Skill and the commodification of labour in New South Wales 1840-1915

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CHAPTER 10

THE 1901 IRONWORKERS' ASSISTANTS' STRIKE

Sydney employers desire to pay good wages for all classes of work... They have agreed to pay the full value of each particular class of work in their engineering establishments, and the general public can readily understand that in our business... different classes of work must be paid for at different rates. ... if we had to pay 7s per day regardless of the value of the services rendered, we could not have the slightest hope of being able to keep the trade. ... We have therefore been forced to classify the work, and fix a value on it on a commercial basis...

(J.P. Franki, Manager, Mort's Dock and Engineering Co., 1901)¹

I

The development of counter-artisanal perspectives in the iron trades before 1900 had occasionally disturbed but not in any lasting way challenged the artisanal paradigm. From 1900, however, the artisanal paradigm in the iron trades was subjected to increasingly sustained attack, leading finally to its displacement by the industrial concept of skill. In the period artisanal practices within the iron trades rapidly lost their "taken for granted" status as immutable, and the forms of explanation for them increasingly came to be considered implausible. The artisanal paradigm rapidly became an anachronistic form of discourse centred in the engineers' unions and the USB. Outside these enclaves iron trade employers as well as "unskilled" iron trades workers adopted the industrial understanding of skill and its logic. Of central importance in this process was the 1901 ironworkers' assistants' strike. This, the first and most important step in the process of dismantling the artisanal paradigm as the dominant mental framework in the iron trades, was taken almost as soon as employment in the New South Wales engineering and shipbuilding industry began to recover after the 1890s depression.

¹ The Daily Telegraph, 1st July 1901, p. 9.
The environment in which economic recovery occurred was different to that before 1890 in a number of respects. The general buoyancy which had characterised the two decades from 1870 was replaced with a much more uncertain and hesitant period of economic growth.\textsuperscript{2} In addition, by 1900 class relations had shifted in favour of employers and when economic growth resumed it did so in the presence of an employing class determined to take full advantage of their decisive victory against the organised working class in the 1890-94 period, and the subsequent decimation which had been visited on organised labour during the depression years.\textsuperscript{3} For although the strikes may not have been "a turning point" for labour \textsuperscript{4}, they certainly were for employers. Their victory clarified the hitherto contested issues of the employers' exclusive power to manage their businesses, and meant that it was now possible for employers to claim as their "right" the control over such crucial issues as occupational classification. Thus when the union involved in a strike of railway labourers in Western Australia in 1901 demanded that its wage increases be attached to a three-tiered system of occupational classification of its own devising, the Editor of The Sydney Morning Herald was prompted to comment that 'The drawing of a classification such as this might naturally be supposed to belong of right to [the employer] and not to the men ...'.\textsuperscript{5}

Workers in engineering and boilermaking occupations were perhaps connected more directly to this assertion of employers' rights to determine

\textsuperscript{2} Buckley and Wheelwright, op. cit., pp. 197-8.
\textsuperscript{5} SMH, 11th July 1901, p. 4.
occupational classification than those employed in other sectors of the economy. During the 1890s leading iron trades employers occupied key positions in the New South Wales Employers’ Association, where they associated with the key employers of maritime and wharf labour who had given such primacy to the classificatory solution to their “labour troubles” in 1890.6 As early as 1891 the director of Hudson Brothers Engineering Co., Henry Hudson, had himself remarked on the inhibiting effect of the artisanal taxonomy, and its standard wage/classification connection.7 This theme was developed by E.J.H. Broad, the Superintendent of Fitzroy Dock (the New South Wales Government dockyard), whose analysis of “unskilled” dockyard labour in 1899 displayed all the hallmarks of an anti-artisanal approach. He commented that the standard wage of 7s a day for dockyard labourers constituted ‘... unfairness to the skilful labourer ...’ in that ‘... he only gets the same as the absolutely unskilled, and I may say, comparatively useless one.’. These comments, in their use of such terms as “the skilful labourer”, place Broad within the industrial understanding; and his solution - ‘... that these [labourers’ wages] should start at a lower rate - say 6s a day.’ connect him to the strategy of classification which accompanied it.8

The further development of the strategy of classification amongst iron trades employers was inhibited by the general circumstances of the 1890s. The weakened position of labour was reflected in the iron trades too,

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6 Henry Hudson, owner of Hudson Brothers’ Clyde rolling-stock works, was President of the New South Wales Employers Union, 1890-91; at the same time two of its Vice-Presidents - Frankl and Goodlet - were drawn from the iron trades. And the central maritime employers Lenahan, Napier and Willis - (see above Chapter 6) - were also on the Executive. See Report of Royal Commission on Strikes, op. cit., Literary Appendix, p. 153. Moreover, iron trades employers continued to head the organisation of the New South Wales industrial bourgeoisie. Hudson was instrumental in re-establishing the Employers Association (which had collapsed after the Great Strikes) in the early twentieth century, and when he did so the Secretary of the ITEA, Wegg-Horne, was appointed as its Secretary. See T. Matthews, ‘Business Associations and Politics. Chambers of Manufactures and Employers Federations in NSW, Victorian and Australian National Politics to 1939’, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 1971, pp. 28-9, p. 36.

7 See above Chapter 6, p. 197.

and it allowed iron trades employers to pursue more traditional strategies against their employees. In 1893 they secured from the engineers’ unions and the USB a 5% reduction in wage rates, and an abandonment of the rule requiring double time for the first two hours of overtime. Franki, who was of all the ITEA members perhaps most inclined to seek out new solutions to the costs of labour, considered ‘... the concession in overtime quite equal to an extra 5% reduction of wages, a great concession ...’.10 These circumstances, as well as the general downturn in business, were little inducement for iron trades employers to adopt more innovatory approaches to labour during the 1890s.

For the remainder of the 1890s the general low level of economic activity in New South Wales continued to inhibit the level of activity in the engineering workshops and shipyards. Unemployment continued for skilled and unskilled iron trades workers until 1898, when a spurt of economic activity brought about more regular employment.11 Although this period of economic activity was only to last until 1901, it was sufficient to spur renewed activity amongst iron trades workers, and in 1899 the skilled workers successfully reclaimed their pre-depression rates of pay, although only after threatening a general strike of skilled iron trades workers.12

It was partly to redress the consequences of their exclusion from this movement that the boilermakers’ assistants employed at Mort’s Dock

9 The Worker, 24th June 1893, p. 3. See also Engineers Case, op. cit., p. 62. Not, however without resistance from the USB, for which see USB Minutes, 23rd May, 6th June, 15th August, 29th August, 23rd November 1893.


