attempts to maintain uniform international apprenticeship regulations. "One apprentice is allowed to each shop, irrespective of the number of machinists employed, and one to every five machinists thereafter; and no boy shall begin to learn the trade of machinist until he is sixteen years old, nor after he is

³⁶ Certain kindred or allied trades, for example, the printing trades, the glass trades, the textile, clothing and allied trades, the building trades, the metal and machinery trades, the wood working and allied trades work together for purposes of more efficient organization and greater effectiveness of administration, but the differences within each group preclude any attempt on the part of these bodies to establish a uniform apprenticeship regulation.

twenty-one years of age." Furthermore, he must serve four years at the trade; but it is a well-known fact to all members of the craft that the rule is hardly more than the recorded expression of opinion of what should be the rule. Great diversity of practice exists among the local unions. The conditions under which this industry must be carried on are, in some respects, not unlike those in the building trades. In the first place, local unions are scattered throughout the entire country in highly different environments. Again, the different grades of work which a machinist is called upon to perform range from repair work, which does not usually require a high grade of skill, to the work performed by those engaged in the construction of the most complicated machines and delicate instruments.

The difficulties encountered in requiring a uniform term of apprenticeship for all those desiring to enter a trade are plainly manifest in the iron molding trade. The skill of the employees varies greatly, ranging from that required in molding plain pieces to the skill necessary for the construction of elaborate and complicated machinery. The employers in the National Founders' Association use unskilled labor on many kinds of work. But the union has opposed this on the ground that if unskilled laborers are allowed to perform even a few of the minor processes the tendency will be for an ever-increasing portion of the work of the trade to gravitate to these poorly equipped workmen.

Attempts have been made with success in some trades to classify different parts of the process of manufacture according to the degree of skill required. The use of much unskilled labor is thus permitted. In most cases, the unions seek to enforce their apprenticeship regulations upon all prospective journeymen.

Apart from the economic characteristics of the trades and the governmental peculiarities of the unions, custom has been a factor in determining whether the national or the local union shall regulate apprenticeship. When certain policies have been followed for years, they are not readily changed, even when conditions change.

Purposes of Apprenticeship Rules.—Whether apprenticeship rules are formulated by the locals or by the international unions, their purposes are identical. Unionism stands primarily for a shorter work day, an increased wage, and more favorable conditions of employment. Apprenticeship regulation constitutes a part of the machinery used to attain these ends. It has been asserted that “the chief motive which influences the unions in shaping their apprenticeship rules is the desire to maintain their wages by diminishing competition within the trades. The only other motive, which is not included within this formula, is the desire, for reasons which may be classed as artistic, to prevent a lowering of the standard of skill. This feeling cannot be supposed to exert more than a minor influence upon actual policies.”³⁷ This statement is true in part only. While the individual member, busy at his daily labors and with little, if any time for considering the larger union policies, may consider only the restrictive side of apprenticeship, the more intelligent and broad minded leaders lay stress on the fact that the maintenance of high wages is assured not only by diminishing competition, but rather by maintaining a high standard of skill among the members. It is claimed that, were the unions able to compel every workman going to the trade to conform strictly to the apprenticeship rules as to training, it would be unnecessary to limit the number of apprentices.³⁸

The position of many of the union leaders is expressed by the secretary of the Bricklayers and Masons’ International Union, who states that “our only aim and object is to establish, not only by our own laws, but by enactments of the legislatures of the different states, a proper regula-

³⁷ Report of the Industrial Commission, Washington, 1901, Vol. 17, p. 53.

³⁸ It frequently happens that, in shops where all parties observe strictly the law regarding beginners, the full quota of apprentices allowed is not always desired. The ratio of apprentices to journeymen permitted by the United Hatters of North America (Constitution, 1903, Art. XVI) is one to ten, but the published list (Journal of the United Hatters of North America, July 1, 1899, p. 11) of apprentices and journeymen actually in service among the different unions reveals a ratio varying from one to eight to one to thirty-five.

tion governing the employment of apprentices, so that their proficiency, when they have rendered the required years of service, provided in their bond of indenture, will be of the best, and thus they will be a credit to their vocations. Organized labor seeks to turn out the highly skilled mechanics. We want the boy to be taught not only the common rudiments of the trade but also the higher orders. . . . We do not seek, however, to prohibit the taking on of apprentices, . . . What we do seek, however, is to provide regulations governing their employment, and, as to restriction in number, we only intended it in the sense that will permit and provide for proper care being exercised in their welfare and advancement, and to the end that the boy may be taken care of more than seven months in the year."³⁰

A high general standard of workmanship is desirable in any trade union (*a*) to the members as individuals, (*b*) to the union as a whole on account of the relation of such a standard to collective bargaining.

(*a*) The original and primary purpose of the apprenticeship system, whether maintained under the indenture, established by custom, or enforced by the early trade unions, was to provide opportunities for boys to learn a trade, thereby ensuring an adequate supply of well trained mechanics for each trade. The journeyman was, during the early period, an exceedingly important person in his immediate vicinity. Oftentimes, the community depended upon his labor for the particular article of his craft, while his ability as a skilled mechanic was highly respected. He manifested great pride in the excellence of his workmanship. On the other hand, he detested the unskilled workman of his craft, whose activities tended to lower the trade standards of efficiency.

Pride in high-class workmanship still characterizes the skilled journeyman. Mechanics take a deep interest in the general standard of skill for the entire trade as well as pride in their own individual ability. The feeling against

³⁰ Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the President and Secretary of the Bricklayers and Masons' International Union, Indianapolis, 1904, pp. 414-415.

the incompetent workman goes to the extent of seeking to exclude him from the organization.

(b) A prime difficulty in collective bargaining lies in the necessity, inherent in all bargaining, of agreeing upon a measure. If the workers in a trade possessed approximately equal ability, a common wage scale for that trade could more easily be agreed upon. But the presence of a large number of comparatively unskilled workmen offers serious complications. The better workmen are inclined to maintain a high standard, while the incompetence of the inferior workman tends to lower the scale. Since the union rate is a minimum, it is easy for the rapid, well-trained workman to secure the union rate; but the less competent journeyman can often secure that rate only with difficulty. Even the stronger unions hesitate to raise the union rate unduly, lest those unable to command it become, as non-union workmen, a powerful opposing force.

One way of solving the problem is to reduce these inequalities between individual workmen. Raising or lowering the rate does not lessen the difficulty as long as workmen of marked difference in skill and dexterity are found among members of the same trade. To secure a force of workmen of fairly uniform ability is one purpose of the apprenticeship regulations. The ideal conditions for a perfectly just standard rate, that is, exactly equal ability on the part of each workman, cannot be realized; but wide differences as to skill among men of the same trade may be greatly reduced. Well-devised and rigidly enforced apprenticeship rules thus become in many trades the prerequisite of a just standard rate.

The restrictive side of apprenticeship rules is prominent in certain unions. The secretary of the St. Louis local of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers had no hesitation in declaring to the writer that it was the policy of his union to exclude all but the best grade of workmen. This was accomplished by maintaining rigid apprenticeship rules, high initiation fees and thorough en-

trance examinations. A similar policy of restriction has been followed in recent years by the plumbers. Highly skilled labor is necessary to perform successfully the highest grades of work in this trade. But many plumbers are engaged entirely on repair work, which does not require much training. Plumbers working on repair work were taken into the union. If a long apprenticeship had been required, these workmen for the most part could not have been members.⁴⁰ Moreover, each journeyman was permitted to engage a helper at a wage much smaller than his own. The helpers, after being trained a year or so, frequently became journeymen. The presence of such a large number of half-trained workmen in the union threatened to cause a great reduction in wages. The International Union, under these circumstances, took vigorous steps to reduce the number of journeymen by restricting the number of apprentices and helpers. The constitution requires that "where there is no established agreement relative to apprentices, or where the agreement has expired, and a new agreement is being framed, helpers and apprentices shall be entirely abolished."⁴¹

⁴⁰ Inasmuch as a very small amount of capital was required to open a shop, a journeyman plumber could easily set up in business for himself. Not only the workmen but their employers also suffered from the lax system of apprentice regulation.

⁴¹ Constitution and Rules of Order of the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, etc. [n. p.] 1902, Article XIX, sec. 5.

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTER OF APPRENTICESHIP REGULATIONS.

Entrance upon Apprenticeship.—Several influences operate together to keep each trade supplied with apprentices. The natural tastes and desires of the boy and the influence of parents and friends are more or less indefinite and intangible, but other influences may be noted with a greater degree of exactness:

(a) As between the employer and the union, it is the former who takes the initiative and induces boys to enter the trade.

(b) In the constitutions of some of the older organizations the right of the journeyman to teach the trade to his son or to some member of his family is explicitly recognized. Thus, in the constitution of the Stone Cutters' Union, provision is made that, while any local union may regulate the number of apprentices in each yard within its jurisdiction, stone cutters' sons in every case must have the preference. Similarly, in the apprenticeship rules adopted by the carpenters' union of Tacoma, Washington, it is specifically stated that "nothing in this article shall be construed to prevent any minor son working with his father, and under his instructions, said father being a member of this union."⁴² The lathers of Cleveland, Ohio, go as far as to provide that "no apprentice shall be admitted to work in any shop unless he is the son of a member of this union, in good standing and above sixteen years of age."⁴³ The Window Glass Workers, restricting the number of apprentices for the blast of 1902, still permitted "a father to take

⁴² Section 13 of apprenticeship rules, adopted by Tacoma unions; see *The Carpenter*, September, 1902, p. 4.

⁴³ By-laws and Working Rules of the Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' International Union, Local No. 2 of Cleveland, Ohio, revised 1903. (Cleveland, 1903.) Art. XIII, sec. 1.

his son or a brother to take his brother, or a member to take the son or brother of some other member of the Window Glass Workers' Association."⁴⁴

The right of the father to train his son in his own trade is a custom of long standing, and has been strong in piece work trades; but, at the present time, few unions permit journeymen to take their sons as apprentices. The Window Glass Workers limit the right by a regulation that "no apprentice shall be granted to any one who has not been a member of the Association for three years."⁴⁵

The formal application for apprenticeship, where required, is much the same in all trades. Usually, the boy and, in some cases, the employer or journeyman to whom he is apprenticed must appear before the local union. Typical regulations in this regard are those of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association, which provide that "each apprentice, upon going to the trade, shall go before the branch under which he is to serve his time, at the first regular meeting, giving his name, age and place of residence, the name of the firm he is apprenticed to; and, if same is considered satisfactory, he shall be taken under the protection of said branch, and the recording secretary shall keep a record of the name in the book kept for that purpose, and a copy of the record shall be sent to the general office to be kept on file."⁴⁶ The International Broom and Whisk Makers' Union requires that "any organized shop desir-

⁴⁴ By-laws of the Window Glass Workers' Association of America, Pittsburg, 1902, Art. 3, sec. 2.

⁴⁵ The requirement of American citizenship, so rigidly enforced in the glass industries, is doubtless due to the strong competition of American goods with those made in foreign countries, and also to the immigration of foreign workmen. However, the high protective tariff on window glass, except for small sizes, and the large initiation fee levied upon foreigners, prevent effective competition from that source. Thus, they provide that "no blower, gatherer, flattener or cutter shall be eligible to become a member of the Window Glass Workers' Association of America who has not been in this country for a period of five years, beginning July 9, 1902, and a full-fledged citizen of the United States. That the initiation fee shall be fixed at the sum of five hundred dollars." By-laws, p. 4, sec. 14.

⁴⁶ Constitution of Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association (Washington, 1900), Art. V, sec. 2.

ing an apprentice shall make application to the international executive board through the local union on blanks furnished by the international secretary for the purpose. The general executive board shall grant the permission in accordance with the trade rules of the district in which the factory is located."⁴⁷ The Bookbinders' Union requires that "a certificate of apprenticeship shall be furnished by the central secretary to be issued by locals to apprentices in the beginning of their term, and presented by them to the union when application is made for admission as a journeyman."⁴⁸ The requirement of the Hat Finishers is very stringent: "All boys, before being allowed to go to work, must appear in person at a meeting of the board of officers consisting of the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and finance committee and have their names registered on the books of the Association." Furthermore, "when a boy applies to be registered, he must present to the board of officers his name and age, also the written consent of his guardian, and of the proprietor of the factory in which he intends to work."⁴⁹

The Window Glass Workers' Association requires that all applications for apprenticeship must come from journeymen. A special blank, containing information as to the age, citizenship, relatives, etc., of the apprentices is made out by the chief preceptor, and transmitted to the board of examiners. This body makes an investigation, and submits the result with recommendations to the preceptory. The application is finally passed upon by the executive board of the International Association. The executive board thus has definite knowledge concerning the character of the apprentices recommended, and retains entire control of the number received. The unions in the glass industry, by

⁴⁷ Constitution, Laws and Due Book of the International Broom and Whisk Makers' Union, Amsterdam, New York, 1904, Art. III, sec. 4 of the constitution governing local unions.

