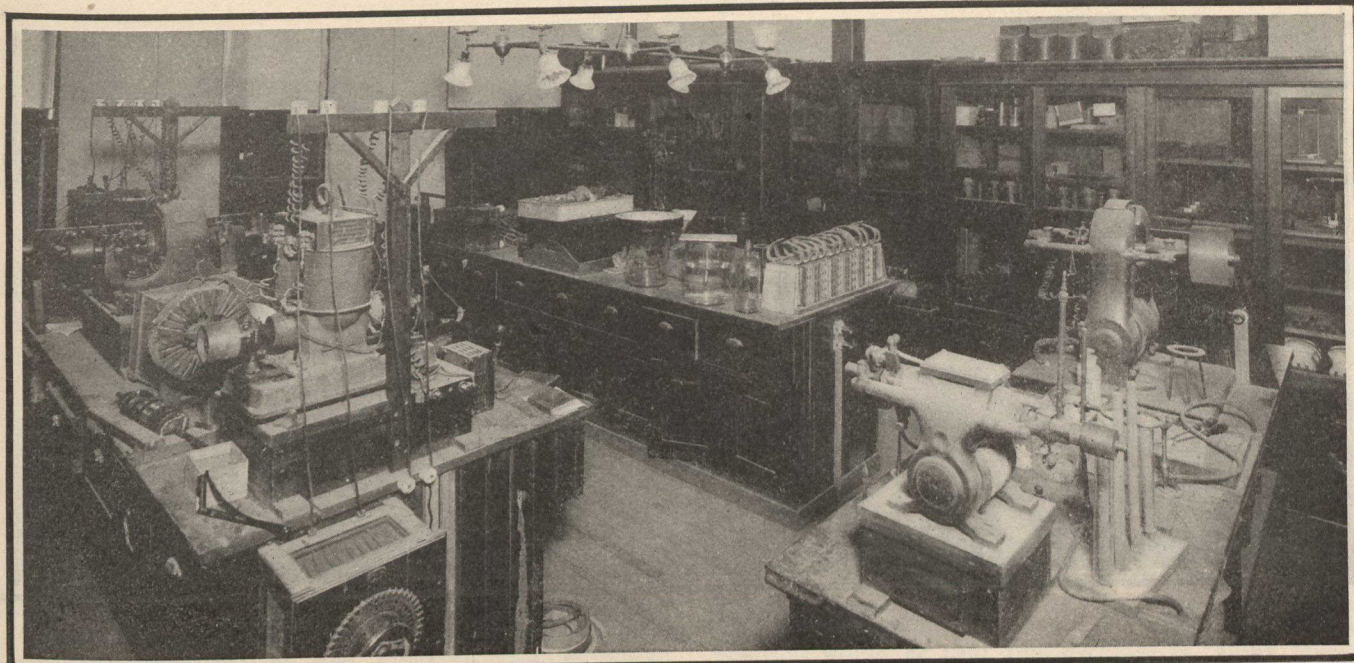




Chemical Laboratory, Technical High School, Toronto.

For Better Mechanics

THE GOVERNMENT ASKED TO APPOINT A COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY.

By S. MORLEY WICKETT.

The old apprentice system has broken down and the technical school is taking its place. The Mechanic Arts High School of Boston, (1893), is one style; the New York Trade School, (1881), is another; the Industrial Institutes of France and Germany are a still higher grade. Last May, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association petitioned the Ottawa authorities for a Commission of Enquiry on Technical Education. The Labour Convention of 1905, passed a resolution asking the Dominion Government to take action. The movement is gathering headway. The demand for skilled mechanics is growing rapidly and the supply is inadequate.—EDITOR.

CANADA knows something of the effects of scientific study on agricultural activities. The Experimental Farm at Ottawa was regarded at first, as an Utopian institution which might put "fine ideas" in the head of the farmer's son. It succeeded in putting ideas in the young student of agriculture who straightway planted them in the soil where they brought forth fruit "an hundred fold." The conditions of to-day are the best proof of what the Federal Farm has done for Canadian agriculture.

The raw produce of the farm must be worked up and form the basis of important manufactures. Our fisheries, mines and forests must also breathe life into a multitude of other enterprises. What technical education has done for agriculture it should now do for industry. The country needs a great body of workmen who can earn the verdict, well-done.

Until Canada took a new lease of life in 1895, demand for skilled mechanics was almost stagnant. But the tide has turned. An ample supply of skilled labour is now absolutely necessary if Canadian industry is not to be retarded. Of late years manufacturers have been scrambling among themselves for what capable employees they possess and for what fresh ability comes knocking at their doors. Unfortunately, very little skilled help comes knocking nowadays. It must either be imported or trained at home. One will find very few industries that have not brought at least some, often many, labourers from Great Britain and the United States.

That the situation is serious needs no further evidence than the fact that at its own expense the Manufacturers' Association is now establishing a Labour Bureau in London. In Winnipeg the other day Mr. Bal-

lantyne in his annual address as President of the Association, spoke as follows:

"Probably the greatest need of manufacturers at the present time is skilled help. The Association has not hesitated to express its disapproval of the emigration policy of the Dominion, which discourages skilled mechanics from coming to Canada. In addition to this, the Alien Labour Law is designed to prevent manufacturers from bringing such men to Canada; and further, no steps are being taken to train such men at home. The Technical Education Committee presented a memorial to the Dominion Government asking for the appointment of a commission for the purpose of indicating a national system of technical training. This is greatly needed in Canada, and if we are to keep pace with the United States and European countries we must give our people every opportunity to attain skill."

We may forget assertions in certain quarters that



Wood Worknig: Demonstration Lesson.
Mechanic Arts High School, Boston.