11 For the relative unemployment of “skilled” and “unskilled” in the iron trades see Buckley and Wheelwright, op. cit., p. 196; Buckley, The Amalgamated Engineers, op. cit., p. 132, p. 136, p. 312; and Engineers Case, op. cit., p. 15. For the “spurt” of economic activity at the end of the 1890s see E. Shann, An Economic History of Australia, Australian edition, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1948, p. 342. Also see Buckley and Wheelwright, op. cit., p. 197; Butlin, op. cit., pp. 14-5.

12 Engineers Case, op. cit., p. 333, pp. 351-2. The Secretary of the Australian Society of Engineers commented that ‘... as the years rolled by and things became prosperous again, we got the money back again at 1/4d an hour; they also gave us back the overtime ... There was a great deal of trouble to get the 1/4d back.’ See ASE Common Rule Application, op. cit., pp. 42-3.
formed the Boilermakers' Assistants Union in April 1900.\textsuperscript{13} There was strong support for a union amongst the unskilled iron trades workers, and membership rapidly increasing through 1900, so that by November the union had about 360 members, principally drawn from Mort's Dock.\textsuperscript{14} As its membership increased to around 600 in early 1901 it did so by gradually encompassing the other specialised iron trades labourers - the dressers, and the engineers assistants - as well as general iron trades labourers.\textsuperscript{15} Reflecting its heterogeneous composition the union's name was changed to the Iron Workers' Assistants' Union(IWA).

If one of the principal spurs to the formation of the IWA was to re-establish the pre-depression wage rate of 7s a day, the timing of its initial foray was effected by external circumstances. In January 1901 the New South Wales Minister for Public Works, E. O'Sullivan, increased the wage rate for unskilled government employees to 7s a day. As the government was one of the largest employers of unskilled labour, this move effectively established 7s as a "going rate" for unskilled workers in general. This was an encouraging environment for the IWA to assert their claims, and in April 1901 they gave the iron trades employers three weeks in which to concede their demands, the most important of which was 7s a day as the minimum rate for "ironworkers assistants".\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{13} For these origins of the union see The Daily Telegraph, 21st May 1901, p. 6, which recounts that ironworkers' assistants, 'Finding that their efforts [to reclaim pre-depression wage rates through discussion with employers] were unavailable [sic.; i.e. "unavailing"] about 12 months ago organised a union of their own.' Also see Murray and White, op. cit., p. 6.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 6-7.

\textsuperscript{15} At the start of the strike the union's membership was put at 600, although the initial response by over 1000 ironworking labourers indicates that the support for the union's action was much more widespread than just its membership. Indeed one of the effects of the strike was to increase the membership of the IWA to about 1500 - which was the contemporary estimate of the numbers of ironworkers' assistants in Sydney at the time. See SMH, 22nd May 1901, p. 6 and p. 10; loc. cit., 23rd May, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{16} For the circumstances behind this see Coghlan, Labour and Industry, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 2049; Markey, The Making of the Labor Party, op. cit., p. 116. See the comment in The Worker, 25th May 1901, p. 4, that 'Surely if the men on relief works and purely navvying jobs are worth 7s daily, the ironworkers' assistants, possessed of a certain amount of technical skill, have claims to at least equal pay.' So well-established was the 7s as the going rate that one observer claimed that '...the action of the [New South Wales] Government in establishing 7s a day as the minimum wage for unskilled labour ...' had attracted men to migrate from other States to New South (cont'd over)
When the skilled iron trades workers had previously demanded a return to pre-depression wage rates, the claim had been conceded by the employers.\textsuperscript{17} This response was a sharp contrast to the employers' refusal to concede or even to discuss any of the demands of their "unskilled" employees. Instead, they allowed the union's deadline to pass, and the men consequently struck work in May 1901.\textsuperscript{18}

The difference in employer response to the essentially similar demands of the skilled and the unskilled was neither accidental, and nor did it simply reflect the employers' greater intransigence towards the unskilled. Rather, in the course of the strike it became evident that the difference arose because the employers had chosen the unskilled as the section of their workforce on which to attempt to apply, for the first time, the technique of occupational classification. And once this course had been embarked upon, the strike itself became more than just an ordinary industrial dispute. It compressed in its course an evolution within the union's arguments away from the logic of the artisanal and towards that of the industrial paradigm. This evolution did not occur in isolation from the approach of the employers. Rather, an intense dialogue arose between the two sides in which employers and workers separated out into distinct strands the respective logics which characterised the artisanal and the industrial concepts of skill. The strike can thus be seen as a crucible in which both employers and union jointly conducted a fascinating experiment, the central feature of which was the question "What would happen once the artisanal concept of skill and its co-ordinates were abandoned?". Moreover, the significance of posing such a question was that the answer which was devised led both sides to abandon the artisanal

\textsuperscript{17} Wales. See W. Wilson, letter, \textit{SMH}, 17th May 1901, p. 5. For the account of the lead-up to the strike, see 'The Men's View of the Situation', \textit{SMH}, 21st May 1901, p. 3. Note their comment '... that on Government relief works 7s a day is paid, and they consider they are only asking for their fair dues in making the request for the rise.'

\textsuperscript{18} See above p. 285.

For a summary of this background see Macfarlane's letter to the Editor, \textit{SMH}, 20th June 1901, p. 9.
understanding, its socio-biological alignments, and its characteristic practices, in order to make use of the possibilities which were discovered latent within the industrial understanding - skill as a commodity whose price remained contested.

II

Existing accounts assert - with a periodisation rather Childean in character - that the history of union formation amongst unskilled iron trades workers in New South Wales properly begins with the IWA's 1901 strike. However convenient that is as the central myth of origin of the IWA's successor organisation, the Federated Ironworkers Association (FIA), it only stands in the way of developing an adequate explanation for the course pursued by the IWA in the 1901 strike. Rather, the IWA was not neophytic, but drew on the tradition of trades unionism amongst the unskilled iron trades workers which can be traced back almost unbroken from that point for nearly three decades. The fact that the IWA officials, especially Macfarlane and Drake, had been instrumental in iron trades unionism of the late 1880s and throughout the 1890s, was one indication of this continuity. Another indication was the presence at the outset of the

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19 This strike has been noticed but remains unanalysed. See Merritt, FIA, op. cit., pp. 26-8; Murray and White, op. cit., p. 7. Childe considered that before the entry of labour "... into the political arena ..." in the 1890s, the labour movement offered "... no features to make it worthy of any special attention ...". See V.G. Childe, How Labour Governs: A Study of Worker's Representation in Australia, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1964, p. 12.

