

1929.
NEW ZEALAND.

APPRENTICESHIP CONFERENCE, 1929.

Laid on the Table by Leave of the House.

CONDENSED REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

THE Conference opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, the 7th May, 1929.

Present :—

		Employers.		Workers.
Auckland	..	G. Mills-Palmer	..	T. Bloodworth.
		S. E. Wright	..	H. Campbell.
Gisborne ..	..	C. Tattersfield	..	W. Horne.
Napier ..	..	E. A. Williams	..	T. Baker.
New Plymouth	..	A. F. Sandford	..	G. Fleming.
Wanganui	..	J. Patterson	..	W. McLeod.
Palmerston North	..	E. R. B. Holben	..	H. N. Scroggs.
Masterton..	..	D. A. Pickering	..	S. Brown.
Wellington	..	A. C. Mitchell	..	F. D. Cornwell.
		A. Fletcher	..	W. Maddison.
Nelson ..	..	W. Wilmot	..	S. Davis.
Greymouth	..	P. Hambleton	..	G. Batty.
Christchurch	..	W. H. Winsor	..	G. T. Thurston.
		H. Bradley	..	J. W. Roberts.
Timaru ..	..	W. Petrie	..	R. Cairns.
Dunedin ..	..	A. Munro	..	M. Brown.
		W. R. Hayward	..	A. Rice.
Invercargill	..	A. J. Ball	..	W. J. Thomas.

Education Department : Mr. T. B. Strong, Director of Education.

Labour Department : Mr. F. W. Rowley, Secretary of Labour.

The meeting was opened by the Hon. W. A. VEITCH, Minister of Labour.

The MINISTER, in expressing to the delegates, on behalf of the Government, a cordial welcome to the Conference table, said that this was a Conference chiefly consisting of members of Apprenticeship Committees and entirely consisting of gentlemen who had been appointed by Apprenticeship Committees for the purpose of advising the Government on the questions that would be referred to them. He felt sure that the Government could fully rely on the Conference for conscientious advice by men who were directly experienced in the administration of the Apprentices Act. They were entitled to be regarded as a body of men who had given their services without fee or reward for no purpose other than the desire to improve the general conditions of apprenticeship service and teaching throughout the Dominion. He was sure that they would recognize the fact that the method and extent of the teaching that was given to boys in learning their trade was of the utmost importance in every country in the world, and was of paramount importance in a young country that was in the early stages of its development. The history of all the older countries of the world showed that they began by cultivating the land—farming was the exclusive occupation of the people; and as the years went by the boys merged into other lines of industry—secondary industries developed; and if they looked back over the history of the Mother-country itself they would find that her power, her greatness really began when she merged into the second stage of her existence—namely, the development of secondary industries in addition to production from the land. New Zealand, in his estimation—though he might express an opinion with which a great many people differed—was merging into the stage of her existence in which secondary industries would play an increasingly important part. At this juncture it was extremely important that the conditions under which apprentices were trained should receive the most careful attention of responsible men who really understood the problem, and the delegates present were entitled to be regarded as such.

Some of the disabilities that were found in the older countries were that apprenticeship was a little too practical, and a great deal of the scientific knowledge which it was so desirable that an apprentice should acquire had been disregarded, and that was one of the points that he would like to impress upon the minds of the members of the Conference. They needed not only the handicraft of a trade to be taught, but in addition to that they wanted definite means whereby the maximum of scientific knowledge might be acquired by apprentices.