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## Apprenticeship Training Report

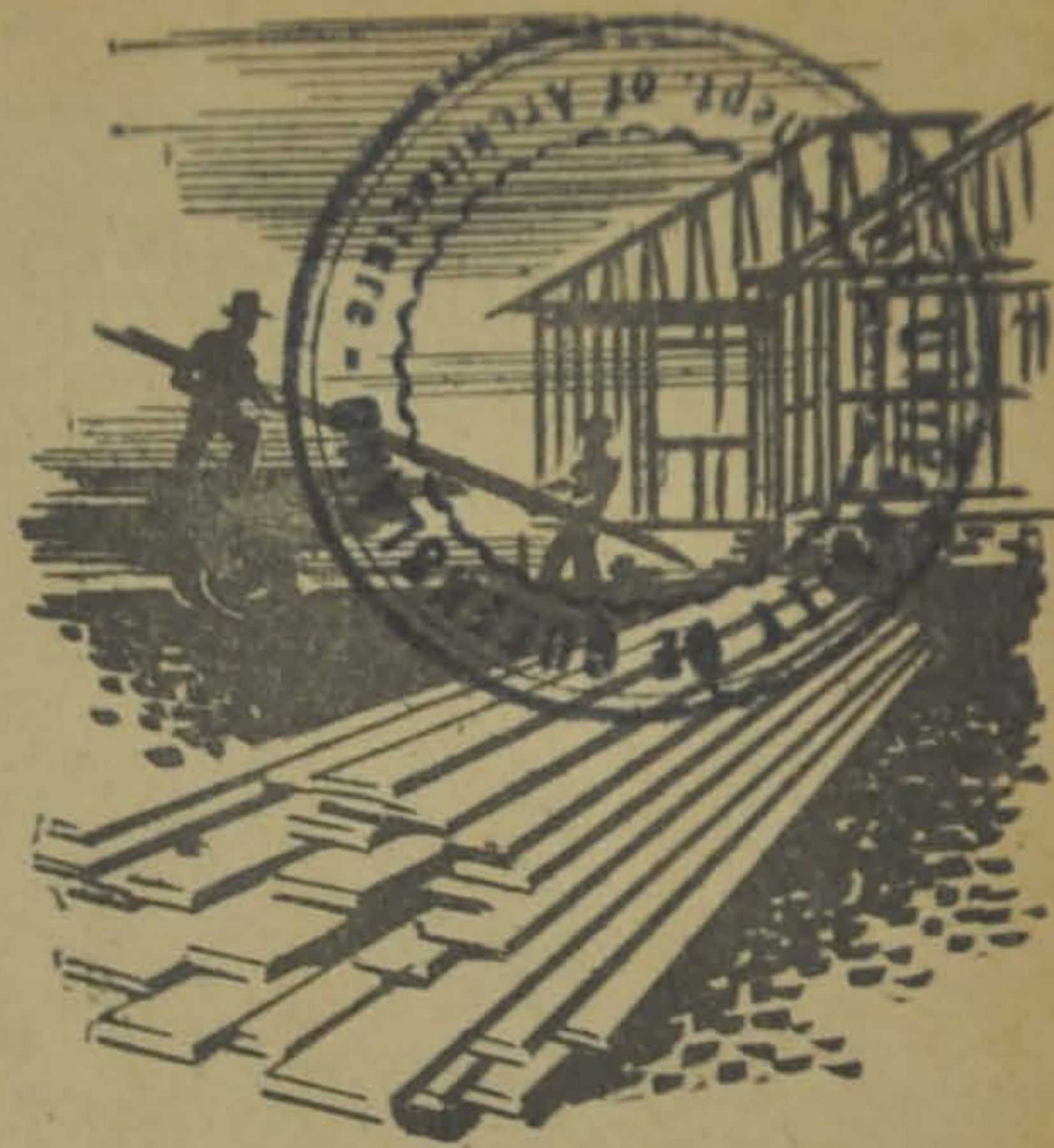
The report of the committee appointed by the Queensland Government to inquire into the training of apprentices has met with a mixed reception. Some of the committee's recommendations meet with general approval—for instance the setting of a maximum period of five years for apprenticeship—but undoubtedly there are many controversial recommendations in the report, such as the suggested three months' continuous training period at a college in the employer's time and at the employer's expense.

In keeping with modern trends, aptitude tests are recommended to be applied to select the most suitable lads for the respective trades, and employers are to have the right of selection of apprentices. It is understood that the compulsory employment of a proportion of apprentices to tradesmen is to be dropped. A full resume of the committee's recommendations appears elsewhere in this issue.

Reverting to the three months' training proposal, apart from the matter of cost (quite a considerable sum a firm employing large numbers of apprentices), it is urged by some that as the commencing age for apprentices is to be fixed at 16 years, the apprentice should have ample opportunity during the immediate preceding twelve months to be learning the rudiments of whatever trade he wishes to follow. In any case, it is claimed, many firms are better equipped than the Technical College to give apprentices adequate training, so that an apprentice may actually be worse off by having to attend the three months' course instead of spending that time at his employer's workshop.

Objection is also raised to the suggestion that all minors and apprentices should be brought within the scope of an "Apprentices and Minors' Bureau," even to the fixation of wages. The latter is a matter, it is felt in many quarters, that should be left to the Arbitration Court, and no sound reason has been advanced for the compulsory registration of all minors.

A meeting of employers' organisations, called by the Employers' Federation, has met and discussed the report, and strong objection is taken to the paragraph stating that the committee's report was unanimous. It is pointed out that one of the employers' representatives, Mr. S. A. Best, disagreed with the committee on many points in the early stages of the committee's investigations, but, unfortunately, he died suddenly and his place on the committee was not filled. The Premier has been requested to receive a deputation to discuss many of the controversial issues involved, and to ensure that the employer's viewpoint is given full consideration, before any action is taken on the report.



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