

CERTIFICATES.

We have already written several articles about standards for weavers, and about other allied subjects. The general outcome of the discussion is that we cannot hope to have in the nearest future a national or international organisation, which would have any authority to issue weaving certificates of any kind. On the other hand such certificates issued by the existing organisations have no legal value.

This is because of the general confusion prevailing in the field of education both in Canada and United States. Education is subjected to the State or Provincial laws; and there is little chance of reconciling all these local laws, regulations, and customs to a point where a diploma issued in Manitoba would be recognised in Texas.

But we think that we found a way to get around this obstacle. In most cases the weaver is not after a formal diploma which would enable him a professional career, but a certificate that according to such an such requirements he should be considered as being on the level of an Apprentice, a Journeyman, or of a Master Weaver. The requirements established by different Guilds are not very different from the list of requirements which we have published some time ago (Master Weaver No.25, Jan.'56).

Therefore what a candidate must do to get such a certificate is quite simple. Take the copy of requirements for different grades of weaving skill, and make all the projects listed, until one comes to the level which is obviously too difficult.

Then when he thinks that he has fulfilled the requirements, he should go to his Guild, or any weaving studio, school, or private teacher generally known in weaving circles, and ask him to check up. If in the opinion of this organisation, person, or school he has reached the objective - a corresponding certificate should be issued.

The certificate can not simply state that Mr. or Mrs.X is a Master Weaver. Nobody has an authority to do that much. But it may say that the work submitted by Mr.X corresponds closely to the requirements generally accepted for this particular grade.

The wording of such a document should go on these lines:

"We undersigned certify hereby that in our
"opinion Mr. has fulfilled the generally accepted require-
"ments for the grade of a The copy of require-
"ments appears on the verso of this certificate."

"We have personally inspected all samples and written
"problems submitted by the candidate, and we found them satis-

"factory both as to the design and the technical execution."

"This certificate is issued in good faith and free of charge."

Signed, etc.

The beauty of this scheme is that it is really the candidate who becomes the judge, because with the requirements and instructions explicit enough, nobody would dare to submit his work unless he were 100% sure that it is acceptable. Therefore it will hardly ever happen that the submitted entries will have to be rejected.

The requirements must be specified on the certificate, simply to protect the candidate as well as the judges from unfair competition which could commercialise the whole idea by establishing ridiculously low standards. The same applies to the principle that the certificate itself must be free of charge. The candidate will pay only the actual cost of having his entries examined and of the operating expenses (printing, mailing etc.). There must be no suspicion of any profit in the whole transaction.

Entry forms which would have to accompany the entries must contain a statement signed (and perhaps sworn) by the candidate that all submitted articles and problems have been made by him without any help. This will give us further protection from any possible abuse.

The candidates who have successfully passed tests in any Guild, school or similar organisation do not need to make again samples or problems already covered by the previous test. They send instead of entries - the former certificate with the list of requirements.

The only objection we can see to this project is that different teachers, schools, or Guilds may judge the same entries in a different way. This is unavoidable, but it happens as well in a Guild where the jury changes every year or so.

Detailed instructions will help here a lot. For instance instead of saying that the submitted work must have straight edges it should be stated how straight they are supposed to be (deviations in fraction of an inch). Instead of saying that the beating must be even, we shall say that the number of picks per inch can vary by not more than 5% for instance etc.

This is of course just an idea for discussion, and we shall welcome any suggestions.

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