

At present there are some 35 post-primary schools in which organized training of apprentices to the motor trade is being carried out. It is estimated that there are well over 1,000 apprentices in the trade, quite apart from those in remote districts, and a fairly large increase is expected in the near future.

Early in 1946 the Hon. Minister gave his general approval of the policy for the development of facilities for instruction in motor engineering by the provision of equipment and also accommodation, as circumstances permitted. Following on from the Minister's general approval of the scheme proposed, the Department and the schools concerned in the first place endeavoured to provide suitable rooms for both theory and practice. This was not an easy task; prefabricated rooms have been used in some cases, and in others Army huts have been brought into service to supplement the school buildings.

Grants for equipment according to the requirements of the particular districts are now being made, and it is expected that the total amount necessary for the 35 schools will be in the neighbourhood of £13,000, as approved by the Hon. Minister. Thus the facilities for training in motor engineering are improving steadily, and in a matter of, say, six months, they should be very much better. It may be mentioned that the Certification Board is the only Board of its kind controlling the training of its apprentices and mechanics, and as such it may be regarded as a pioneer movement that has achieved marked success in every way.

In the actual training of apprentices the co-operation between the Education Department and the Certification Board has been very gratifying on both sides, and there is every reason to believe that the continuation of this co-operation will prove invaluable in raising the standard of trade training for the motor mechanics of the Dominion.

(21) APPRENTICE-TRAINING

A great step forward in apprentice-training was made during the year by the passage of the Apprenticeship Amendment Act, based upon the recommendations of the Apprenticeship Commission set up a few years ago. On this Commission the Department was represented by the Director and by the Superintendent of Technical Education. The Apprenticeship Commission made, in all, some thirty-six recommendations, most of which were incorporated in the Apprenticeship Amendment Act put through last year. It is this amendment which makes possible daylight training of apprentices. Of the thirty-six recommendations made by the Apprenticeship Commission, only five specifically concern the Education Department, and the Department has already taken steps to implement these recommendations in order that there should be no delay in carrying out its part of the work when daylight training of apprentices becomes operative. These five recommendations are as follows :—

Recommendation 14.—"In the programme of work for "social studies" in schools there should be incorporated reference to possible careers, including a broad general knowledge of the conditions of apprenticeship." (Definite regulations are at present being prepared making for an increase in the numbers of careers advisers in schools, for the training of these careers advisers, and for defining their particular duties.)

Recommendation 15.—"A system of bursaries should be inaugurated to help pupils who live in country districts not served by a technical school and who are desirous of further study in technical subjects above the level of the School Certificate." (This system of bursaries has just been established and the first awards made. Pupils following advanced technical courses in agriculture, art, building construction, engineering, and homecrafts who are required to live away from home in order to follow these courses are now granted bursaries of an annual value of £40.)