20 The 1901 strike is one of the "myths of origin" of the FIA. The existing accounts stress implicitly that the "baptism of fire" which they see the 1901 strike as being, set the pattern for the future direction and character of the union. See the comment in Merritt, FIA, op. cit., p. 26, that "... if an [ironworkers' assistants' union] did survive [the 1890s depression] it had no direct organisational links with the ... [1901 Ironworker's Assistants Association] ... which played the leading role in creating the F.I.A.". He goes on to say that as a result of the role of IWA leaders in the strike the union "... gained greatly in prestige." (loc. cit., p. 28), thereby positioning the 1901 strike as the effective historical origin of the FIA. Also see Murray and White, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

21 See above Chapter 9, p. 252, p. 269.

22 The full-time Secretary of the IWA was F.H. Drake, who had worked as an assistant in the New South Wales railways during the 1880s and 1890s. He had been active in the 1890s IWA. See Murray and White, op. cit., pp. 6-7, and above Chapter 9. Other officials of the 1901 IWA also had long experience of 1880s and 1890s assistants' unionism. Its first President (S. Boyd), and Secretary (Fred Toombs), had both been founding members of the Balmain Labourers Association in 1883, and Macfarlane was active in the 1890s. See Balmain Associated Labourers, op. cit.
strike of the same positive representations of ironworkers assistants' labour which had characterised the approach adopted in the earlier unionism of ironworkers assistants.

In one important respect, however, the representation of assistants' labour which had been generated in the 1880s and 1890s differed from that in 1901. Whereas previously ironworkers' assistants' unionism had generated an anti-artisanal discourse, by 1901 that stance had evolved into the more positive forms of the industrial paradigm. This transition was evident early in the strike, when the union consciously positioned itself as an intermediate category of labour between "skilled" and "unskilled". Macfarlane, one of the strike leaders, justified the union's demand for 7s a day by noting that it '... was not too much to ask for the work the iron workers assistants do ...', because '... though they are not what is termed skilled laborers ...'23, '... they could not be classed as unskilled workmen.' either. 24 Rather, as The Herald reported on the first day of the strike, 'The men affirm[ed] ...' - and they did so we can note by drawing on the typical industrial separation of skill from worker, and its use as an index or calibration - '... that the work they are doing is of a class that requires a certain amount of skill ...' (emphasis added).25 To support this contention they emphasised that the tradesmen whom they assisted '... were generally very particular that their assistants were in every way efficient ...'.26 Moreover, as the idleness forced upon skilled ironworkers by their assistants' strike demonstrated, the latter were '... just as necessary to the employers as the skilled workmen.' (or so Macfarlane argued) 27, and of sufficient specific character that it was possible to describe those who worked

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23 The Daily Telegraph, 24th May 1901, p. 7.
24 SMH, 23rd May 1901, p. 11.
25 Ibid.; also see The Daily Telegraph, 21st May 1901, p. 6.
26 SMH, 23rd May 1901, p. 11.
in the different workshops as constituting ‘... different trades ...’.

This was to claim trade status for a previously “unskilled” occupation.

Such claims had the intention of differentiating ironworkers’ assistants from unskilled labour in general. By claiming a degree of skill the assistants were directly contradicting the depiction of them as simply ‘... wood and water joeys ...’ doing the rude, undifferentiated labouring - the ‘... bullocking work ...’ - as it was represented within the artisanal paradigm. The union’s claim for overtime rates for work done over 8 hours was intended to similarly reposition ironworkers’ assistants as an intermediate category, by effecting the separation, via the conditions of labour, of iron trades assistants from the general pool of the “unskilled”, who continued to be excluded from the 8 hour day. The union also noted that ‘... the boilermakers were given 1d an hour as ”dirt money”...’ whereas their assistants ‘... got nothing ...’, and they claimed an entitlement to likewise be paid. This reflected a similar project of positioning ironworkers’ assistants as an intermediate category of labour. If this connection seems to unnecessarily complicate a simple prosaic matter, it is necessary to bear in mind the powerful set of artisanal distinctions between “respectable” and “unrespectable” workers, and to note that dirt was a powerful signifier of the lack of respectability which normatively inflected the category “unskilled” in the artisanal paradigm.

28 SMH, 23rd May 1901, p. 11.
29 For these phrases see Thomas Irons, Manager, Clyde Engineering Co., Engineers Case, op. cit., p. 564.
30 For the union's claim for overtime - also effectively a claim for the 8 hour day - see 'The Mens' View of the Situation', SMH, 21st May 1901, p. 3. Still in 1901 the 8 hour day was a condition enjoyed principally by skilled workers. It was only with the passing of the Eight Hours Act in 1916 that the eight-hour day became more widespread among semi- and unskilled workers. See Markey, In Case of Oppression, op. cit., pp. 27-9, p. 31, p. 164. Turner, In 'Union is Strength', op. cit., p. 57 notes that the demand for ‘... the universal eight-hour day ...’ was one of the ‘... main preoccupations ...’ of the labour movement in 1900. Also see C. Fox, Working Australia, Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1991, p. 94.
31 Ibid., 27th May 1901, p. 3.
32 Thus we find Spence (The Worker, 1st December 1894, p. 3) commenting that: ‘Amongst the workers we still find some who ... imagine that if a man can keep his coat on while earning his living he is superior to the one who has to take it off; also that if you take off your vest you are over the man who works in shirt sleeves; likewise dirty trades are less respectable than those in which you don’t get your face and hands smutty.’. Spence positioned these comments between the two (cont’d over)
While in these claims we can see the union drawing on the industrial understanding of skill, at the outset of the strike the IWA did not consistently use the logic of the industrial paradigm. Rather, at the start of the strike some of the characteristic features of the artisanal paradigm and logic was grafted onto the basically industrial orientation of the union. The most obvious manifestation of this was in their central claim that all members should receive 7s a day. The IWA here adopted the distinctively artisanal mode of justification that this was a cardinal ‘... principle of unionism ...’.

