

institutions born of them and suited to them. We could not restore the apprenticeship system now, if we would, and American young men are guided by a correct instinct, and not merely by impatience, when they refuse to bind themselves as apprentices.

Let us recapitulate : A whole important field of lucrative activity, that of mechanical labour, is gradually passing into the possession of foreigners, and natives are either abandoning it, or if they remain, do so only as hewers of wood and drawers of water. This leads to several most undesirable results. First, the working class is forming itself into combinations animated by foreign notions, in many cases hostile to the principles of our free institutions. Secondly, a whole range of occupations in which an honest livelihood might be earned, and for which, more than for any other, a large number of our citizens are suited, is being withdrawn from them, leaving them either to pick up a precarious livelihood by degrading means or through a questionable "smartness," or else forcing them to overcrowd professions for which they are unsuited, to the great detriment both of these professions and of the persons who are fitted to enter them. Thirdly, labour troubles, with all their attendant miseries and dangers, physical, moral and political, are growing up on every side and destroying the peace and harmony of the nation. All this is due to the fact that American youths, for the most part, either refuse to learn trades at all, or, if they are forced to learn them, do so in such a slipshod way that they cannot hold their own against foreign workmen, are forced into inferior positions, in which they respect neither themselves nor their work, and become chronically discontented and rebellious. The causes of this refusal on their part to learn trades are chiefly three : (1) the natural human aver-

sion to continuous, undiverting labour, intensified by American restlessness and impatience for immediate results ; (2) a feeling that manual labour is ungentlemanly and servile ; and (3) the want of proper opportunity to learn trades, a want due to the decay of the obsolete apprenticeship system and our failure to replace it by anything suited to actual conditions and the modern spirit.

Such is the present situation, and it plainly requires to be changed. The question is : How shall we change it and reopen the fruitful field of mechanical labour to the youth of our country ? How shall we make young men willing to submit to the sustained and earnest exertion involved in the learning of a trade, and to curb their native restlessness ? How shall we convince them that all honest labour is gentlemanly, and only idleness and dependence are ungentlemanly ? How shall we give them a chance to learn trades thoroughly, supposing they are willing to do so ? I answer without hesitation : By making manual training an integral part of common and high-school education, and by establishing public technical schools on the same footing as the schools of natural science, medicine, law, and the fine arts. By so doing, we should, I think, meet nearly all the difficulties of the case. First, we should of course make it possible for any young man who chose to learn any trade thoroughly, without becoming an apprentice and exposing himself to all the dangers, delays, uncertainties, and indignities which apprenticeship in its decrepitude involves. Secondly, by placing the mechanical arts on a level with the so-called liberal arts, and upon a scientific basis, we should raise them to the dignity of professions. Thirdly, we should in this way supply a portion of the stimulus necessary to induce our young men to overcome their natural inertia and impatience.