



Colin Steed receiving his gold medal from Mr. Ray Gunter, Minister of Labour

IN OUR LAST ISSUE we were able to report the success of our *Apprentice*, Colin Steed, in the United Kingdom Pattern-making Competition. Now we are delighted to report that he is the world champion apprentice in patternmaking, for he was awarded a gold medal at the XIV International Apprenticeship Competition held at Glasgow at the end of July. This is a wonderful achievement by young Colin, aged twenty (the company's first entrant), particularly as he was competing against young craftsmen from ten other countries, which included Japan, last year's winner. The test involved the making of a complicated bearing bracket. The Minister of Labour, Mr. Ray Gunter, made the presentations at the conclusion of the competition.

This universal competition has had rather an extraordinary history. It started as a "*Vocational Training Competition*" in Spain in 1947, when it was conducted merely on a national basis. Three years later the first International Vocational Competition was held in Portugal, when the subjects consisted of: metal, wood, electricity, graphic arts and building trades.

Real progress was made in 1953 (Madrid) when an unofficial entry—Douglas Hill—was submitted from Great Britain. Other countries competing this time included France, Germany, Morocco, Portugal and Switzerland. But for the enthusiasm of a private businessman, Frederick D. Hill of Canterbury, it is doubtful whether the United Kingdom would ever have been interested in this annual competition for apprentices of the world. For many years there was a complete lack of interest shown by British industry but, after many disappointments, his tenacity was rewarded by an official entry from U.K. in 1957, held in Madrid. The results were most encouraging and since that year the British entries have been both regular and amongst the largest. From Mr. Hill's point of view the culmination point was reached this year when the competition was held in Great Britain for the first time, with H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh as Patron.

The City and Guilds of London Institute choose the British team by means of Selection Tests held at convenient regional

centres in Britain. In any trade, the candidate must be of the required standard, otherwise that trade is not represented. In the competition proper the tests range up to 48 hours' duration and they are not made known to competitors until the actual competition commences. The first week of the competition is devoted to tests, the second to judging and visits. The host country provides accommodation and arranges a comprehensive programme of social, cultural and industrial visits.

British industry owes a great debt to Frederick Hill; he was awarded the M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List, 1963. By sheer hard work and determination he has given apprentices of the United Kingdom an opportunity to enter an annual International Trade Competition when they can compare their own standard of performance and methods with those of other countries. This, surely, is a big step forward in the history of the British apprentice.

Frederick D. Hill is received by Gen. Franco. Later he gained recognition from the Spanish Government for his service to youth