And the demand also contained within it the similarly distinctive artisanal implication that all members of the union were on an equal level of ability. Although this approach was only the tip of the union’s continued affiliation to features of the artisanal paradigm, it was certainly its most vulnerable aspect.

The employers’ response to the claims of the ironworkers’ assistants also initially displayed an affiliation to the artisanal paradigm. Some were intrinsically inclined to disbelieve the claims to a “degree of skill” which were being made by the union. One of the larger employers, for example, commented that the work of assistants was such that ‘... men of ordinary intelligence would rapidly become accustomed to [it].’, and that he would have ‘... very little difficulty ...’ finding replacements for the assistants who were on strike at his works.

To some extent Franki concurred, describing the men involved as ‘... labourers ...’, and their work as ‘... only ordinary assistants work ...’.35

33 The Daily Telegraph, 23rd May 1901, p. 7.
34 Ibid., 25th May 1901, p. 11.
35 SMH, 21st May 1901, p. 3.
While the reproduction of the artisanal taxonomy and its alignment of ironworkers' assistants with the category "unskilled" was of some significance in the employers' approach to the union's claims, its presence was rendered insignificant by the employers' overall aim. As the difference in their response to the claims of the skilled and the unskilled suggests, from the outset the employers approached the strike as an opportunity to be embraced, and not simply as a deadlock to be resolved. In this their guiding principle was the logic and possibilities opened up by the industrial concept of skill. Their central aim was to attack the (artisanal) concept that the union comprised a group of workers who were monolithic in ability, and to erect in its place a scheme of classification which registered the differences in ability between union members. Although occasionally this interior dimension to the strike was revealed in public comment - such as when a journalist commented after the first strike conference between union and employers that '... the proposal of the employers is really to grade the employees ...'\(^{36}\) - at least in the initial phase of the strike the aim of the employers remained hidden. However, in the less guarded confines of employers' circles the employers' intention in the strike was discussed in less oblique terms. At one point in the strike Franki wrote confidentially on behalf of the employers to the Secretary of the Sydney Marine Underwriters Association, J.E. Woodthorpe, asking that Association to support the ITEA '... in the direction that you will not have any work done while the strike lasts otherwise the efforts of the Employers will be useless ...'. In such a context Franki was prepared to specify an employers' aim in the strike, which he described as '... endeavouring to grade the Labouring men ...', and characterised the ITEA's approach to the strike as one of '... fighting for the changes...' rather than passively resisting the union or seeking a return to pre-existing conditions.\(^{37}\)

\(^{36}\) Ibid., 23rd May 1901, p. 7.
Equipped with this aim, from the start of the strike, and under the guiding influence of Franki, in the first few days of the strike the employers began to work towards their central objective of breaking-open the monolithic category "ironworkers assistants". At the first conference between the two sides the employers asked the union's delegates '... to define an ironworkers assistant, and what qualifications were necessary to become a member of their union.' In response the union delegates cited the IWA rules which described those eligible for membership as comprising assistants to the various iron trades (Rule 1) and also members '... of any other unskilled labourers' union ...' (Rule 23).38

These rules gave the employers the necessary vantage point from which to attack the monolithic category "ironworkers assistant", and its accompanying concept, the standard wage rate. Referring to Rule 1, they drew attention to the presence in the union of categories of workers who were '... not assisting at any of the [iron] trades ...' such as '... men engaged cleaning up the shop, driving engines, firing the boilers, etc ...'. Working the same logic, the employers also pointed out to the union's delegates that Rule 23 meant '... anyone, such as a seaman, navvy or bricklayers' laborer, who has never worked in an ironworks ...' could join the union. The variegated actual and potential membership of the union was thus the fulcrum of the employers argument: 'Is it reasonable ...', they asked the delegates, '... that the likes of these men should command the same rate of wages ... as the man who has been at this particular kind of work for the greater part of his life?'. How, asked the employers, did the union propose to differentiate between members of the union of greater and lesser ability?.39

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38 By agreement between the parties there were no press reports of this conference, which was on 22nd May 1901. However its details were made public later in the strike when "Employer" wrote to The Telegraph and included the details in his letter. See The Daily Telegraph, 29th June 1901, p. 7.

39 Ibid.
The delegates for the union were forced to recognise the validity of the employers' characterisation of the union, drawing as it did on the union's own rules to demonstrate the variegated rather than monolithic composition of the union's membership. They were, as they admitted, caught unprepared for this line of argument, and in formulating a response to it the union delegates instinctively reached for a typically artisanal logic. For the union's response to the employers' objections to paying a standard wage was precisely to propose that a differentiation in wage rates could be made on the basis of age: all workers between the ages of 21 and 60 were to be paid at 7s, with those falling outside this age cohort to be paid less, at a rate to be determined between themselves and their employers. In mobilising biology as the basis for their scheme of classification the union's delegates hoped on one hand to give recognition to the employers' arguments of the different levels of ability in the union membership, while at the same time not giving way on the principle of the 7s minimum standard rates for all "ironworkers assistants". In effect they were asserting the typically artisanal position that those with "skill" (even if it was only "a certain amount", as the union had argued) - "ironworkers assistants" - were adult men, and those who were utterly "unskilled" - those members of the union who worked as "labourers" - were old men and youths.

At first the employers began to negotiate around the union's concept of an age-based scheme of classification, pressing the union to '... to give a definition of what [they] meant by a man!'. But the details of the employers' counter-proposal indicated an underlying dissatisfaction with the concept of an age-based scheme. Their proposal drew on but also undermined the union's age-based scheme, by considering "a man" to be defined as '... a capable employee entitled to the full rate of pay ...', rather

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40 The Daily Telegraph, 24th May 1901, p. 7.
41 Ibid., 23rd May 1901, p. 7.
than one simply defined by age. The employers had thus introduced the issue of ability into the public arena, and created the pre-condition for the division of ironworkers' assistants into "First class" and "Second class" men.