⁴⁸ Constitution, By-laws, Standing Rules and General Laws of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders, New York, 1905, p. 32.

⁴⁹ Constitution and By-laws of the Hat Finishers of the City of Newark, New Jersey, 1881.

placing control of apprentices in one central body, are able to regulate the number received in the trade as a whole. They have succeeded in enforcing the most rigid apprentice rules. The plan followed by the Pen and Pocketknife Grinders' and Finishers' Union is similar to that of the glass workers. "Any member of the union who desires to take on a boy, applies to the grievance committee. After obtaining their consent, the application goes to the executive board. Each member is allowed one boy, preferably his own son for whom he must pay twenty-five cents per month dues, until he attains the age of eighteen years."⁵⁰

The secretary of the local is in most unions required to keep a complete list of all apprentices beginning or ending their term within the jurisdiction of his local, and to report to the international union at stated intervals. In cases where a joint agreement with large firms exists, it is common for a permanent joint arbitration board to have charge of all questions concerning apprentices, and to keep a record of their progress. The name, place and time of those entering upon and completing apprenticeship terms are printed in many of the trade journals.

In most unions, boys are apprenticed to the employer, to whom they are responsible and with whom contracts are made. The apprenticing of boys to individual journeymen occurs in only a few industries, and in most of the trades is positively forbidden, except that occasionally, as has been noted, fathers are permitted to teach the trade to their sons. The unions must maintain a close supervision over apprentices lest they run away, and become members of another local before they have served the full term.⁵¹ This is especially difficult in the building trades, and among the machinists and cigar makers. The journeyman often re-

⁵⁰ Constitution and By-laws of the Pen and Pocketknife Grinders' and Finishers' Union of America, Bridgeport, Conn., p. 6, secs. 15-16.

⁵¹ Section 9 of the agreement for 1902 between local unions and the Builders' Association of Chicago provides that all apprentices indentured to members of the Carpenters and Builders' Association shall report to the joint arbitration board at its meeting on the first Thursday in January, April and October of each year.

moves to another locality before the apprentice has completed his term. The employer is more permanently situated. For this reason, the policy of apprenticing to employers is favored.

The terms upon which the applicant agrees to become an apprentice are embodied in a verbal or written contract or an indenture, the last form being generally recommended, but little used. Thus, the convention of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, held at Detroit in 1888, recommended to the local unions that "all boys entering the carpenter trade with the intention of learning the business, shall be held by agreement, indenture or written contract for a term of four years."⁵²

In order that the boy may be tested as to ability, fitness and willingness to work, the employer is ordinarily permitted to take him on probation, the probationary period varying in different trades and places from two weeks to six months. An agreement between the Master Plumbers' Association of Lynn, Mass., and the plumbers' local union provides that the first three months shall be on probation.⁵³ The Connecticut masters' convention in 1895 made elaborate provision for a probationary period. "Any boy wishing to learn the plumbing trade, a certificate shall be issued to him by the local union if there be one; if not, then by the state organization that he is a regular apprentice, stating time and amount of pay he shall receive each year during his apprenticeship. The six months, during which he is on probation, shall count as part of his term."⁵⁴

Having been duly apprenticed under conditions acceptable to the union and to the employer, the boy goes to his work under their joint care and protection. He is ordinarily required to carry a card, for which a small fee is usually,

⁵² For apprenticeship rules approved by the Detroit convention, see *The Carpenter*, August, 1893, p. 11.

⁵³ Agreement between Master Plumbers' Association of Lynn, Mass., and Vicinity, and the Journeymen Plumbers' Association, No. 77, sec. 3; see *Plumbers' Journal*, September, 1895, p. 2.

⁵⁴ Report adopted by Connecticut Master Plumbers' Convention. *Plumbers' Journal*, September, 1895, p. 2.

though not always, charged. In some unions this card is renewed quarterly, and any apprentice not carrying the proper quarterly card is not permitted to work.⁵⁵ The apprentice, in a few unions, is charged an admittance fee, payable in full or in part upon his entrance to the trade. The Brotherhood of Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders demands half fees of the boy; and, if a beneficiary member, he receives half the benefits. Moreover, when the boy becomes of age or is able to command the wages, he must pay the remaining half fee. In the Upholsterers' International Union the boy, after six months' service, is required to take an apprentice card, for which he must pay one dollar.

Age of Apprenticeship.—The minimum age at which an apprentice may enter upon or complete his trade is determined in a large measure by the characteristics of each trade. Where much physical strength is required in order to perform the work properly, or where great danger is encountered by those engaged in a trade, it is uncommon to find apprentices received under sixteen or eighteen years of age. In crafts where less strength is needed, and where the beginner is less liable to accidents, apprentices are received at a much earlier age. The Travelers' Goods and Leather Novelty Workers' International Union receives boys at fourteen. The Chartered Society of the Amalgamated Lace Operatives of America will accept beginners at the trade at any age under twenty-five. The minimum age is influenced in some trades by factory legislation. Thus the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders maintains the rule that "no person shall be permitted to enter the trade as an apprentice under the age of sixteen nor over the age of eighteen years at the recognized branch of the book binding industry, provided that in states and provinces where factory age limit is less

⁵⁵ "Apprentice must receive apprentices' working card at the commencement of each quarter, namely, January, April, July and October, and shall pay fee, five cents per month for the same;" Constitution and By-laws of the Operative Plasterers' International Association, No. 36, of the City of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana, 1900, Art. VII, sec. 6

than sixteen years, fifteen years shall be the minimum age for apprentices."⁵⁶

Most unions regulating apprenticeship prohibit the entrance upon apprenticeship of persons over a certain age. In a few unions old men are granted the privilege of beginning an apprenticeship. Other unions are rigid in this respect, permitting apprentices to enter only during a stated period covering a very few years. The Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association thus provides that "no applicant under the age of fifteen or over eighteen shall be allowed to go to the trade."⁵⁷ Section 2 of an agreement, dated May, 1902, between local unions of carpenters and the Chicago Builders' Association provides that "the applicant for apprenticeship shall not be more than seventeen years of age at the time for making application."⁵⁸ The International Steel and Copper Plate Printers' Union of North America requires that apprenticeship must begin between the ages of seventeen and eighteen, but the membership qualifications usually demanded of apprentices may be waived by consent of the international union.

The maximum age restriction is often criticised as working a hardship upon those who have been unable to begin at the required time, but are afterwards desirous of taking up the trade. It is argued, however, by the union that a workman who has not begun to learn his trade until late in life is generally unwilling to submit to ordinary apprenticeship regulations. He will not work with boys for a long term at small wages. In fact, he cannot usually afford it, if he must provide for a family. As a result, the man apprentice soon severs his relation with the employer, and in order to secure higher wages seeks work as a journeyman. The man, therefore, who begins his trade at twenty-five or thirty years of age seldom becomes a capable workman. The position of

⁵⁶ Constitution, By-laws, Standing Rules and General Laws of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders, New York, 1905, p. 32, sec. 2.

⁵⁷ By-laws of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association of North America (Washington, n. d.), Art. V, sec. 2.

⁵⁸ See *The Carpenter*, May, 1902, p. 7.

the union and the employers is concisely expressed in the declaration of policy adopted by the Mason Builders' Association and the Bricklayers' Unions of Boston and vicinity. "To prevent the taking of apprentices at an immature age, when they may be considered on the average as physically unfit for such laborious work, and not sufficiently educated to warrant leaving school, and to discourage the beginning of apprenticeship, at a time when the individual may be considered, on the average, as having passed that period when the faculties of mind and body are in the condition which is most receptive of instruction, and most readily adaptive to the requirements of the trade, the following time and term are fixed."

Term of Service.—The term of apprenticeship varies in the different trades from two to seven years, three and four years being the ordinary term. The bakers and confectioners and the broom makers require that applicants for membership shall have had two years' experience. The watch case engravers require apprentices to serve five years. Some locals in the plumbing trade keep the boy at the trade six years. The machine printers require that each apprentice at the trade shall serve seven years.²⁹

In theory the time of service required is supposed to represent the time necessary for a boy of average ability, under fair circumstances, to learn the trade well enough to demand a journeyman's wages. In the same trade, however, the term varies in different localities. Thus the term of apprenticeship in carpentry in Tacoma, Washington, is three years, while in many eastern cities four years are required. In the plumbing trade the term varies from two to six years. This variation arises partly from differences in the class of work done, but more especially because the local bodies are stronger in some places than in others. A long apprenticeship term is the rule where the union is strongly organized.

²⁹ The apprenticeship system recently put in operation by the Knabe Piano Company in their large factory in Baltimore provides for a course of training extending over a period of eight years. The system has been evolved by the company entirely apart from the influences of the union.

or the finer grades of work are to be learned; but where the union is weak or the work desired is in the main of an ordinary type, the tendency is toward a shorter term.

The requirement of a long apprenticeship term in any trade that may be picked up tends to defeat the very purpose for which the system is established. Instead of inducing the boy to learn his trade in the prescribed manner, a long term of service is likely to cause him to take up his trade as a non-unionist. Not infrequently in communities where unions are weak or poorly organized the apprentice wearies of his long service as a beginner at small wages, and leaves his employer to seek work on his own responsibility with non-union men. Ordinarily the union fixes only the minimum term of apprenticeship, and leaves to the individual initiative of the apprentice the termination of the period of apprenticeship, but some unions find it necessary to set a maximum term. Thus the piano and organ workers will not permit apprentices to serve longer than three years without permission of the local union. The cigar makers follow the same policy. In 1897, E. Presnail, a cigar manufacturer, appealed to the president of the Cigar Makers' International Union against union No. 55 of Hamilton, Ont., for compelling an apprentice who had served three years at the trade to join the union. The appellant claimed that the firm was working under a four-year agreement and was not subject to the apprentice rule of the union. The president decided that unless the firm could produce the written agreement or contract the apprentice must become a member of the union.⁶⁰

Perhaps no trade illustrates better than cigar making the prime difficulty encountered in any attempt to fix by national law a uniform term of apprenticeship for all branches of the craft. Cigar making consists in the main of two parts, bunch making and rolling. Each may be learned by beginners within three or four weeks, and within as many months the new apprentice has learned both branches sufficiently well to make the cheaper grade of cigars. Beginners are

⁶⁰ Cigar Makers' Journal, April, 1897.

permitted to handle only inferior material. Those who operate machines require even less time to learn the trade than those who work by hand, but their product is also of an inferior quality.⁶¹ However, the total amount of cheap cigars consumed is quite large, creating a constant demand for workmen who possess just sufficient ability and skill to enable them to make such a grade of goods. The three-year term of service, demanded of apprentices in strictly union shops, is perhaps not too long for those engaged in manufacturing the best brands of cigars, since this class of workers must make bunches, roll the wrappers and make cigars of many sizes.

The length of the apprenticeship term is supposed to be of sufficient duration and the training of such a nature that the learner will be enabled to perform not only the cheaper grades of work, but to render the highest class of service demanded in the industry. Where both classes of workmen are employed in the same trade as in cigar making, it becomes a serious question with the union how far to press the rule which requires all apprentices to serve a stated number of years before being admitted to the union. If made too rigid, the number excluded from the union would be large, and the influence of the organization would be seriously endangered. If too liberal in its apprenticeship requirements, the trade would be filled with incompetent workmen, and a high standard of workmanship and a high rate of wages would be difficult to maintain.

On the whole, the result of enforcing a long apprenticeship in skilled trades is to secure the better class of workmen as members of the union, but to exclude those who possess less skill. The conflict of interest between these classes of workers makes it impossible for all the local unions in the trade to enforce the same membership requirements. The difficulty is generally minimized by receiving as members not only those who are known to have served the full time, but also any others who can command the scale of wages regardless of the time spent in learning the trade.

