

temper, and keep a firm command over his men without being a tyrant. His conduct towards them should be such as will not make them afraid to speak to him or ask a question. (I once worked under a foreman who if asked anything about the work, would snarl out, "Look at your rod!" when the rod was so badly set-out that neither he nor I could tell what it was intended for). At the same time, he should be sufficiently firm to deter any familiarity. If a foreman has these qualities, he gains respect from his men; he gets good men, who try their best to satisfy him, and will do more work for him than for a bully. I never yet met a bully who was either a good workman or a good setter-out. As a rule, he makes a bluster to hide his want of knowledge; a good workman will soon detect his incompetency, and take advantage of it, in retaliation for the bullying he has to put up with. A man who is bullied, never works with a good will; if he is a good workman, he takes it as an insult, and will move elsewhere when a chance occurs. I could give instances of foremen whose only recommendation to the employer is that they are bullies, who are constantly spoiling materials and wasting time by their ignorance, which they expose every minute by trivial interference with men in their work, and who have to discharge workmen, sometimes better than themselves, in order to shift the blame from their own shoulders. Foremen should not keep constantly interfering with men in every little detail; if a man can't do the work without it, discharge him, and not waste time finding fault with him. Then there are foremen who let apartments, and take good care of those who lodge with them, whether they are good workmen or not, and of course the master is the sufferer. Again, some foremen take drinks or bribes from workmen, and the man who oftenest greases the foreman's palm keeps his place longest. Again, there are society foremen who give their jobs to their most intimate friends at the branch they belong to, whether good or indifferent workmen. All these men exist. I have worked under them, with them, and employed them, and if any attempt to contradict me, it will be a good proof that the cap fits. They place themselves under an obligation to the men, the men take advantage of it, and employers are the sufferers. My opinion is, however, that the worst of all is the incompetent, underpaid foreman (and there are many), whose weekly wage, taken at per hour for the time he makes at shop and at home, is less than journeyman's wages. He takes the situation on account of the honour (?) of his position, or because he is too idle, or too incompetent to get on as a journeyman. He gets testimonials or recommendations of some description, and the employer, thinking of cheapness, gives him employment because his wage is the lowest. Employers should understand enough of human nature to know that very few men underrate their value, and depend upon it if a foreman offers his services at journeyman's wages, he is worth no more. He gets the appointment and trusts to luck and the help of the workmen more able than himself to help him through. If he has a job he does not understand (and he does not understand much, as a rule), he has to give it to a workman who does. Of course the workman takes advantage of it, and says to himself, "The foreman knows nothing about it; he has to give me what he can't do himself, and yet he has a good, easy job. I don't see why I shouldn't take it easy!" And so the employer is robbed. He (the employer) is fairly satisfied; the work gets done some way or other, more by luck than judgment. He does not see that his cheap foreman is not earning him one-third the profits a fully-qualified man at £1 per week more would earn him, which would perhaps mean £10 to £20 per week. And yet he will keep the foreman,

and when he does not require his services will give him a testimonial that will insure the imposter a chance to rob someone else. But is this low rate all the cheap foreman gets? In very many cases it is not. He is inclined to air his position, and it takes money; so he has to put dead men in occasionally, and very often one or two inferior men worth not half the standard rate of wages, pick up weekly the full price, and hand back 2d. or 3d. per hour to the foreman. This is all true; scores of men have seen it. Every employer has to pay in some way or other, and it is best to get good, straight men, pay them a price which will place them in a position beyond the approach of a workman's bribery. If you do not do this, you will have to pay all the more, for an underpaid man will not stand much temptation; his palm will not itch long before he receives something to relieve it in some way or other. In nine shops out of ten there are men more capable than their foremen. And why? Well, a man who is fully qualified will place a fair value upon his abilities, as by them alone he would expect to hold his own. He looks at a foreman's post in its proper light, as entailing a lot of thought, worry, anxiety, and responsibility worthy of fair remuneration, and prefers rather to remain as he is than to give his energies and abilities without proper pay. That is the kind of man to have. Some time ago I wanted a shop foreman. I advertised and was inundated with applications. Some of the applicants gave a lot of references; said what good jobs they had occupied, and then asked very little more than journeyman's wages. One sent a short note without fuss, and wished to know what his responsibilities would be, as he should expect proper remuneration accordingly. I sent for him, found him thoroughly practical, and very independent. I engaged him, and he turned out better even than I anticipated. A good man at £4 per week is far more profitable to an employer than an incompetent one, who will take the post at £2 per week. If an employer advertised for a foreman at 45s. per week, he would have scores of applicants; but make the figures £4 5s., and I doubt if he would get half-a-dozen. A man who demands a good wage is, nine times out of ten, better worth his money than one who asks half as much. Now about workmen. Sometimes we hear old men say, "Ah, men don't know how to work nowadays." Well, I can agree with them in that in their generation they could do the work well; but the pace would not suit the present time. It is quite certain, that, taking quantity and quality together, we have better men (some) now than we have ever had. I might say 10 per cent of the men are good workmen in every sense of the term; but we find some of all sorts among the 90 per cent remaining, who nearly all claim to be average men. First, there is the man who can do more work, with a cup before him in a public-house than in the workshop; he is always more clever in talking about work than in doing it. Then there is the man who can do an enormous amount of work, but none well; and, as a rule, spoils all he does. Then there is the man who always jumps about, and looks his very best when the foreman is about, and who is always so embarrassingly respectful, pulls his forelock, and says Sir every time he speaks; you generally find *him* making up for all that when the foreman's back is turned. He is not half the man as one who looks you straight in the face, gives you a curt Yes or No, who troubles himself no more when you are watching him than when you are away, and who has pluck enough to give a suggestion about the manner of doing the work, whether it differs from your way or not. Then there is another class, which includes about one-third of the men—namely, what I call faddists, who have to go through certain formalities over every little thing.