As the strike continued, the employers gradually shifted the emphasis of their arguments, amplifying the criterion of ability, and pushing to one side the criterion of age. They were setting in motion the critical feature of the industrial concept - its axiom that differences in wage rates should be an expression of the different values of the labour power consumed in the processes of production. To erect a scheme of occupational classification and payment which breached this cardinal principle, was (the employers argued) to apportion wages on an arbitrary basis. As Noakes, the works manager of the Clyde Engineering Works said to a visiting strike delegation, such a scheme was '... nonsense ...' because '... they knew as well as I did that ...' it would mean '... paying ... boys of 16 just come to the works ...' the same rate of pay as those who had been there for years. Working from the other end of the age scale, Franki's response to the union's proposals that age should be the basis for wage differentials was to argue '... that something tangible should be laid down to indicate the men who are to receive the minimum rate.' This was hitting out against the implicitly "intangible" criterion of age, which, as he went on to point out, was an inconsistent and therefore arbitrary basis on which to apportion wages because '... in some instances men of 60 years and over were more able to do the work than other men of 50 years of age.' The alternative he preferred was, he said, '... to see the men classified ...', maintaining that '... the principle should be to pay the men according to their abilities ...', which to him meant payment '... according to their value ...'.

42 SMH, 24th May 1901, p. 5.
43 The Daily Telegraph, 30th May 1901, p. 6.
44 SMH, 25th May 1901, p. 10.
If the employers rejected the union delegates’ attempt to build an age-based classification scheme, that proposal was hardly received more enthusiastically within the union itself. Observers of the strike as politically disparate as *The Worker* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* considered the issue significant enough to devote special attention to it, both describing it as ‘A point which ... requires delicate handling ...’. And this judgement was borne out by the tensions which it generated within the union. While there was general agreement amongst the membership that ‘... men over 60 years who may be employed sweeping the shops, picking up scrap iron, etc ...’ should be paid at a lesser rate, there was much less unanimity in regard to the proposal to pay “youths”- defined as those under 21- at a reduced rate. As sections of the union pointed out to their delegates, such a scheme of classification would be ‘... a source of grave danger.’ to many members. Although the delegates had attempted to portray the workforce as characterised by an alignment between the “unskilled” work of “general labouring” and categories of age, in reality much of this “unskilled” work was done by adult men aged between 21 and 60. Thus, it was argued within the union, to agree to a differential scale of pay based on age would mean that ‘... in many instances strong youths of from 16 to 21 ...’ who were capable of doing the work of ironworkers assistant, ‘... would be used to displace men who are now doing the work ...’. The categories of skill (assistant/labourer) clearly were not aligned with the categories of age (youth/adult under 60).

In view of these considerations it was not surprising that the union’s members rejected the notion of an age-based system of classification. This was in the third week of the eight week strike, and although those artisanal ideas did not immediately disappear from the arguments presented by the union, from this point in the strike they began to be displaced, at first

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45 *The Worker*, 1st June 1901, p. 6; *SMH*, 24th May 1901, p. 5.
46 Ibid.
slowly, then more rapidly, by ideas and schemes which clearly reflected the
logic and language of the industrial understanding of skill. This
development was almost predictable at the start of the strike, considering
the efforts which were at that point made by the union to portray
ironworkers assistants as having a ‘... certain amount of skill ...’ - a mode of
description which drew attention to questions of level of ability. Indeed, as
one observer of the strike noted, the question of what constituted a
‘... First class hand ...’ was one which, ‘... had been a matter for considerable
discussion amongst the men ever since the commencement of the strike
...’.47 By the third week of the strike the union’s arguments began to shift in
emphasis. They went to some trouble to counter what they now
characterised as ‘... a misunderstanding ...’ of their case for an age-based wage
structure. They now ‘... denied that they require[d] youths of 16 years and
upwards to be paid men’s wages.’ - the 7s minimum - despite the fact that
this clearly was what they originally had demanded. Instead they now
claimed ‘... that youths of 16 years and upwards shall be paid men’s wages
when they are made to do men’s work, and do it competently.’ (emphasis
added).48 This statement was a hybrid of artisanal/industrial discourse, but
in it the union was clearly giving priority to the logic of the industrial
paradigm. The age-based scheme was still in evidence, but subservient to
the industrial notion of wages being paid on the basis of “competence” or
ability. More generally, the displacement of the artisanal by the industrial
paradigm was reflected in the change in the problematic around which the
strike negotiations revolved. In the first week of the strike negotiations
centred and deadlocked on the question of ‘What is a "man"?’49; by the

47 SMH, 8th June 1901, p. 7.
48 Ibid., 10th June 1901, p. 8.
49 For this problematic, and this phrase see The Daily Telegraph, 23rd May 1901, p. 7, which reported
that ‘... the chief difficulty [in the conference between union and employers] had been to arrive at a
definition of a “man”...’. Macfarlane commented that at this conference the union delegates had
been at a disadvantage because they ‘... had not been prepared to give a definition of what we meant
third week of the strike this essentially artisanal problematic had been replaced by consideration of the question 'What constitutes a first-class hand?''.  

Classification on the basis of ability, not age, had now become the key issue within the strike.

## III

Once they union had changed the conceptual basis of its classificatory scheme from an ascribed to a learned basis, both sides were talking the same language, and negotiations - which had become stalemated around the age-based scheme of classification - could resume. Both union and employers continued to modify their positions, and they did so by exploring further the latitudes and possibilities contained within the industrial understanding of skill. Once the union had abandoned age and adopted ability as the basis of classification, the logic of that position gradually began to be expressed in the union's argument. Thus they now viewed the question of the rate of pay they demanded (7s per day) rather differently. Instead of portraying their demands as constituting a standard rate, they began to conceive of the 7s as a minimum upon which further margins would be paid, arguing for '... a minimum wage of 7s a day, with a sliding scale upwards.' They had thus moved a long way from the artisanal "principle" of a uniform rate of pay for all, which they had adopted at the start of the strike, adopting the very form which they had previously described as '... a discriminating scale of wages ... opposed to the principles of unionism ...'.

At the same time that the union was embracing the logic of the industrial paradigm, the employers were also moving in the same direction. Whereas at the start of the strike they deliberately avoided describing the

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50 *SMH*, 8th June 1901, p. 7.
51 Ibid., 24th June 1901, p. 3.
52 *SMH*, 23rd May 1901, p. 7.
work and the workers in terms of skill or its categories, as the strike proceeded into its fourth and fifth weeks they began to use this terminology.