⁶¹ *Cigar Maker's Journal*, March, 1883, p. 4.

Disputes over the length of time the apprentices must serve have occasionally arisen between employers and the unions ; but, in most cases, the terms have been fixed by custom of long standing, and, with perhaps a few exceptions, have not been reduced because of any modern changes in the trade.

The length of a service year varies in different unions. The fires in glass furnaces are drawn during July and August, and the work of all apprentices and journeymen is discontinued during this time. Some unions require that the apprentice be kept at work during a certain number of months each year. Thus the apprentice provisions in the agreement between the Chicago Builders' Association and the local unions specify: "The contractor taking an apprentice shall engage to keep him at work for nine consecutive months in each year and see that during the remaining three months of the year the apprentice attends school. The apprentice shall, during the months of January, February and March of each year, attend a technical school acceptable to the joint board, and a certificate that he has done so will be required before he is allowed to work during the year."⁶²

Journeymen in the building trades rarely have more than nine months' steady work in a year. The average term of employment for apprentices cannot be more, and is often much less. If the employer has contracts to justify continuous work, the apprentice may be engaged during the entire year, assuming no agreement to the contrary. In the event of business depression or during periods of inactivity, it may be impossible for the employer to fulfill his contract, and the apprentice may be unable to secure work from any other source for more than a few months of the year. Occasionally the apprentice finds some other form of employment when thus temporarily released, or the employer may pay him as though he were actually at work. During periods

⁶² "Joint Arbitration Agreement between the Chicago Masons and Builders' Association and the United Order of American Bricklayers and Stone Masons' Union, No. 21, of the Bricklayers and Masons' International Union. April 1, 1903, to May 1, 1905." (n. p. n. d.)

of business inactivity journeymen are usually discharged, and, up to a certain limit, apprentices retained. The opposite arrangement is, however, sometimes made.

In order to prevent boys from leaving their employers before finishing the stated term of service, the unions have enacted rigid rules with reference to runaway apprentices. The apprentice must begin and end his term in the same shop unless he is prevented from doing so by the death or removal of his employer, or is granted a clearance card by the union. Should the apprentice leave without just cause, he cannot be received by any local union, nor even be permitted to work with union men.⁴³ The following regulation of the Painters', Decorators' and Paperhangers' Union is typical of the building trades in this respect: "When a boy shall have contracted with an employer to serve a certain number of years, he shall on no pretense whatever leave said employer and contract with another without the free and full consent of said employer, unless there is just cause or such change is made in consequence of death or relinquishing of business by the first employer; any apprentice so leaving shall not be permitted to work under the jurisdiction of any local union in our Brotherhood, but shall be required to return to his employer and serve out his apprenticeship."⁴⁴

The "runaway column" is a prominent feature of the trade journals in the stone cutters', carpenters' and bricklayers' unions. The published list contains the name, age and residence of the delinquent boy, the residence of the employer, a statement of the term that the boy has served,

⁴³ Exceptions to the rule are sometimes made when the apprentice is the son of a journeyman. A Baltimore employer of stone cutters told the present writer of the following experiences: The son of a journeyman was apprenticed to the employer. The father of the boy moved to another city taking his son with him. The employer appealed to the union to reinstate the apprentice and compel him to comply with the terms of the contract. Thus the union refused to do, claiming that it was an unwritten law that a journeyman could take his son with him wherever he might go.

⁴⁴ Constitution of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America (Lafayette, 1901), Art. XLV, sec. 6.

any clue to his possible whereabouts and a warning to all members of the union to be on the alert to locate him.

The apprentice cannot be summarily discharged except for incompetency or constant neglect, or, at least, if discharged without an explanation satisfactory to the union, his place cannot be filled until the expiration of the time for which he agreed to serve.⁶⁵ The employer has the final word as to the fitness of the boy to continue at work, and can discharge him at any time. But, in general, the particular journeyman under whose instruction the apprentice has been placed is regarded as best qualified to speak as to the boy's ability and conduct, and the discharge of an apprentice is ordinarily upon his recommendation or that of the foreman of the shop.

Should the employer suspend business during the time the apprentice is serving his term, some unions endeavor to find new positions for beginners thus displaced.⁶⁶ Ordinarily the apprentice is required to finish his term within the jurisdiction of the union where he was first engaged. The stone cutters provide: "If any employer should cease to carry on the stone cutting business, the apprentices in his employ shall be compelled to finish their time under the jurisdiction of the branch with which they started, provided they can obtain employment."⁶⁷ Should the apprentice be unable to obtain employment within the jurisdiction of his union, he is given a "clearance card" to be presented in

⁶⁵ A typical rule in this regard is that adopted by the bricklayers of Baltimore. "Any employer who shall from the want of employment or any other cause than the incompetency of the apprentice to learn the business, transfer or discharge his apprentice, shall be debarred from taking any other apprentice, until the time for which the said apprentice was registered to serve has expired." Constitution and By-laws of the Bricklayers' Protective and Beneficiary Union (Baltimore, 1901), Art. XXX, sec. 2.

⁶⁶ "Should any employer suspend or give up business, it is the duty of a subordinate union to provide a place for any apprentices that may be thrown out of employment, and desire to finish their time, and, at the expiration of their apprenticeship, they shall, if found competent, be entitled to journeymen's wages upon joining the union." Constitution and Rules of Order of the Bricklayers' and Masons' International Union of America (North Adams, Massachusetts, 1902), Art. XIII, sec. 3.

⁶⁷ By-laws of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association of North America (Washington, 1900), Art. V, sec. 4.

making application to the union in another place. Such an applicant must give proof of his former connection, and if accepted, must serve such length of time as may be fixed by the union receiving him.⁶⁸

When a shop becomes non-union, any apprentice refusing to leave his work, when ordered away by the officers of his local union, is usually liable to any penalty which that body may see fit to impose. The United Hatters and a majority of other unions permit the local bodies to adjust such matters. In cases of long-continued strikes or lockouts the instruction of the apprentice may be seriously interrupted, so that it is impossible in the remaining time of his term for him to acquire sufficient skill to entitle him to be classed as a journeyman. Under such circumstances, it is customary for the union to grant a permit to the apprentice, that he may have an opportunity to continue his apprenticeship elsewhere. In the majority of strikes, whether the apprentice remained at work or not would not materially affect the position of either party to the controversy, while, on the contrary, to interrupt apprenticeship for any great length of time seriously handicaps the apprentice in learning the trade. Some unions, therefore, will not permit the apprentice to be penalized for remaining at work in a struck shop.

Any apprentice who has served a portion of his term of service in a foreign country and desires to continue the same

⁶⁸ "Any applicant for time to finish his trade should he find a place as an apprentice in some shop where they have not the full complement of apprentices prescribed by the branch to which he applies, shall be required to give proof by his work that he has already served part of his time before he shall be entitled to the protection of this association, and a majority of the members working in the shop where he is employed shall determine how long he shall be required to serve, and shall personally testify before the meeting of the branch their opinion of the time he shall serve, and in case a majority cannot be present they shall delegate one or more of their members to appear before said branch meeting with their decision in writing. No applicant of this character shall be more than twenty years of age, and all apprentices or improvers must present themselves before said branch meeting within two weeks after they are engaged." Constitution and By-laws of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association (—, 1892), Art. VI, sec. 6.

in the United States is ordinarily required to furnish proof of the work done as an apprentice in his native land. The wire weavers are more rigid in this respect than most other unions. They maintain that, since the "weavers" in foreign countries do not restrict apprentices in the proper ratio for the benefit of the trade, "any persons starting their apprenticeship in any foreign country and not serving their legal or full apprenticeship, will not be recognized or allowed to finish their apprenticeship in this country."⁶⁹

Number of Apprentices.—Perhaps the most prominent feature of apprenticeship regulation is a limitation on the number of apprentices. This limitation is expressed in terms of the ratio of the number of apprentices to the number of journeymen, or to the shop or the contractor. The limitation on the number of apprentices, more than any other regulation of apprenticeship, is determined by local conditions. Thus, the common rule for the granite cutters is one apprentice to every gang or fraction thereof, a gang consisting of thirteen men. But, in Oregon, the ratio as fixed by state agreement is one to twelve.⁷⁰ In the Milford, N. H., agreement, the ratio is one to fourteen,⁷¹ and at Westerly, R. I., it is not more than one to five journeymen.⁷² The regulations of the Maryland branch provide that "firms employing five journeymen five months in the year are allowed one apprentice, two for first gang (thirteen), and one for each additional gang." At Richmond, Va., employers using five journeymen or less are allowed not more than two apprentices, and one additional apprentice for every five additional journeymen regularly employed,⁷³ and at Jacksonville, Fla., one apprentice is

⁶⁹ Constitution and By-laws and Schedule of Prices of the National Executive Board of the American Wire Weavers' Protective Association, Newark, 1902, Art. V.

⁷⁰ See Bill of Prices for Cutting Granite in the State of Oregon, July 1, 1898, to May 1, 1900.

⁷¹ See Bill of Prices for Milford, N. H., March 1, 1902, to March 1, 1903, p. 4, par. 4.

⁷² See Bill of Prices for Westerly, R. I., to March 1, 1900, p. 6, sec. VI.

⁷³ See Bill of Prices for cutting granite in Richmond, Va., May, 1900, p. 12.

allowed in each shop where fifty men may be employed.⁷⁴

In some industries, notably in the building and printing trades, the chief unions are largely recruited from artisans who have learned their trade in the smaller places. Under these conditions, the unions in the larger places frequently limit severely the number of apprentices, counting upon the influx of workmen.

Similarly, in those unions in which the number of members fluctuates greatly a local union frequently raises the apprentice ratio in order to prevent an increase of apprentices from the temporary presence of journeymen within its jurisdiction. In the stone cutting industry, it frequently happens that twenty-five or more journeymen are sent temporarily to one locality. Were the ordinary ratio adhered to under such circumstances, the number of apprentices received would be greatly increased, and, as the journeymen thus employed remain only until the job on which they are employed is completed, the apprentices would be much in excess of the number allowed under normal conditions, and more than the needs of the locality would justify. Furthermore, the same journeymen are often transferred to the jurisdiction of another local during the period covered by the term of the apprenticeship, thereby augmenting the basis upon which apprentices may be taken. The following communication to the *Hatters' Journal* describes the practice of some employers in that industry: "At the time our laws gave manufacturers the privilege of employing an apprentice for every six or seven journeymen employed, advantage was taken of the law to employ six, twelve or eighteen men for a few weeks, so that the additional number of apprentices could be registered for the shop, and then the journeymen were discharged. This was unfair to the journeymen put on the road, but the injustice did not stop there. When dull times came, work was found for the apprentices, and the journeymen were sent home."⁷⁵

The Glass Bottle Blowers' Association maintains the rule

⁷⁴ See Agreement Governing Granite Cutting in Jacksonville, Fla., March, 1903, to March 1, 1904.

⁷⁵ *Hatters' Journal*, October, 1898, p. 11.

that "firms, who from any cause reduce their number of journeymen must also reduce their number of apprentices so that at all times they shall be within the provisions of the law."⁷⁶ The practice of discharging apprentices and retaining journeymen during periods of business inactivity or in times of emergency is, however, not an accepted trade-union policy. In the first place, to discharge an apprentice during the period of training means a serious interruption in his course of instruction, and lessens his opportunities of becoming a skilled workman. If compelled to serve the term at different places under different instructors, the apprentice will in all probability acquire less skill than if his training had been continuous and in the same shop. Again, the discharged apprentice usually wanders from place to place, is employed in union and non-union shops, and is often received in some local union before he has served the specified term. The net result is a shortened term with a corresponding increase in the ratio of apprentices to journeymen.

Two chief forms of ratio are used in restricting the number of apprentices. The first is a fixed ratio, which remains the same however great the number of journeymen employed.⁷⁷ The second is a declining ratio, in which the proportion of apprentices is reduced as the number of journeymen increases. Some unions limit the number of apprentices which may be employed in any one shop, beyond which no additions are allowed.⁷⁸ Thus, the stone

⁷⁶ Constitution, By-laws and Appendix of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association of the United States and Canada, Camden, New Jersey, 1903, p. 29, sec. 10.

