

They think themselves fancy men, and have such a lot of fancy tools that they have to do an unnecessary lot of fadding in order to find a use for them. They are fairly good workmen, but they want breaking of their fads. Two-thirds of our joiners cannot shute a joint 3 ft. long without the formality of trying it with a straight-edge; and after a joint is made they do not consider it complete unless a dog is driven in each end, and a cleat, or cramp, placed across the centre. Such nonsense is only ridiculous waste of time. Throw away dogs and cleats (unless in long winding stuff), dispense with the straight-edge, make a proper joint, rub just enough to get out the glue, and the man will do half as much more work; and yet there is hardly a shop in London (and the practice is getting into provincial towns as well) where a joint is made without all this fuss. I saw, only a day or two ago, a man shuteing drawer bottoms preparatory to cutting off to length; they were 2 ft. 9 in. long, and he, a man with, I should say, at least fifteen years' experience in joiners' shops, *was actually using a straight-edge to see when they were straight*. There are scores of similar tricks these faddists perform that a foreman who is a practical man will detect and stop at once; but a foreman under some of the circumstances I have mentioned is too much under an obligation to his men to say anything to them, even if he has sense enough to see it. If a foreman is practical, has his eyes open, and his men in hand, he will soon either show them better or show them ticket-of-leave. Another class is that of the majority of young men growing up among us now. They can clean up a moulding, put together a piece of joinery, clean it off, and turn it out creditably; in fact, so far as use of tools is concerned, they can compete with anyone; but give them a rod for a fair piece of work, and their stuff not set-out, and they would be floored at once. These cannot be called joiners; they are simply human machines for finishing the work. Then, as a rule, they take faddists as their ideal, and follow them as nearly as possible, simply because they have no practical knowledge of construction of joinery. This is one outcome of employing one man to set-out the whole of the work; another is that practical men have no interest in their work, they don't care whether it is wrong or right—it is not their setting-out, so does not matter to them. Let each man set-out his own work; it is cheapest, the man takes more interest in it, and he can work better to his own lines than he can to those of another. A foreman can also see what a man's abilities are, and at what work he can best earn his wages, and if mistakes are made the right man gets the blame. Then there is the man who owns his incompetency by working at a lower rate of wages. I once employed one for three weeks, and found him the dearest man I had on my premises. I have always found a man at 6d. per hour worth not quite half as much as one at 9d. per hour. They must be employed somewhere, but I for one would prefer to do without them. Pay all your men the standard rate of wages, don't keep them if they cannot earn it, treat those who do earn it as men, and you will get men who will do their duty. There are always some who don't do this, and if you do you will find plenty of men. Give the man his hire, but see that he earns it first. In conclusion, I will say to employers: Get practical foremen, who can not only show a workman how to do a difficult piece of work, but can do it themselves if necessary; treat them as foremen, pay them as foremen, and see that they do their duty as foremen. Foremen, treat your men properly; if a man Sir's you too much, watch him. If you find a better man than yourself among your workmen, don't play coward and discharge him at first opportunity, and do not expose your ignorance to him

by petty interference, or he will take advantage of you. Do not presume to undertake anything beyond your abilities, and, above all, don't get the idea into your head that you can do more than anybody else, and that your way of doing everything is the only way. Every man has different methods, and can work his own way best. Look at the results, and then if a man does not suit you, or is incompetent, give him the opportunity of trying his hand elsewhere. Don't treat men like dogs; if a man wishes you good-morning when he comes in, don't glare at him for his presumption. A foreman can be kind and affable, and pass time-o'-day with his men, and still keep them under firm control. You need not exalt yourself so very high above them in order to make them know you are foreman; it is a firm, steady, none-of-your-foolery manner that gets the work done. To workmen: Don't neglect the smallest opportunity for improving your knowledge of everything in connection with your trade. If Tom-So-and-So is no better off with all his knowledge, you may be, and don't be too clever to learn from your mates; if one gives you a hint, don't take it as an offence; see what you can learn from it. Do your best to become worth your money, so that you may be independent, and don't bribe foremen. You need all the money you can get for yourselves, and you are defrauding your employer in so doing, besides acknowledging you are not worth your money. If you are not a competent man, don't go and pose yourself as a man at a low price of wages; go as an improver, admit you are such, and strive your best to improve as quickly as possible to a full-fledged workman. If you have a kind, lenient master and foreman, do your best to keep them as such; don't take the least advantage. It is taking advantage by men that makes masters and foremen mistrust them and treat them as sharply as possible. Men always cry down a sharp master when it is their conduct that has made him so, and they that have made the rod for their own backs.—*Building News*.

AN IMPROVED PNEUMATIC DISPATCH SYSTEM FOR MAIL AND EXPRESS SERVICE.

The modern railway service for the rapid transmission of mail and high-class freight, in the estimation of most persons, is assumed to be quite adequate to the requirements; but, if asked for a reason for the assumption, the answer would most probably be because human ingenuity has devised nothing more speedy and efficient. If it could be shown to the satisfaction of those who rest content with present methods, through ignorance of the possible existence of better ones, that substantial improvements in respect of speed of transmission, security against loss and accident, and economy of operation, have actually been demonstrated to be quite practicable, the desirability of the adoption of such improvements would need no argument.

There are several methods of rapid transmission, adapted to a limit of weight of perhaps 500 pounds, that, in respect of speed and economy, give promise of accomplishing results greatly superior to what is now being accomplished by the railway service. These are the electric and pneumatic systems. The first of these it is not our intention to consider at length at this time. It is attracting the attention of some of the highest inventive minds of the day, and doubtless at no distant period will realize the high hopes that are entertained respecting it. Thus far, however, the problem still awaits a practical solution.

Whatever may be the outcome of the electric method, it is safe to say, that, until cheaper means of generating electric