A journalist mis-reported Franki as saying that the employers' offer to pay a minimum of 6s a day '... must apply to unskilled, and therefore valueless, labour.' Franki went to some trouble to ensure that an accurate version of his comments was placed on the public record, emphasising that what he had said was that '... the 6s a day, with the sliding scale, must be made to apply to unskilled labour, which was of "less value than skilled labour."' 53

Here, for the first time, the industrial conception of skill as an index by which labour power could be measured entered into the discourse of the employers. In association with this usage, Franki also began to use the terminology of skill in other distinctively industrial ways. For example, he described his proposed classification of the men as a scheme in which '... there should be two classes First and Second[,] the skilled men ... to receive 1/- per day more than the ordinary casual hands.' This was innovation indeed, because by "skilled men" here Franki specifically meant '... [blacksmiths'] strikers, Holders up and Boilermakers Assistants, certificated men in Engineers shop, Dressers etc.' 54 The significance of this resort to a language of skill was not lost on the union, which quickly discerned that '... the employers wish to grade ironworkers' assistants according to their skill ...'. 55

The presence of a degree of conceptual consensus between employers and union, rather than being the modus vivendi for resolution of the dispute, allowed a closer and more intricate engagement between the two sides, and the inflamed character of which prolonged the dispute into six, seven and eight weeks. The central issue was the question of control over the process of classification. At first this was manifested in a deadlock over

53 SMH, 24th June 1901, p. 3; 26th June 1901, p. 5 respectively.
55 SMH, 1st July 1901, p. 5.
how, and by whom, the competency of an assistant would be measured. In the first negotiations after the abandonment of an age-based criterion by the union, and the adoption of the idea of a graduated scale of classification with wage differentials, '... discussion centred on the question as to who should decide who were first and who were second class men ...'. The union's delegates proposed '... that after a man had spent a certain time in any work he should be classed as a first-class hand.' To this the employers countered '... that time would never make some men first class workmen.', and proposed instead that it should be left to '... the works foreman ... to decide as to the men's qualifications and ultimate classification.'

From the point of view of the union, the employers' proposal to centre the power of classification in foremen was problematic. Although the employers attempted to portray foremen as '... the intermediary between the employer and the employees ...', and as such independent judges of competence, they reckoned without giving consideration to the active role which foremen had played in the preceding three decades, as representatives of both employers and craft unions, in enforcing the artisanal taxonomy and suppressing the development of effective unionism among the assistants. Even those foremen who were less antagonistic to union formation among the assistants were still products of precisely the artisanal practices and beliefs which were likely to lead to an intrinsic scepticism about the claim to a degree of skill made by the ironworkers assistants. It was not surprising then that the union rejected the employers' proposals that classification into two grades should be done by the works foremen.

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56 Ibid., 12th June 1901, p. 5.
57 Ibid.
58 See above Chapter 9, pp. 256-7.
59 The Daily Telegraph, 11th June 1901, p. 8.
If the IWA refused to surrender the power of classification into the foremen's hostile hands, the employers were equally determined to maintain control over their hard won "right" to determine classification. On this basis they rejected the proposal which was made to resolve the dispute through the mediation of an outside arbitrator. As H. Hudson (the Secretary of the ITEA) explained in his reply to the New South Wales Department of Labour and Industry's request for independent arbitration:

the employers have already offered to pay first-class men 7s per day classified according to ability, to a minimum of 6s per day, and we wish to state that no arbitrator can discriminate as to the rate of wages which men of varying ability should receive. 60

Neither side was able to present a scheme of classification which was acceptable to the other, and the dispute remained deadlocked on the issue. While Franki considered that 'The only hope there was for a settlement ... was for the union to classify its men, and let the employers know exactly what work the men receiving the 7s a day [i.e. first class men] were to do ...' 61, Macfarlane considered that '... had they [the employers] acceded to our request to give us a definition in writing of what constituted a first-class man, the strike might now be ended.' 62

If employers were determined to maintain control of the power of classification they were also keen to resolve the dispute, which after six weeks was becoming enervating, expensive and diverting. 63 At the same time, community opinion was beginning to turn against them. Their refusal to agree - as the union had done - to submit the dispute to an independent arbitrator, was being seen as employer intransigence and

60 SMH, 18th June 1901, p. 3.
61 Ibid., 24th June 1901, p. 3.
62 Ibid., 20th June 1901, p. 9.
63 See, for example, Franki's comments to D. Williamson, a consulting engineer employed by Mort's Dock in London: "... my time has been taken up a great deal lately over [the] strike of Ironworkers Assistants ...", Mort's Dock and Engineering Company, Out Letter Books, op. cit., 25th June 1901, fo. 442-3; also Franki to D. Anderson, Manager, Orient Line of Steamers, Sydney in which Franki was, "Asking your further indulgence ... on the case of the "Emile Gallino"", as a result of the continuing strike; loc. cit., 5th July 1901, fo. 445. Also see the report 'Effects on Shipping', SMH, 26th June 1901, p. 5.
unreasonableness.\textsuperscript{64} In this context of increasing pressure, the employers
turned their attention to defining in exact terms the classification scheme
which they envisaged. Rather than the vague distinction between First and
Second Class employees, to be determined by foremen, the employers
analysed the labour processes in their factories, workshops and shipyards on
the basis of the different degrees of skill which they discerned existed there.
They devised a detailed scheme of classification which went far beyond the
simple two-tier model which they had started out with, and in doing so
developed to a higher degree still the possibilities for classification which
were latent within the industrial concept of skill.