⁷⁷ "It is agreed by parties hereto, that no master plumber shall have more than one apprentice to every three men or fraction thereof, and no boy under sixteen years of age shall enter the trade." See Agreement between the Masters and Plumbers of Spokane, Washington, Art. 13, Plumbers' Journal, June, 1899, p. 13.

⁷⁸ "Each joint shop shall be entitled to one apprentice on an average of ten to fifteen men, based on men employed between March to November 1, and one additional apprentice for every additional fifteen men employed based upon the above average. But, in no case, shall any shop be allowed to have more than four apprentices." See By-laws and Trade Rules of the District Council of Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America, St. Louis and Vicinity, 1903, p. 20, sec. 1.

cutters provide: "Any branch of the Association shall have the privilege of regulating the number of apprentices in each yard; one where less than fifteen men are employed, two where less than one hundred, and in no case to exceed four in any yard."⁷⁹

Ordinarily, apprenticeship rules are favorable to the smaller shops, in that they are allowed a greater number of apprentices than are permitted to the larger shops. Thus apprentices are not allowed at all in the newspaper offices of New York, Philadelphia and other large cities. This rule was passed by the local typographical unions, but is not actively opposed by the publishers since it does not pay to train apprentices. The same is true in the cigar making industry and in the building trades. The large employers are ordinarily less desirous of having apprentices. At present, a large majority of those learning the above mentioned trades do so in small shops, often in small towns, where it is less expensive to all concerned. However, since the city employer is able to pay a higher wage than the employer in the small town or office, he has no difficulty in obtaining skilled workmen.

In certain trades where many incompetents have formerly been admitted, and an effort is being made to raise the standard of wages, apprentices are prohibited altogether for a given period. The case of the Plumbers has already been cited.⁸⁰ When the Watch Case Engravers' International Association of America was organized, that body attempted to enforce a rule that "no person, male or female, should be admitted into the engraving trade for a term of four years." This was defended on the ground that some manufacturers had employed a large number of boys, but had taught them only part of the engraving trade, with the result that a large number of poorly trained engravers had been admitted into the union, so that the high standard of workmanship, formerly maintained by the craft in general, was

⁷⁹ Constitution of Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association, adopted 1900 (Washington, n. d.), Art. V, sec. 7.

⁸⁰ See *supra*, p. 74.

being lowered, and few fully equipped artists were being trained.

In many cases, the ratio is fixed by agreement with the individual employers or employers' associations, and may be changed yearly if desired. With perhaps a few exceptions, such as the iron molding and glass industries, the ratio has become fixed by custom, and is seldom changed. The wide difference in existing ratios is due largely to variations in the local labor supply. If sufficient workmen be present to carry on the work, no one is anxious to take on new apprentices and those applying are easily discouraged. At other places, employers will not be bothered with apprentices, preferring to employ an extra number of journeymen at a higher rate, if there be a sudden demand, and to discharge them when business resumes its normal condition. In the matter of apprentices as well as in other features of unionism the rigidity of the rule and the degree of strictness with which it is enforced depend in a large measure upon the strength of the local union, and upon the power of the employers.

The Wage of the Apprentice.—The wage received by the apprentice is usually a matter of agreement between the boy and his employer, although some unions insist upon making certain provisions in this particular. Thus the Broom and Whisk Makers, working by the piece, provide that "apprentices shall receive the same amount of pay as the journeymen receive for their work."⁸¹ Such a regulation, when rigidly enforced, removes the temptation to substitute the cheap labor of the boy for the more expensive services of the skilled journeymen. However, any local union that possesses power sufficient to enforce such a rule is also in a position to limit efficiently the number of apprentices by direct law. The Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers, Brass Molders, Brass and Silver Workers' International Union provides that the wages of the apprentice must be

⁸¹ International Broom and Whisk Makers' Union, Due Book and Constitution, Amsterdam, New York, 1904, p. 47, sec. 2.

regulated by the local union in whose jurisdiction the apprentice is employed.⁸² The Toledo screw workers' union provides that "all apprentices working day work shall receive not less than \$1.25 per day of ten hours, and \$2.00 shall be allowed for piece work for ten hours."⁸³ The Amalgamated Lace Operatives vary the amount received by the apprentice during each year of his service according to the work actually done. They also provide that the journeyman shall charge for his services as instructor of the apprentice. This is thought to be a just compensation to the journeyman, who must lose time from his own machine while instructing the beginner. The rule covering this point provides that the apprentice "shall serve three years, and be paid as follows: sixty per cent [of the journeyman's rate] the first year, seventy-five per cent the second year, and ninety per cent the third year on one half of the racks made on the machine, the difference to be equally divided between teacher and employer. In any case where the employer does not claim his share of the percentage, the same goes to the apprentice; and, where there is no teacher, the apprentice shall be paid on all racks made on the machine, and shall receive the teacher's percentage."⁸⁴

Where apprenticeship is regulated in great detail by conferences between employers and employees, the wages of the apprentice are usually provided for in the agreement. This is in most cases an advantage to the apprentice, since the union is able to obtain better terms for him than he could secure for himself. The joint arbitration agreement made by the Chicago Masons' and Builders' Association and the local bricklayers' union contains the provision that "the minimum wages of an apprentice shall not be less than two hundred and sixty dollars for the first year, three hundred for the second year, three hundred and fifty for

⁸² Constitution and By-laws, 1903, Art. XXXIV, sec. 2.

⁸³ Constitution and By-laws of Screw Workers' Union No. 11, Toledo, 1889, Art. VII, sec. 3.

⁸⁴ By-laws of the Chartered Society of the Amalgamated Lace Curtain Operatives of America, Philadelphia, 1902, Art. IV, sec. 1.

the third year and four hundred for the fourth year, payable semi-monthly."⁸⁵ Some employers pay the apprentice a certain wage while he is serving his term with the promise of an additional sum to be paid upon the completion of the apprenticeship, the purpose being to hold the boy throughout the entire term and to encourage him to take advantage of the opportunities offered. This plan is not possible in some trades because of the irregularity of employment and, therefore, the frequent necessity of changing employers.

Training of the Apprentice.—During the early part of the apprenticeship period the boy's labor is worth little, and he is usually given the odd jobs about the shop or placed on coarse work under the care and instruction of a journeyman or foreman. In the glass industries, he is permitted to begin with the small sizes; the cigar makers allow him to make the cheaper grades, for which a poor quality of tobacco is used, while the iron molders require the beginners to make the simplest pieces. In some unions, frequently among the plumbers, the apprentice is assigned to a particular workman to whom he must go for all instruction; in others, very often among the stone cutters, he is permitted to ask questions of any journeyman engaged on the work, and the workman so questioned must devote a reasonable amount of time to giving him the desired information. The opportunities of the apprentice to learn the trade depend largely upon the character of the boy, the attitude of the employer, and the interest of the journeyman. In some cases, the apprentices are neglected; in others, the employers, in order to make the boy pay his way as soon as possible and in the end become an efficient workman, take personal interest in him and give him the best advan-

⁸⁵ Joint Arbitration Agreement between the Chicago Masons and Builders' Association and the United Order of American Bricklayers' and Stone Masons' Union No. 31, of the Bricklayers' and Masons' International Union, April 1, 1903, to May 1, 1905, p. 18.

tages.⁸⁶ It has long been the practice of the employers of stone cutters in Baltimore to pay the tuition of their apprentices at the Maryland Institute so that they may acquire the principles of drawing and sketching. The progress of the apprentice during his term of service thus depends upon his ability, upon the opportunities given him by the employer and upon the interest taken in him by the journeymen. Unless a detailed agreement be formulated, the union makes only general rules in these particulars. Usually they are expressed in the form of a charge to the journeymen, the foreman or the members of the union to see that the boy has competent instruction and opportunities for advancement. The following paragraph from the rules of the Stone Cutters is typical: "It shall be the imperative duty of the shop stewards and members to see that all apprentices in their respective shops are given as good work as they are able to do, in order that they may become skilled workmen, fitted to take their places as journeymen in our midst."⁸⁷

The specific work to be performed by the apprentice during each year of his term is, in many cases, defined by the constitution of the union, or specified in the general agreement. Where the trade is best learned through a series of operations rather than in one difficult process, it is customary for the union to determine how long the apprentice shall serve at each portion, and to insist that he be advanced at stated intervals from one part to the other. A typical requirement is that of the Saw Smiths' Union,

⁸⁶ Very satisfactory results have been obtained by the Atkins Company, saw manufacturers, of Indianapolis, by requiring one experienced and highly skilled journeyman to devote his entire time to the apprentices. They are grouped together apart from the journeymen and placed at work under his immediate supervision and care. When sufficient progress has been made and the boy possesses a fair knowledge of the trade, he is placed on the work with the journeymen. Where the industry permits, this seems to be an admirable arrangement, for such a plan does not allow the apprentice to interfere with the work of the journeyman. Moreover, the apprentice is sure of thorough instruction.

⁸⁷ By-laws of Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association, 1892, Art. V, sec. 8.

which states that "it shall be the right of every apprentice, and he shall also be required to learn all branches of anvil work done in the shop in which he is employed."⁸⁸ The United Hatters are more specific for they demand that "all apprentices registered for finishing, can be used by the employers for the first twelve months at any of the minor branches, such as soft hat curling or ironing machines or plating, and the second year, at flanging; but, in all cases, they must serve their last year at the bench. . . . If registered for the making department, after being instructed, they shall continue for the space of nine months at sizing, then six months at blocking, then six months at stiffening. After this space of time, employers can put them at any branch of the business in which they may require their services."⁸⁹ The Window Glass Workers' Association represents a trade of four distinct processes, namely, gathering, blowing, cutting, flattening; and the time an apprentice is required to serve at each trade is three years; but usually he is permitted to blow after having served three years as gatherer. However, from lack of experience in the work, he must begin upon small sizes; and, although he receives the regular rate, his income is smaller than that paid to the journeyman. A New York corporation held certain patents, and, making a specialty of building chimneys, applied to a local of the bricklayers' union for permission to take on an apprentice. The local refused, and referred the matter to the national executive board. This body also refused the company an apprentice on the ground that the boy would not have a fair opportunity to gain an adequate knowledge of bricklaying.

No uniform rule prevails in regard to testing the apprentice's proficiency. A prominent employer complained to the present writer that boys, who had served the four years of apprenticeship required by the local stone cutters' union,

⁸⁸ Official Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention, Saw Smiths' Union of North America, Indianapolis, 1902, p. 12, sec. 4.

⁸⁹ United Hatters of North America, New York, 1903, Art. XI, secs. 5 and 6.

were permitted to join the union and to receive the same rate of wages as other journeymen, although they might have spent but a few months in each year in learning the trade. Other unions are more strict in this regard, requiring the apprentice to serve an additional year if found in any way deficient. The agreement between the Chicago builders and the Chicago building trades union thus provides: "In case an apprentice at the end of his term of four years for want of proper instruction in his trade is not a proficient workman, and if, after a thorough investigation, the joint arbitration board finds that the contractor to whom he had been apprenticed did not give the proper instruction and opportunity to learn the trade, he may be required to serve another year with whomsoever he and the joint arbitration board may determine, and at such a rate of wages, less than the minimum in his trade, as they may determine; and the difference between said rate and minimum scale in his trade shall be paid through the joint arbitration boards by the contractor to whom he was apprenticed."⁹⁰ In some cases the apprentice is required to present a diploma or a statement of proficiency from his employer. The Baltimore bricklayers provide: "An employer wishing to have an apprentice shall make application in writing or in person to the union, said application to be presented by the boy who wishes to be taken as an apprentice, said apprentice to serve the term of four years, to learn the art of bricklaying or stone masonry, and his name and length of time he is required to serve shall be registered in the book provided for that purpose, and his employer furnished with a certificate of registration, said certificate to be returned to the union endorsed by the employer at the expiration of the time of apprenticeship."⁹¹

Admission of Apprentice to the Union.—Admission to the union may be regarded as the final step in apprenticeship.

⁹⁰ Agreement between Chicago Builders' Association and Local Union, sec. 5.

⁹¹ See Working Code between the Bricklayers' and Masons' International Unions, Nos. 1, 4, and 5, of Baltimore, Maryland, for the Years 1903 and 1904, p. 8, sec. 23.

Indeed, apprentices are taught unionism along with the trade, and special inducements are offered to secure their entrance into the union. The painters provide: "Apprentices in the last year of their service shall be admitted free of charge and entitled to a seat in the union without a vote and be free from all dues and assessments. On completion of their apprenticeship, they shall be entitled to full benefits and all rights to full membership by conforming to Section 1 of this article. No capitation is required of apprentices, but in cities where business agents are employed, local unions may charge one dollar initiation and ten cents per month dues."⁹²

When the apprentice is received into the union as an apprentice member, his rights are less than those of journeymen members, he pays less in dues and receives smaller benefits. For example, the jewelry workers will receive as members all apprentices over sixteen years of age upon payment of one dollar and a half, which is one half of the minimum initiation fee for journeymen. The dues of apprentices are one half the regular dues, but such members may not vote nor speak except to bring complaint or to ask for information. Also they are entitled to one half of the benefits received by regular members. At the conclusion of their apprentice term, they are received as full members without any additional initiation fee.

⁹² Constitution of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paperhangers of America (Lafayette, Ind.), Art. VII, sec. 8.

CHAPTER IV.

ESTIMATE OF UNION APPRENTICESHIP RULES.

The apprenticeship system in nearly all the unions is unsatisfactory. Side by side with the capable mechanic, a great number of incompetents are found in the trades. This condition may be attributed to three general causes: (*a*) the large influence of local unions in determining apprenticeship rules; (*b*) the effect of changes in business organization and industrial technique; (*c*) the disregard of apprenticeship rules both by employers and by the unions. Each of these influences will be briefly considered.

(*a*) The character of some trades, notably cigar making and the building trades, as has been noted, makes it necessary to leave apprenticeship rules to local determination. This policy has resulted in a wide range of treatment, in many cases unwise and inadequate. A nicer adjustment of rules to local conditions has been secured, but many local unions have been unable to enforce effective apprenticeship regulations. Some unions make no pretense of maintaining an apprenticeship system, and others make rules of the loosest imaginable description. In consequence, the large, strongly-organized unions observe elaborate apprenticeship codes; in the smaller and weaker unions in the same trade a brief statement of a few lines contains all that is said in regard to apprentices, and even these provisions are often openly neglected.

(*b*) The provision made for training the modern apprentice is, in most cases, inadequate on account of the change in industrial and business methods. Although all the trades have not been affected by the introduction of machinery and the consequent subdivision of the trade, yet important and, in most cases, radical changes have thus been introduced.

The effect of machinery upon the apprenticeship systems

formerly maintained by labor unions has been twofold. (1) In some trades, notably those of the boot and shoe makers and the garment workers, the machines have been simplified and the trade subdivided to such an extent that unskilled labor has largely supplanted skilled workmen. In such trades the apprenticeship system has almost entirely disappeared.

(2) The same effect has not resulted from such inventions as the linotype, the planer, and some of the machines used in mill work and in the large machine shops. These machines require, for their successful operation, the skill of the trained craftsman. The physical strength formerly exerted by the workman is largely supplied by steam power. In these trades only trained craftsmen or journeymen in the last months of their apprenticeship are permitted to take charge of the machines. The care that must be given the machine, the difficulties in learning how to operate it, the cost in case of damage, together with the element of personal danger to the operator, must be considered when determining the effect of the introduction of a new machine upon the craftsmen. Many of the finer grades of work formerly done by hand are now done almost entirely by machinery, propelled by steam. Yet so carefully must the machine be handled, so accurately must the measurements be taken, and so nicely must the machines be adjusted that only fully experienced men are intrusted with their care. The operator or tender of these machines has a task to perform fully as difficult as that of his predecessor who performed the same work by hand. In some cases the machine operator has even a more difficult and responsible task than was required of the hand worker, so that he is required by the union to spend the same number of years in learning the trade as the former, but, having mastered it, he is able to produce far more rapidly than before. The pace set in the modern shop, which contains much costly machinery, is not conducive to thorough training, since the chief object, necessarily so because of keen competition, is to produce the maximum amount in the shortest time at the minimum cost;

and, as long as the employer can secure competent workmen, he will not take the time nor expend the money to train apprentices. The result has been that in many instances the apprentice must learn the trade as best he can.

The building trades may serve as an illustration of the influence on apprenticeship of typical changes in technique and in business organization. Machinery has been extensively introduced only in stone cutting.⁹³ But subdivision is present in all the trades, and, in all of them, the problem of specialization has consequently arisen. The workmen who can do but one part of the work of the trade is rapidly increasing, though his increase is constantly deplored. The specialized workman is less dependent upon the instruction of others. In case of business depression the workman who has picked up his trade changes to another more readily than the all-round workman who has spent years learning his craft. Moreover, he does not share the feeling of respect for skilled work that inspires the true mechanic. In none of the building trades, however, has the term of service for apprentices been reduced because of the subdivision of the trade. On the contrary, it has resulted in an urgent demand for higher standards of workmanship.⁹⁴

⁹³ The "planer" is used extensively in large, permanently located shops. It is not confined to smoothing the stone, but is capable of cutting different designs in hard or soft stone by simply changing the "bit," which can be easily made by the blacksmith. The machine is of great weight, run by steam power and somewhat expensive. It can be operated by one or two mechanics and will do the work of eight or ten men. The pneumatic tool operated by compressed air is another labor-saving device of recent date in this trade. Each cutter supplied with one is able to make much more rapid progress in rougher work with less expenditure of energy than with the ordinary mallet and chisel. However, it is not to be supposed that these important inventions have in any wise revolutionized the trade. The machines render the best results in the hands of the regular stone cutters, and have occasioned no change in the apprenticeship rules of the trade. If the apprentice desires to become a machine operator and his employer has no opening for him, he is placed on the machine during the last year or six months of his term.

⁹⁴ The recent change of material used in the structure of the framework of many large office buildings and apartment houses has wrought remarkable changes in methods of construction, and has substituted comparatively unskilled labor for highly skilled service. The structural iron worker, possessing more physical strength and

A further explanation of the inadequate training of the apprentice in the building trades is found in the organization of modern building operations. The erection of large structures is done in the main by large construction companies. A typical building company of this character maintains offices in the principal cities of the United States, with headquarters in New York City, and competes for business in every section of the country. Superintendents are sent from place to place to take charge of the work secured. Each local arranges its apprenticeship rules with the agents of the company in its own jurisdiction. Should business not justify the continuance of an office in any particular field, it is closed or transferred to another city. One of the chief elements in the award of every contract of size is the time in which it can be executed, and the keenest rivalry exists among the several offices. Every condition is thus unfavorable to the maintenance of apprenticeship regulations. The manager of the office is constantly seeking new business for his company, and has little concern for the work in progress. The superintendent, sent out by the company to take charge of the work, goes from place to place as orders are received from headquarters, and is only concerned with the problem of getting the building completed in the shortest time at the least cost. The foreman occupies much the same relation to the superintendent as the latter does to the company. He must keep his men moving or lose his position. The individual journeyman must satisfy his foreman or be discharged, and has little if any time to instruct boys. In fact, there is no personal tie or intimate relation between the beginner and those who have charge of the work. The boy is simply not wanted, for no large contractor desires apprentice labor merely because it can be secured at a low wage. The time consumed in teaching the trade to beginners would cause a

daring than real technical ability and skill, has supplanted to a certain extent the trained bricklayer, stone mason and carpenter. With the introduction of ferro-concrete as a building material, the superintendent and foremen, aided by hatchet and saw carpenters and ordinary laborers, are able to construct the entire frame-work of the building.

delay in work, more expensive than the sum saved on wages. Indeed, the apprentice is physically in the way on a large building, where all work must be done in order and on time. Under the indenture system, the contractor was supposed to make a sacrifice during the first part of the apprentice term, as the boy was unable to pay his way. This sacrifice is required to a far greater extent under the present system; and the contractor, hard pressed by competition, is unwilling to make it.

Much work in the building trades is still done by small contractors. Every city of size has many of them. Often conducting non-union establishments, they receive more apprentices than are allowed in union shops. The work performed by this class of contractors is less hurried in time and less precise in quality, and will usually permit of boy labor under the direction of a skilled foreman. Many learn the trade in these small shops. In fact, it is from the number who thus "pick up" the trade, and from those who learn it in small cities and in rural districts, as well as from that smaller number who have served a formal term of apprenticeship, that the demands of the larger employers, who require a better class of workmen and pay the highest wages, are met.

(c) The apprenticeship rules nominally in force are often wholly disregarded by both union and employer. In fact, because the employer cannot control his apprentices as under the indenture system, many apprentices leave the shop where they have learned the trade and seek employment elsewhere. The apprenticeship system, as we have seen, is esteemed by the union not only as a thing desirable in itself, but also as a device for carrying out larger policies. The old requirement for union membership was the completion of a term of apprenticeship, but, in most cases, this is no longer a requisite. If the applicant is able to command the standard rate of wages, he will experience little difficulty in gaining admittance to the union, regardless of the way in which he has acquired his skill. In fact, many crude work-

men first join the union and gain the greater part of knowledge of the trade afterwards. The present policy of the unions in trades where it is impossible to secure effective enforcement of apprenticeship rules is to get every workman at the trade into the union. When an applicant of doubtful ability applies for membership, the question considered is not when and where did he serve his apprenticeship, but will he do less harm to the cause inside or outside of the union; and upon the answer to this question largely depends his acceptance or rejection. During the time of strike the union has no hesitation in sacrificing any of its requirements for admission and even in offering special inducements to workmen to join the union in order to gain accessions and to win the strike.⁹⁵

For several years the Glass Bottle Blowers' International Union waged a continuous and bitter warfare against certain non-union firms in New Jersey. During this time the regular apprenticeship rules were constantly sacrificed that they might induce the workmen to withdraw from these unfair shops. Urged by representatives of the union, many men and boys were induced to leave the non-union shops, were received as members of the union, and sent elsewhere to work at the regular standard wage; or, in case employment could not be found, they were supported temporarily by the union. An ex-member of the executive committee of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Union showed the present writer a list containing the names of one hundred and fifteen

⁹⁵ A business agent of the wood workers' union of Indianapolis stated that not only would such possible "strike breakers" be received into his union free of cost, but that transportation would be provided, in order that they might go elsewhere to work. It is a well-known fact that the non-union men gotten together by an employer during a strike may gradually find their way into the union after difficulties are adjusted. During recent conferences between representatives of the Iron Molders' Union and National Defense Association in regard to the apprentice question, it was admitted by both parties that previous to the formation of agreements the frequency of strikes supplied a large number of workmen. After the agreement went into effect, the number of strikes was greatly reduced, and the supply of workmen from this source was so seriously diminished that the legitimate needs of the trade necessitated an increase in the number of apprentices.

men and two hundred and thirty-one boys whom he had persuaded to leave the non-union shops. These blowers, many of whom had been at the trade but a few months, were made full-fledged members of the unions and supported by that body until employment could be secured elsewhere for them. However, as these men and boys were often sent far away from the New Jersey shops for employment, and since they did not possess ability and skill sufficient to command the union rate in first-class shops, it is probably true that the incompetent ones were soon discharged by their employers and doubtless finally dropped their membership in the union. Such flagrant abuses of the apprenticeship regulations are justified by the union as "emergency measures," but the "strike and emergency workmen" often prove to be undesirable members.

The most promising tendency in the direction of bettering the conditions of apprenticeship is found in the fact that apprenticeship regulations are in an increasing number of cases formed by joint agreement between the employer and the union, and not, as formerly, by the union or the employer alone. With perhaps a few exceptions, this change in the method of framing laws has brought about no radical change in the character of the rules themselves. The old apprenticeship regulations of the union have ordinarily become the basis for new ones in the agreement, or they have been accepted in their entirety by employers. The acceptance of the agreement by employers and unions tends to concentrate the best thought of both parties upon the subject, with the result that in many instances elaborate and efficient rules have been jointly enacted and enforced. A typical agreement between employers' associations and unions, such as exists in many large cities, covers the following points:

1. Time of Beginning, the Length of Term, and Qualifications of the Apprentice: The qualifications here referred to are in the main moral and educational, and as a rule are of slight importance.

2. Obligations of the Apprentice: Every regular apprentice must agree to render continuous service as provided by the rules, and furthermore to accept all other conditions specified throughout the agreement.

3. Agreements of Employers: Every person permitted to receive apprentices binds himself to furnish competent instruction and to give the boy ample opportunity for learning the trade during the latter's term of service.