The employers' proposal was a scheme of classification which
specified a scale of wages '... for men of varying ability and for different
classes of work, which, of course, have different values ...'. Thus they
identified in the boilershops three very specific classes of work - 'Good men
at holding up, strikers, and drillers ...' as being worth the maximum 7s.
Next were those who were considered 'Good general assistants' who
should be paid 6s 8d. And then, also within the boilershop, 'Shop hands
and rouseabouts' to be paid '... according to ability.' on a scale graduated in 2d
increments from 6s to 6s 4d. Similarly, in the engineers' shops the
employers identified 'Leading men, well up in rigging tackle and slinging,'
(7s), and 'Good general hands', on the same scale graduated '... according to
ability.' Similar schemes characterised the classifications in foundries and
blacksmiths' shop. \textsuperscript{65}

This extended application of the industrial concept of skill to the
grading of ironworkers' assistants did not prove acceptable to the union. It
still left 'control of the classification in the hands of foremen, and it
abrogated the bedrock position of the union, that 7s was a minimum for any

\textsuperscript{64} See for example, the reports SMH, 1st July 1901, p. 5 and 4th July 1901, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 1st July 1901, p. 5.
union member, no matter how classified.\textsuperscript{66} Given that the strike showed little sign of dissipating into a general return to work, and with business and community pressures on them increasing, the employers finally relented and agreed to submit the dispute for resolution by arbitration.\textsuperscript{67} The terms under which they submitted revealed, however, that they continued to closely consider the strategy of classification until the very end of the dispute. The arbitrator was to consider two matters, the nodal points considered germane to each side. The issue on the union's side was 'The fixing of a minimum wage for ironworkers' assistants ...'; that on the employers' side continued to be 'The classification of work and the fixing of rates of wages for the same ...'.\textsuperscript{68} Franki as ever continued to press the importance of the issue of classification. Even as the arbitrators were about to begin their task he recommended that the ITEA reiterate in their submission that the Association:

most emphatically protest[s] against being compelled to increase wages, and claim the right as Employers to grade the men according to their ability.\textsuperscript{69}

\textbf{IV}

The 1901 ironworkers' assistants dispute was, as one commentator at the time noted, '... one of the most unique industrial disturbances that has taken place in the history of the State ...'.\textsuperscript{70} This was a perceptive assessment of the significance of a strike which in hindsight can be seen to mark a watershed in the history of the iron trades in New South Wales. There were several unique aspects to the strike. Most immediately, as this

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 4th July 1901, p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Hudson commented that '... the decision [of the employers] was not arrived at without strong opposition ...', \textit{SMH}, 10th July 1901, p. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{68} \textit{SMH}, 12th July 1901, p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{69} Mort's Dock and Engineering Company, Out Letter Books, op. cit., Franki to the Secretary of the ITEA, 25th July 1901, fo. 452.
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{SMH}, 13th July 1901, p. 12.
\end{itemize}
observer commented, the strike stood out from the preceding half century of industrial disputes in that "... never previously have so many skilled mechanics had idleness forced upon them by a dispute amongst the unskilled workmen."\textsuperscript{71} If the strike in this way signalled the onset of disruption to the pattern of stability between the "skilled" and "unskilled" in the iron trades, this itself was a subset of its more general historical significance. For the strike was the shear point - in one particular set of occupations and employment relations - between a regime of production dominated by the artisanal concept of skill, and that dominated by the industrial concept. In its course was telescoped the process of displacement of the artisanal by the industrial paradigm which was simultaneously occurring elsewhere. Through the dialectic of discourse which was the principal characteristic of the strike, employers and employees explored the internal architecture of the industrial concept of skill. What they each discovered were the possibilities which it contained for formulating new strategies with which to pursue the incessant struggle over the creation and appropriation of surplus value. And in making these discoveries employers and workers had not simply "entered" the industrial concept of skill; they had begun to live within its walls. They now thought about class struggle within a new conceptual terrain.

However, if in the decade which followed the strike the industrial concept of skill came to occupy the conceptual centre of the industrial strategies and policies developed by the ironworkers assistants and the iron trades employers, this was neither a mechanical nor automatic result of the strike. Rather, for both groups, the development of approaches which expressed the logic of the industrial concept continued to evolve over the course of the decade. The course and extent of that evolution to 1907 in the case of the ironworkers assistants is traced in the rest of this chapter. The
period from 1908 to 1912 is followed in the next chapter, as is the evolution and importance of the industrial concept of skill in the case of the employers, and its impact on their relations with their skilled workers.

In the years after 1901 the IWA continued to explore the possibilities contained within the industrial concept of skill, and especially its insights about the commodification of labour. While activity in the private engineering workshops and shipyards industry in New South Wales slumped back into stagnation between 1902 and 1904, the IWA resumed the process of sloughing off the manifold constraints on its activity exerted by the artisanal concept of skill. The internal dynamics of the strike itself had clearly revealed the artisanal reflex of the “skilled” towards their assistants’ independent action. Early in the strike the Boilermakers’ had expressed ‘... some indignation ...’ at the suggestion that they too were out on strike, pointing out that ‘... if Mort’s Dock could provide them with assistants they would go to work.’ To the employers the USB reiterated this position throughout the strike. At a private meeting with Franki and the foreman of Mort’s Dock boilershop early in June a USB committee advised them that they ‘... must take no notice ...’ of press reports that the union’s members would not work with non-union labour, and pointed out to them that the union had ‘... no Rule in [its] book to that effect.’ The USB’s support for the strike was considered so questionable that the United Labourers’ Society wrote to the union inquiring ‘... if it was correct that [USB] members were willing to work with Non-Society men irrespective of the Iron Workers Assistants strike.’ The USB reply – ‘... that the members of this Society are not prepared to work with non-Union Labour where the Iron Workers Assistants are on Strike.’ - was not so much deception, but expressed the degree of ambivalence with which the Boilermakers’ union

72 Merritt, F.I.A., op. cit., p. 28.
73 SMH, 22nd May 1901, p. 10.
74 USB Minutes, ‘Special Meeting No. 3’, 4th June, 1901.
had always acted towards the ironworkers’ assistants.\textsuperscript{75} It needs to be borne in mind that on the shopfloor there was considerable support for the strikers: at the same time that the USB officials were meeting with Franki, a meeting of the union voted by ballot to continue the union’s financial assistance to the IWA by 158 to 34, and passed a resolution ‘... that all members working in any shop where the Assistances [sic.] are on strike should cease work.’\textsuperscript{76} And although the immediate effect of such a position was support for the strikers, it was at the same time taken as an opportunity to reiterate the typical artisanal distinctions of status and worth. Thus a boilermaker explained that he refused Franki’s request to the boilermakers to act as each others’ assistants because he had ‘... not spent thirty years as a boilermaker to start again as an assistant ...’.\textsuperscript{77} Thus even this act of solidarity was a vehicle for the reproduction of the artisanal attitude of contempt for the work, if not the person, of the assistant.