4. Registering Apprentices: Each organization keeps a complete record of all apprentices. A beginner registered under such circumstances is generally given a card by the joint committee, which attests the fact that he is a properly registered apprentice.

5. Limitation of Apprentices: Practically all apprenticeship agreements provide for a uniform ratio of beginners to journeymen. In some industries extensive investigations have been made; and, as far as possible, a fair and adequate ratio has been adopted.

6. Supervision of Apprentice: Perhaps the chief advantage secured for the apprentice through the agreement is the provision usually made for his supervision and control during his term. Where both sides are strongly organized, they mutually watch each other and compel a strict enforcement of the agreement. This control of apprentices is given to the joint committee, who consider all questions arising and exercise judicial functions in hearing appeals or settling disputes. In some cases this committee is given power to cancel the apprenticeship, to transfer apprentices in case of death or removal of employer, or to discharge them for any other reason.

7. Rights of the Employer: In case the employer becomes dissatisfied with the apprentice because of inability, laziness or unwillingness upon the part of the boy to render faithful services or for other just cause, he may appeal to the joint committee, which has the power to discharge the apprentice if the charges are proved.

8. Rights of Apprentice: The apprentice, on his part, has

the privilege of carrying any grievance against his employer to the joint committee.

9. Pay of Apprentice: Previous to the formation of agreements the apprenticeship regulations were, in the main, formed entirely by the union; but, in a great majority of cases, the employers and apprentices were unrestricted in adjusting the rate of wages. In fact, the fixing of wages for the apprentice by the union is comparatively a recent development, which has been accelerated by the growth of the agreement.

10. End of Apprenticeship Term: At the conclusion of the prescribed term the employer must notify the joint committee. The employers' organization and the union are notified. If the agreement has been fairly observed, the apprentice is given a certificate, and is recognized as a journeyman.

Agreements relative to apprenticeship, up to the present time, have been almost entirely local. The most notable exceptions are the agreements of the Iron Molders' Union, the Glass Bottle Blowers' Union and the Window Glass Workers' Union. In these trades the apprenticeship rules are formed by an agreement between the international unions and the employers' associations.

In the machinists' trade, where employers of labor, such as railway and electric road companies, operate over a large territory, it not infrequently occurs that apprenticeship is regulated by agreements between the railroad officials on the one side and the representatives of the international union on the other. In these agreements uniform conditions are provided for all shops of the company, or, as is sometimes the case, for all shops within certain clearly defined portions of the road.

The nature and scope of such formal apprenticeship agreements, even in the same trade, vary greatly with different localities. Wherever the union has been strong and has maintained a well-developed system while acting alone, detailed apprenticeship rules covering every phase of the question are usually inserted. In other localities only that

particular phase of the apprenticeship question which has been a source of trouble is provided for in the agreement. For example, the agreement between the bricklayers' union no. 4, of Missouri, and the Contractors' Association contains the single provision that all apprentices shall be governed by the laws of the union.⁹⁶ An agreement at Columbus, Ohio, between the local stone masons' union and the Master Stone Masons' Association has but one short article concerning the apprentice, fixing the ratio of one apprentice to six journeymen and the term of service at three years.⁹⁷ In fact, the typical form of apprenticeship agreement among the smaller unions is either concerned with regulating the number of apprentices that may be taken or with providing some form of training for beginners. In agreements of this nature little, if any, provision is made for enforcing the apprenticeship rules, and, as a rule, they are rarely more effective than the apprenticeship regulations formerly maintained by the union. Even in more formal agreements no uniformity as to terms exists among the locals. In the granite cutting industry the joint agreement of 1900 at Rocklin, Cal., provided for a ratio of one apprentice to eight journeymen.⁹⁸ At Waldboro, Me., for the same year, one apprentice was allowed for every ten journeymen cutters.⁹⁹ At Vinal Haven, Me., one apprentice to twelve journeymen was permitted,¹⁰⁰ while the agreement for 1902 at Milford, N. H., allowed only one apprentice to each fourteen cutters.¹⁰¹ Such variations occur to a much greater extent in the limitation of apprentices, but, even as regards age, qualifications or methods of training beginners, there is often no uniformity among the local unions.

In the more elaborate apprenticeship agreements found in

⁹⁶ See Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the President and Secretary of the Bricklayers' and Masons' International Union, for the Term Ending December 1, 1902, p. 92.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁹⁸ See Bill of Prices for Cutting Granite in Rocklin, Cal. (n. p., 1900).

⁹⁹ See Bill of Prices for Waldboro, Me. (1900).

¹⁰⁰ Bill of Prices for Vinal Haven, Me., dated June 9 (n. p., 1900).

¹⁰¹ Bill of Prices for Milford, N. H., 1902-03, p. 11, sec. 4.

some large cities, all regulations for beginners at the trade are prepared by joint arbitration boards. The apprenticeship rules formed by agreement in many trades in New York City and Chicago cover every phase of the apprentice question, even to the smallest detail. The agreement between the Masons' and Builders' Association of Chicago and the local bricklayers' and stone masons' union represents one of the best systems of apprenticeship now in force among the building trades.¹⁰² It provides that apprentices shall not be prohibited by any union, and that they shall not be amenable to union rules, but shall at all times be under the control of the employers, subject to the rules of the joint arbitration board. In addition to the usual features of apprenticeship agreements as to ratio, age, wages and probation term, an important provision is the requirement that all apprentices shall attend school during certain months of the year.¹⁰³ An important feature of the agreement is the provision for enforcing the regulations adopted. When a grievance arises between an apprentice and an employer or a journeyman, the point at issue is submitted in writing to the presidents of both organizations. Should they be unable to agree, the

¹⁰² See apprenticeship rules in the "Joint Arbitration Agreement between the Chicago Masons' and Builders' Association and the United Order of American Bricklayers' and Stone Masons' Union, No. 21, of the Builders' and Masons' International Unions, April 1, 1903, to May 1, 1905."

¹⁰³ All contractors taking on apprentices are obliged to keep them at work for nine consecutive months in each year. During the months of January, February and March, the apprentice must attend a technical school acceptable to the joint board. As evidence that he has fulfilled this requirement, the apprentice is required to present a certificate from the school before he is permitted to begin his work. For every day the apprentice is tardy or guilty of disorderly conduct at school he must serve an additional day of apprenticeship without pay. For each case of failure to attend school, except for good excuse, two days' service without pay is added to his term of apprenticeship. Any contractor who prevents his apprentice from attending school during the months mentioned is fined five dollars per day for each day. Likewise, any member working on any building during said months with an apprentice is also fined five dollars for each day he works. Furthermore, any contractor who fails to provide employment for his apprentice or does not keep him at school shall pay him the same as though he were at work or at school.

question is submitted to the joint arbitration board. In case this body is unable to reach a decision, an umpire is called in to sit with the board and cast the deciding vote. Both organizations have agreed to compel members to comply with the apprenticeship rules as jointly agreed upon and adopted.

INDEX

- Actors' National Protective Union, no apprentice system in, 540.
- Adams, John, on Monroe's View, 144.
- Adams, John Quincy, quoted, 75; on Monroe mission and View, 144-145.
- Administered state, definition of, 348.
- Alcohol in Philippines, Spanish government control of (1787-1862), 9, 12; American tax on, 25; revenue from, 42.
- Algiers, treaty of U. S. with (1795), Monroe's part in, 87-88, 111-114.
- Allegiance, nature of, 344-345.
- Annapolis and Elkrige Railroad, Maryland's aid to, 444.
- Annapolis and Potomac Canal Company, Maryland's aid to, 437, 443.
- Apprentices in American trade unions, under governmental regulation, 494-499; those eligible to be, 494-495; length of training of, 495; schooling for, 496; punishment for offenses committed by, 496; status of, after death of master, 496; limitation of number of, 496-497; pledges between masters and, 497-498; abandonment of indenture for, 498-499; customary rules for, 500-512; rules influenced by large numbers of foreign workmen, 500-502; and by simple industrial conditions, 502-504; limitation of number of apprentices, 504-508; wages of, 508; hours of labor of, 509; relations between masters and, 509-510; length of training of, 510-511; trade-union regulation of, 513-523; by local unions, 513-516, 520-521; by international unions, 516-520, 521-523; regulation of, by trade agreement, 524-534; limitation by trade agreement of number of, in iron-molding industry, 525-532, 533; extent of present union regulation of, 535-547; unions having no system of training for, 535-540; unions having a system, 540-545; partial control of apprentices by unions, 545-547; regulation of, 548-552; by local unions, 548-550; by international unions, 550-552; purposes of regulation of apprentices, 553-556; to provide workmen, 554; to secure fairly equal ability in workmen, 555; character of regulations of apprentices, 557-581; entrance upon training, 557-562; age of apprentices, 562-564; term of service of, 564-571; number of, 571-575; wage of, 575-577; training of, 577-580; admission of, to union, 580-581; estimate of union rules for, 582-593; unsatisfactory conditions, 582-588; promising conditions, 588-593.
- Apprenticeship in American Trade Unions (Motley), 491-593; governmental regulation of, 494-499; customary rules of, 500-512; trade-union regulation of, 513-523; determined by trade agreement, 524-534; extent of present union regulation of, 535-547; regulation of, and its purpose, 548-556;

- character of regulations of, 557-581; estimate of union rules of, 582-593.
- Assemblies of Maryland (1642-49), 197, 213, 214, 215-216, 231-240, 256-268.
- Attorneys at law in Md., tax on (1822), 402.
- Auctioneers in Baltimore and in Md., tax on (1798-1907), 400-401.
- Bakery and Confectionery Workers' International Union, character of apprentice regulations in, 564.
- Baltimore, Lord, *see* Calvert, Cecilius.
- Baltimore and Frederick Turnpike Company, Maryland's aid to, 428 (note).
- Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Maryland's aid in the building of, 430-431, 432, 437, 439, 440 (and note), 446, 472-473.
- Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad, Maryland's aid to, 432-436, 441, 472-473.
- Baltimore and Washington Railroad, taxation of by Md. (1832), 404-405; Maryland's aid in building of, 432, 434.
- Baltimore and Yorktown Turnpike Company, Maryland's aid to, 428 (note).
- Bank of England stock in Md. (1733-1806), 382-383.
- Banks in Philippines, tax on, 26, 32, 42; in Md., tax on (1813-1848), 384-386, 404, 405-406, 470-471.
- Barlow, Joel, and treaty of U. S. with Algiers (1795), 111-113.
- Bayard, Samuel, on Jay treaty, 122.
- Belligerent community, definition of, 348.
- "Berkshire," in iron-molding industry, 500, 504, 506, 516 (note).
- Billiard-tables, tax on, in Md. (1798-1825), 401-402.
- Bills of credit in Md. (1733-1789), 361, 366-368, 371, 373, 382-383.
- Bodin, on the state, 292, 295-300.
- Boghitchevitch, quoted, 284.
- Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders, International Brotherhood of, apprentices in, 562.
- Bond, Beverly W., jr., "The Monroe Mission to France," 55-150.
- Bonds, tax on, in Md. (1841-1847), 459-460.
- Bonfils, H., quoted, 285, 315, 320.
- Bookbinders, International Brotherhood of, character of apprentice regulations in, 559, 562.
- Boot and shoe industry, no apprentice system in, 538-539.
- Borel, quoted, 290.
- Bozman, J. L., quoted, 157 (notes), 229, 233, 253 (notes), 256.
- Braithwait, Wm., 170, 174-176, 177 (note), 194, 196.
- Brent, Giles, 157, 158, 166-167, 169, 170, 172, 173, 174-176, 177, 192, 196-197, 204-205, 253.
- Brent, Mrs. Margaret, 188, 204-205, 210, 212, 219, 221-224, 233, 239, 241, 250, 257.
- Brewery Workmen, United, no uniform apprentice rules, 551.
- Bricklaying industry, apprentices in, 521-522; non-union workers in, 545 (note); regulation of apprentices in, by international union, 553-554.
- Bridge and Structural Iron Workers' Union, no apprentice system in, 536.
- British property in Md., revenue from confiscation of (1780-1790), 369, 381.
- Brock, Father John, 206 (note).
- Brokers, tax on in Md. (1842), 463-464.
- Broom and Whisk Makers' Union, International, char-

- acter of apprentice regulations of, 558-559, 564, 575.
 Brownson, quoted, 288.
 Building trades, regulation of apprentices by local unions of, 519, 520-522, 548, 550, 582, 591, 592-593; character of regulations, 563, 564, 567-568, 569 (notes), 572, 574, 576, 579, 580; effect on apprenticeship system of machinery and specialization in, 584-586. *See also* Brick-laying industry, etc.
 Burgess, quoted, 290.
 Burr, Aaron, on Jay treaty, 93.
 Business tax in Philippines, 9-11, 30-32, 42.
 Calvert, Cecilius (Lord Baltimore), 173-176, 207-210, 216, 257-268.
 Calvert, Charles, quoted, 265-266.
 Calvert, Leonard, 157, 172-173, 174, 179-182, 192-194, 195, 196-197, 213, 215, 217-222.
 Calvo, quoted, 314.
 Car Workers, International Association of, no uniform apprentice rules in, 551.
 Carpentry, apprentice regulations in, 517, 557; character of regulations, 564.
 Certificates of debt in Md. (1776-1785), 368, 371, 372.
 Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Maryland's aid in the building of, 427-432, 434-439, 441, 445-446, 472-473.
 Chinese in Philippines, taxation of, 9.
 Churchman, John, quoted, 120.
 Cigar-making industry, simple industrial conditions in, 593; number of apprentices in, 595 (and note); regulation of apprenticeship by local unions of, 519, 520-521, 582; character of regulations, 565-566, 574, 577.
 Claiborne, Wm., 195-196, 211-212.
 Collateral inheritance tax in Md. (1845), 462.
 Commercial regulations, U. S. and France (1794), 66-69.
 Commissions of executors, trustees and receivers, tax on, in Md. (1845), 462-463.
 Conciliation, used in apprenticeship regulation, 524-534.
 Confederation, definition of, 347.
 Consular service of U. S. in France, Monroe and, 73, 88-90.
 Copley, Thomas, 206 (note).
 Cornwallis, Thos., 156, 157, 166-170, 173, 179-186, 202, 207-209.
 Corporation taxes in Philippines, 23; in Md. (1813-1840), 385-386, 404-406.
 County assessments in Md. (1821-1827), 396-398.
 Crane, Robert T., "The State in Constitutional and International Law," 277-348.
 Currency, change of basis of, in Porto Rico, 17; in Philippines, 17-18.
 Debt of Md. (1777-1848), 361, 371-372, 374, 378-380, 419-454, 455-475, 481.
 Delaware and Chesapeake Canal, Maryland's aid to, 426.
 Dependent nation, definition of, 346.
 Documentary stamp taxes in Philippines, 10-11, 26-28, 32, 42.
 Eastern Shore Railroad Company, Maryland's aid to, 437, 443.
 Edwards, Enoch, on Monroe mission, 133-135.
 Elastic goring weaving industry, apprentice system in, 544.
 England and Jay treaty, 63, 117; and treaty of U. S. with Algiers (1795), 113.
 Executors, tax on commissions of, in Md. (1845), 462-463.
 Exemptions from taxation in Philippines, 31-33.
 Expenditures of Md. (1790-1848), 375-376, 386-389, 392-393, 412-419, 480.
 Exports, from Philippines,

- Spanish restriction of, 8, 12; restriction of, to U. S., 12, 14-16; advantage of free trade for, 43-45.
- Extraterritoriality, fiction of, 330, 340.
- Fauchet, M., and Monroe mission, 85, 97, 105, 106, 145.
- Federal state, definitions of, 287-290.
- Fee-system in Md. (1824-1836), 375, 406-407, 413.
- Fenwick, Cuthbert, 155, 260 (and note), 261.
- Financial History of Maryland, 1789-1848 (Hanna), 357-479; during Revolution, 359-372; treasury confusion after war, 370-372; period of surplus financiering (1789-1816), 373-393; of indirect taxation (1817-1841), 394-419; internal improvements and the state debt, 420-454; suspension of interest payments (1841-1848), 455-475; tables of receipts, expenditures, etc., 478-481. *See also* Table of Contents, 355.
- Fisher, Father Philip, 205 (and note), 251.
- Fleet, Henry, 171-172.
- Force, an essential element of the state, 326-329.
- Forest products in Philippines, tax on, 9-11, 29-30, 42.
- France, receives Monroe on his mission, 61-62; commercial regulations with U. S., 66-69; and navigation of Mississippi and southern boundary of U. S., 69-73, 82-86; attitude of, toward Jay treaty, 76-82, 92-101, 103-110, 115-126; and Louisiana, 85, 119; U. S. consuls in, 88-90; alleges violation of treaty of 1778 by U. S., 105-110; and treaty of U. S. with Algiers (1795), 87-88, 111-113. *See also* Table of contents, 53.
- Freund, quoted, 284.
- Funding law, of Md. (1784), 372; of Congress (1790), 378-380.
- Gerard, Thos., 174-176, 192, 253.
- Glass-blowing industry, regulation of apprenticeship by international union, 519, 550; character of regulations, 572-573, 577; disregard of regulations, 587-588. *See also* Window glass workers, etc.
- Government, Rousseau on, 307; location of sovereignty in, 325; *de facto*, definition of, 348.
- Granite-cutting industry, non-union workers in, 545 (note); apprentice regulations in, 571, 591.
- Greene, Thos., 165, 192, 219-253, 260, 261.
- Grotius, on international law, 312-313, quoted, 315, 316, 320.
- Ground-rents in Md., tax on (1841-1847), 461.
- Guaranteed state, definition of, 347.
- Hall, C. C., quoted, 265.
- Hall, W. E., quoted, 284-285.
- Hamilton, Alexander, on Monroe mission, 137.
- Hammond, John, quoted, 214-215.
- Häncl, quoted, 289.
- Hanna, Hugh S., "A Financial History of Maryland, 1789-1848," 357-479.
- Harper, Robert Goodloe, on Monroe mission, 132-133, 137.
- Hat-making industry, apprentices in, 510-511; non-union workers in, 545 (note); ratio of apprentices in, 553 (note); character of apprentice regulations in, 559, 570, 572, 579.
- Hawkers, tax on, in Md. (1777-1840), 401.
- Hichborn, Benj., on Monroe mission, 80.
- Hill, Edward, 213, 224-227.
- Hobbes, on the state, 301-306.

- Hord, John S., "Internal Taxation in the Philippines," 7-45.
- Humphreys, David, and treaty of U. S. with Algiers (1795), 87-88, 111-114.
- Ide, Henry C., and internal taxation in Philippines, 14-16, 18-24.
- Income taxes in Md. (1841), 460-463.
- Indenture in American apprenticeship, 495-499.
- Independence, its relation to sovereignty, 316, 319-320; nature of, 336-338.
- Independent nation, definition of, 346-347.
- Indians, in Maryland (1642-1649), 156-157, 167-172, 227, 244.
- Ingle, Richard, 165, 182-188, 198-210, 214, 228-229, 253.
- Inheritance tax in Philippines, 23.
- Insurance companies, tax on foreign, in Md. (1840-1845), 405, 464.
- Insurance companies in Philippines, tax on, 29, 32, 42.
- Insurance policies, tax on, in Md. (1845), 465.
- Internal improvements in Md. (1826-1840), 395-396, 420-446, 447-449.
- Internal taxation in the Philippines (Hord), 7-45. *See also* Philippines.
- International law, origin and history of, 311-314; is it law? 314; "persons" of, 314-315.
- Iron-molding industry, apprentices in, before formation of unions, 500, 504, 506; after formation of unions, 516 (note), 519-520; agreement with National Defense Association concerning apprentices in, 524-532, 533; regulation of apprentices by international union in, 550, 552; character of regulations, 577.
- Jay, John, minister to Great Britain, 57; instructions, 59; news of treaty received in France, 76-82; opposition to treaty in U. S., 93, 99; Monroe's view of treaty, 146-147.
- Jefferson, Thomas, on Jay treaty, 61, 122; on Monroe mission, 138; on Monroe's View, 142; on "Scipio's" attack, 143.
- Jellinck, quoted, 290.
- Jesuits in Maryland (1642-49), 175-176, 205-206.
- Jewelry workers, apprentices in, regulated by local unions, 548; character of regulations, 581.
- Kelke, quoted, 286-287.
- Kent Island (Md.), 195-196, 210-212.
- Laband, quoted, 289.
- Lace Curtain Operatives, apprentices in, 544 (note), 562, 576.
- Langdon, John, on Jay treaty, 93.
- Law, definition and nature of, 322-327.
- Lawrence, T. J., quoted, 315, 319, 320.
- Leased territory, definition of, 347.
- Lee, Charles, on Monroe mission, 131.
- Le Fur, quoted, 283, 287-288.
- Lewger, John, 171-172, 174-175, 176, 179-181, 184-188, 192, 253.
- License taxes in Md. (1777-1848), 361, 374-375, 398-403, 463-464.
- Limited Partnership Law of Md. (1826), 403.
- Livingston, Robert, on Jay treaty, 93-94, 121; on Monroe mission, 137-138.
- Locke, on the state, 306.
- Lockouts, status of apprentice during, 570.
- Lotteries in Md., tax on dealers in (1819), 402; tax on (1817), 407-410; (1845), 465.
- Lottery in Philippines, revenue from, 9-10.

- McHenry, James, on Monroe's View, 144.
- Machine Printers' Beneficial Association, character of apprentice regulations in, 564.
- Machinists and blacksmiths, simple industrial conditions among, 503; limitation of apprentices among, 508.
- Machinists, International Association of, regulation of apprenticeship by, 551-552, 590.
- McIlwraith, quoted, 285.
- McKinley, Wm., and Porto Rican trade duties, 13.
- Madison, James, on Jay treaty, 93.
- Maine, Sir Henry, quoted, 320.
- Malta, Knights of, ask land in U. S., 88.
- Maryland Canal Company, Maryland's aid to, 437-439, 443.
- Maryland during the English Civil Wars. Pt. II. (Steiner), 155-268; relations with other colonies, 156, 169; with Indians, 156-157, 167-172, 227, 244; deeds, suits, etc., 158-166, 177-182, 188-192, 194, 196, 198, 210-211, 214, 215 (note), 217-219, 221-224, 229-231, 238-251; Jesuits in, 175-176, 205-206; Ingle's rebellion, 182-188, 198-210, 214; regarding laws, 192-193, 214, 228-229, 253; Assemblies, 197, 213, 214, 215-216, 231-240, 256-268; Conditions of Plantation, 254-255; religious toleration, 255-256, 264-268.
- Maryland, financial history of, 1789-1848 (Hanna); during Revolution, 359-372; treasury confusion after war, 370-372; period of surplus financiering, 373-393; of indirect taxation, 394-419; internal improvements and the state debt, 420-454; suspension of interest payments (1841-1848), 455-475; tables of receipts, expenditures, etc., 478-481. *See also* Table of Contents, 355.
- Mason, S. T., on Jay treaty, 93.
- Merchants in Md., tax on (1820-1832), 398-400.
- Merlin, M., 83.
- Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers, Brass Molders, Brass and Silver Workers' International Union, apprentice regulations in, 575-576.
- Mining concessions in Philippines, tax on, 30, 42.
- Mint tax in Philippines, 9-10.
- Mississippi, navigation of, and Monroe's negotiation, 69-73, 82-86.
- Von Mohl, quoted, 288.
- Monarchomachen, regarding the state, 300-301.
- Monroe, Jas., appointed minister to France, 56; instructions, 58-60; received in France and exceeds instructions, 61-62, 66; negotiates commercial regulations, 66-69; and navigation of Mississippi and southern boundary of U. S., 69-73, 82-86; relations with Paine, 73, 133, 134, 135-136; and U. S. consular service in France, 73; and Gouverneur Morris, 74; gives American flag to French Convention, 74-75; troubles with France over Jay treaty, 76-82, 103-110, 115-126; treaty with Algiers (1795), 87-88, 111-114; on Jay treaty, 90-101, 146-147; protects Americans in France, 114; recalled, 121-126; asks reason for recall, 127-128; unofficial explanations, 128-133; accusations of R. G. Harper and others, 132-133, 137; defense, 133-137; his View, 137-139, 142-146; Washington's criticism of the View, 139-142; other criticisms, 142-145. *See also* Table of Contents, 53.
- Monroe Mission to France, 1794-1796 (Bond), *see* Jas. Monroe.