There was no such ambivalence in the position of other iron trades unions. The ASE and Ironmoulders were accused by the IWA of acting to prolong the strike and undermine their assistants’ struggles. They were reported to have worked with non-union assistants, and to have assisted each other where the latter were not available. So antagonistic was the ASE to the existence and aims of the strike that a speaker at the TLC during the strike described their stance not just in terms of neutrality, but as one of outright opposition to the assistants’ aims: it was, he said ‘... a peculiar proceeding ...’ for these unions ‘... not to recognise that the ironworkers assistants had a just claim in their demand for 7s a day.’. Instead, it seemed to him and to others that these unions had a vested interest in seeing the strike fail, and he called on the TLC to ‘... make a particular request to the

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 11th June, 1901.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 13th June 1901.
\textsuperscript{77} SMH, 22nd May 1901, p. 10.
two unions to ... decline to work with non-unionists, and not to work as assistants.'

In view of the neutral-to-obstructive response of the skilled iron trades workers to their struggle, it is hardly surprising that in the years following the strike - which ended in a compromise - the IWA asserted itself as an independent body, capable of and willing to operate guided by a clearer conception of its own interests and rights. An important pre-condition for this was the establishment of distance between itself and the institutions of the skilled. The IWA Secretary, F. B. Drake described the Iron Trades Council as 'A body of men composed of the mechanics Societies, who sit together in Council.' indicated the development in the IWA of an awareness of the skilled as a phalanx distinctly organised in a way which divided them from the unskilled. Thus when the skilled unions gathered together in their collective body the Iron Trade Council, sought to negotiate with the employers over the conditions under which the latter might contract to build sixty locomotives for the government railway, the IWA claimed a degree of independence. It refused to agree to wages stability for the duration of the contract as the unions of the skilled had done, and moreover claimed that the skilled no longer could be assumed to speak for the unskilled.

Importantly, during these years the understanding of labour as a commodity developed further as a guiding conception within the union. The development of this trajectory of development was enhanced by the commitment of Drake, to a socialist politics which was specifically rooted in

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78 The Daily Telegraph, 31st May 1901, p. 7.
79 The terms of the strike settlement can be found in SMH, 10th August 1901, p. 10. Also see Merritt, F.I.A., p. 28.
80 New South Wales Court of Arbitration: Amalgamated Ironworkers' Assistants' Union (AIAU) of New South Wales v. Chapman and Co, 1907; AIAU Application for Common Rule; Re. Ironworkers Assistants Award - Objections to Common Rule (hereinafter all grouped together under citation Ironworkers Assistants Case), 1907, Vol. 48, NSWSA, 2/101, p. 144.
81 See Drake's recollection ibid., p. 127, that '... all the skilled mechanics agreed that if the Clyde Works ... did not ask for a reduction, they would not ask for an increase. My point is that the Ironworkers' Assistants refused to do any such thing and that the conference was absolutely abortive.'
the commodified understanding of labour, and the industrial understanding of skill. Thus in 1904 Drake, who was perhaps influenced by the IWW when it shortly after became established in Sydney, was pursuing a stance in regard to the iron trades employers which departed from the decorous relationships maintained by the skilled unions.\footnote{382} At a conference with the employers he scorned the claim made by the ironmaster, G. Hoskins, that ‘Our [i.e. the ITEA] interests are your welfare.’, retorting that:

> your interests are to get the men to work as low as possible; that is the aim and object of all employers; on the other hand, we are bound to try and keep up our wages; that is the attitude of unionism.\footnote{383}

While Drake at least had imbibed the commodified understanding of labour, it was not yet as clearly connected to the logic and discourse of industrial skill as it was to become. When in 1907 the union confronted the ITEA in the New South Wales Arbitration Court, the principally industrial discourse and logic it deployed was accompanied by remnants of the artisanal paradigm. The union’s claim to the degree of skill of assistants displayed a vestigial allegiance to the categories of the artisanal concept, especially its biological aspect, Drake describing ironworkers’ assistants’ work as being ‘... a man’s work and ought to be paid for at a man’s wage.’\footnote{384} Similarly reflecting the IWA’s continued allegiance to aspects of the artisanal paradigm, the union claimed in 1907 not to want to encroach on the work of the ASE’s blacksmiths’ apprentices or that of the drillers, although there was little technically to distinguish the latter from the members of the IWA.\footnote{385}

However, these iterations of the artisanal concept of skill and its logic were of minor importance in the argument presented by the union to the

\footnote{382} Merritt, op. cit., p. 35. For the establishment of the IWW in Sydney, see I. Turner, Industrial Labour and Politics: The Dynamics of the Labour Movement in Eastern Australia 1900-1921, The Australian National University, Canberra, 1965, pp. 56-7.
\footnote{383} Ironworkers Assistants Case, op. cit., p. 177.
\footnote{384} Ibid., p. 35.
\footnote{385} Ibid., p. 19, p. 54, p. 107.
Court. They appeared as occasional archaic outcroppings of an older conceptual order amidst the sea of industrial discourse which was mobilised by the union’s advocate, Mr Tayler, and the witnesses appearing for the union. They argued the central industrial position, that “skill” could be found in a variety of sites throughout the labour processes in which ironworkers’ assistants were engaged. It was anti-artisanal logic indeed to have Tayler asking an employer witness whether there was ‘... any reason to think that an assistant to blacksmith has to be a very skilled man?’; and even more oppositional to hear the reply that the blacksmith’s assistant had to ‘... support the efforts of the blacksmith, he must be intelligent, know when to use the hammer, and hit when directed.’. Similarly, the opinion that ‘... years of experience would be necessary to understand all jobs.’ of a qualified ironworkers’ assistant, was a long way from the artisanal portrayal. The dissolving of older representations can be discerned in Tayler’s unabashed - and unchallenged - use of clearly innovative terms to describe these hitherto “unskilled” workers. To the works manager of the Meadowbank Engineering Works he asked ‘... supposing ... an utterly unskilled man who had never done the class of work before [was employed at the works], how long would it take him to become an ordinary blacksmith’s assistant?’ The reply, from one to two years, led to the next question: ‘You would call an ironworkers assistant a skilled man?’ The insistent nature of Tayler’s introduction of the categories of industrial skill as terms to describe his clients’ abilities, was a measure of the union’s intention to push through the re-evaluations and re-inscriptions available in the industrial concept of skill; and the employer’s reply to the question - that he ‘... would to a certain extent.’ - likewise measured how far the artisanal concept with its pure dichotomy had been displaced by the industrial in this section of the iron trades by 1907.87

86 Ibid., p. 18.
87 Ibid., p. 25.