- Moore, J. B., quoted, 289-290, 319.
- Morris, Gouverneur, recalled as minister to France, 55; asks passport from Monroe, 74.
- Moser, quoted, 320.
- Motley, James M., "Apprenticeship in American Trade Unions," 491-593.
- Musicians, American Federation of, no apprentice system in, 540.
- Nation, nature of a, 333-342.
- Nations, classification of, 345-348.
- Neale, James, 155, 158, 174-176, 192, 253.
- Negro, free, colonization of by Md. (1826-1852), 413-415.
- Neutralized state, definition of, 347.
- Note-brokers in Md., tax on (1819), 402.
- Occupation taxes in Philippines, 31, 33, 42.
- Officers' commissions in Md., tax on (1844), 465.
- Officers' fees, in Md., tax on (1824-1844), 406-407, 462.
- Opium in Philippines, Spanish government control of, 9; revenue from, 10.
- Oppenheim, quoted, 286.
- Paine, Thomas, and Monroe, 73, 133, 134, 135-136.
- Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers, Brotherhood of, apprentice regulations in, 568, 573 (note), 581.
- Pattern-making industry, apprentice system in, 543.
- Peddlers, in Md., tax on (1777-1840), 401.
- Pelet, M., 84, 86.
- Pen and Pocketknife Grinders' and Finishers' National Union of America, character of apprentice regulations in, 560.
- Penitentiary in Md. (1805), 392-393, 416.
- People, nature of a, 318-319, 339-341.
- Personal union, definition of, 347.
- Philippine Commission, and internal taxation, 11-17, 19-24.
- Philippines, internal taxation in (Hord), 7-45; Spanish system, 7-10; American system, 10-24; American tax rates, 25-31; exemptions, 31-33; use of revenues, 33, 42; bureau of internal revenue, 33-36, 41; opposition to taxation, 37-40; amount collected, 42; cost of collection and refunds, 42-43; advantage of American free trade, 43-45; bibliography, 45.
- Phillimore, Sir Robert, quoted, 315.
- Piano and Organ Workers' International Union, apprentice regulations of, 565.
- Pickering, Timothy, and Monroe mission, 100, 104, 109-110, 118-121, 127-129, 144.
- Pinckney, Chas. C., 121, 124, 125.
- Pinckney, Thos., 86, 98.
- Plantagenet, Beauchamp, quoted, 168-169, 206 (note), 211 (note).
- Plumbers' Associations, Master, set probation period for apprentices, 561.
- Plumbers, United Association of Journeymen, apprenticeship regulation by, 550 (note); restricts number of apprentices and helpers, 556; character of apprentice regulations in, 564, 573 (note), 577.
- Poll-tax, in Philippines, 7-11, 28, 42; in Md., prohibited by Bill of Rights, 377.
- Port duties in Md. (1776-1789), 361, 362, 371, 373.
- Porto Rico, internal taxation in, 13-14.
- Potomac Company, of Md. and Va., history of, 427.
- Print-cutting industry, apprentice system in, 544.
- Printing trade, apprentices in,

- before formation of unions, 500, 501-502, 506-508, 509-510; after formation of unions, 513-515, 551; character of apprentice regulations in, 572, 574; effect on apprenticeship of invention of machinery, 583-584. *See also* Typographical Associations, etc.
- Probation in apprenticeship in American trade unions, 561.
- Property tax in Md. (1776-1848), 362-366, 371, 377, 455-458; difficulty of collection of (1841-1846), 466-469.
- Protected state, definition of, 347-348.
- Protests in Md., tax on (1842), 465.
- Public exhibitions in Md., tax on (1841), 464.
- Public schools in Md., state aid to (1723-1839), 385, 391, 411, 417-419, 435 (note), 453-454.
- Railway unions, no apprentice system in, 536-538.
- Randolph, Edmund J., and the Monroe mission, 58-100, 103.
- Real estate in Philippines, tax on, 10.
- Receivers, tax on commissions of, in Md. (1845), 462-463.
- Religious toleration in Maryland (1642-49), 255-256, 264-268.
- Resumption of interest payment on state debt of Md. (1848), 474-475.
- Revenue of Md. (1776-1848), 360-369, 372-375, 380-386, 389-390, 394-412, 451, 455-465, 470-471, 478-479.
- Rivier, A., quoted, 283, 315, 318, 319, 320, 321.
- Rousseau, on the state, 307-308; on government, 307.
- Rüttiman, quoted, 289.
- Salaries in Md. (1790, 1815, 1842), 375 (note)
- Saw smiths, non-union workers in, 545 (note); apprentice regulations of, 578-579.
- "Scipio," see Uriah Tracy.
- Semi-sovereignty, nature of, 337.
- Sidgwick, quoted, 289.
- Sinking fund of Md. (1784-1848), 372, 446-449, 481.
- Sovereignty, history and nature of, 316-318, 319-321; indivisibility of, 322-332; divisibility of, 333-342.
- Spain and navigation of Mississippi and southern boundary of U. S., 69-73, 82-86.
- Sphere of influence, definition of, 348.
- Stamp tax in Md. (1845), 464-465.
- State in Constitutional and International Law (Crane), 277-348.
- State in constitutional law, 292-310, 322-332; early concept of, 292-294; definition of by Bodin, 295-300; by the Monarchomachen, 300-301; by Hobbes, 301-306; by Locke, 306; by Rousseau, 307-308; by modern German writers, 308-310; indivisibility of sovereignty in, 322-332; subjects of, 329-331, 344-345; location of sovereignty in, 322-323, 324-325; government in, 325; law in, 324, 326-327; force in, 326-329; territory of, 330; definition of, 331-332.
- State in international law, 311-321, 333-342; discussion of Grotius' views of, 312-313; essential and occasional elements of, 315-321, 333-342; divisibility of sovereignty in, 333-342; people of, 339-341, 345; government of, 336; independence in, 336-338; rights in, 338-339, 341; classification of nations, 345-348.
- Stationary Firemen, International Brotherhood of, no apprentice system in, 537.
- Steel and Copper Plate Printers, International Union of, apprentice regulations in, 563.

- Steel range workers, regulation of apprenticeship by international union of, 550.
- Steiner, Bernard C., "Maryland during the English Civil Wars," Pt. II., 155-268.
- Stock in Md., tax on (1841-1848), 458-459.
- Stone, Wm., 252, 253, 255-268.
- Stone Cutters' Association, Journeymen, regulation of work by, 549 (note); apprentice rules of, 550 (note); character of regulations, 557, 558, 563, 569-570, 572, 574, 577, 578, 579-580; effect on apprenticeship of invention of machinery, 583-584.
- Stove mounters, regulation of apprenticeship by international union of, 550.
- Strikes, status of apprentice during, 570.
- Stubbs, quoted, 286.
- Subjects (of the state), 329-330, 344-345.
- Susquehanna and Patapsco Canal Company, *see* Tidewater Canal Company.
- Susquehanna Canal, Maryland's aid to, 426.
- Suzerainty, definitions of, 283-287.
- Taft, Wm. H., and internal taxation in Philippines, 13.
- Taxation in Md. (1776-1848), forms of, 361-366, 374-375, 455-465; declaration of Bill of Rights on, 377-378; arrearages in, 381-382; of banking capital, 384-386; indirect, 394-419; difficulties of collection, 466-469.
- Taxes in Philippines, Spanish and American, poll tax, 7-11, 28, 42; on Chinese, 9; on coinage of money, 9-10; on urban property, 9-10; on business houses, 9-11, 30-32, 42; on forest products, 9-11, 29-30, 42; on real estate, 10; on documents, 10-11, 26-28, 32, 42; on corporations, 23; on inheritances, 23; on alcohol, 25; on tobacco, 25-26; on banks, 26, 32, 42; on insurance companies, 29, 32, 42; on mining concessions, 30, 42; on occupations, 31, 33, 42.
- Taylor, Hannis, quoted, 283, 319.
- Taylor, John, on Monroe mission, 142-143.
- Tazewell, Henry, on Jay treaty, 93; on Monroe mission, 123.
- Territory, relation of, to sovereignty, 316-318, 329-330; to a nation, 338-340.
- Textile industry, no apprentice system in, 539.
- Tidewater Canal Company (Susquehanna and Patapsco Canal Company), Maryland's aid to, 442, 472-473.
- Tobacco inspection in Md. (1824), assumed by state, 415.
- Tobacco in Philippines, Spanish government control of (1782-1883), 9, 12; American tax on, 25-26; revenue from, 42.
- Tracy, Uriah ("Scipio"), and Monroe mission, 143.
- Trade agreement, regulation of apprenticeship by, 524-534.
- Trade unions, American, regulation of apprentices by, 513-523; no apprentice system in certain, 535-540; apprentice system maintained by other, 540-545; partial control of apprentice system by, 545-547; control of apprentice system by local unions, 548-550; by international unions, 550-552; purposes of control of apprentices by, 553-556; admission of apprentices into, 580-581, 586-588.
- Travelers' Goods and Leather Novelty Workers' International Union, age of apprenticeship in, 562.
- Treasury of Md., administration of (1790), 376-378; effect of surplus in (1813), 389-393.
- Treaty of 1778, alleged violations of by U. S., 105-110.
- Tributary state, definition of, 347.

- Trustees, tax on commissions of, in Md (1845), 462-463.
- "Two-thirder," in the printing industry, 500, 507-508.
- Typographia, deutsch-amerikanischen, apprentice system in, 544.
- Typographical Association, National, regulates term of apprenticeship, 518.
- Typographical Association of New York, on employment of foreign workmen, 501-502; on "two-thirders," 507-508; on pay for journeymen teaching apprentices, 508.
- Typographical Society, Baltimore, on apprenticeship, 513-514.
- Typographical Society, Columbia, on apprenticeship, 513, 514.
- Typographical Society, Nashville, on apprenticeship, 514.
- Typographical Society, New Orleans, on apprenticeship, 514-515.
- Typographical Society, Philadelphia, on apprentices, 513.
- Typographical Union, International, limits number of apprentices, 515; control of apprentices in certain unions of, 551.
- Union Manufacturing Company, Maryland's aid to, 428 (note).
- United States, southern boundary of, and Monroe's negotiation, 69-73, 82-86; and treaty with Algiers (1795), 87-88, 111-114; and Jay treaty, 93-101, 121-122; alleged violation of treaty of 1778 by, 105-110; surplus revenue distribution (1837), Maryland's share of, 411-412.
- Upholsters' International Union, apprentice cards in, 562.
- Urban property in Philippines, tax on, 9-10.
- Van Stophorst loan to Md. (1782), 369, 380.
- Vassal territory, definition of, 347.
- Vaughan, Robert, 184, 247, 253, 260, 261.
- Wages of apprentices in American trade unions, 508, 575-577.
- Wagon and carriage industry, no apprentice system in, 539.
- Waitz, quoted, 289.
- War of 1812, financing of, in Md., 386-389; payment by U. S. of Maryland's claims for, 410-411.
- Washington, George, and Monroe mission, 95, 127, 139-142, 145.
- Watch case engraving industry, apprentice system in, 545; character of apprentice regulations in, 564, 574-575.
- Wheaton, Henry, quoted, 320.
- White, Father Andrew, 205.
- Window glass workers, regulation of apprenticeship by international union of, 550; character of regulations, 557, 558 (and note), 559-560, 579.
- Wire weaving industry, apprentice regulations in, 571.
- Wolcott, Oliver, and Monroe mission, 131, 144.
- Woolsey, quoted, 288-289.
- Working cards of apprentices in American trade unions, 561-562.
- Wright, Luke E., and internal taxation in Philippines, 15.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
I.—INTERNAL TAXATION IN THE PHILIPPINES. By J. S. Hord. . .	I
II-III.—THE MONROE MISSION TO FRANCE, 1794-1796. By B. W. Bond, Jr.	47
IV-V.—MARYLAND DURING THE ENGLISH CIVIL WARS. Part II. By B. C. Steiner.	151
VI-VII.—THE STATE IN CONSTITUTIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LAW. By R. T. Crane.	271
VIII-IX-X.—A FINANCIAL HISTORY OF MARYLAND, 1789-1848. By H. S. Hanna.	349
XI-XII.—APPRENTICESHIP IN AMERICAN TRADE UNIONS. By J. M. Motley.	483

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