

did not want to show up on time. They wanted to quit early. The workers who worked for Dad longest were also the most respectful, most obedient, and most diligent. Their years of work gained them not only a good income but also a good reputation.

John Ruskin once said, "The highest reward for man's toil is not what he gets for it but what he becomes by it."

Do Your Best

"An honest day's work for an honest day's pay" used to be an unwritten motto of American laborers. A return to this philosophy would do wonders for the U. S. economy.

But honesty in labor goes far beyond hard work in return for a wage. It encompasses quality, truth in advertising, and a desire to do one's best.

In recent years, the quality of foreign products has surpassed that of American manufactured goods. Whereas the stamp "Made in Japan" used to be synonymous with "shoddy," the opposite is true today. Consumers know this and are buying the high-quality foreign products. In response, American industry has attempted to restore confidence in the quality of its goods by advertising a return to quality.

Are American factories really improving in quality as a result of their advertised quality-consciousness?

For the answer, at least in the automobile industry, study the "incidence of repair" charts in the automobile issue of the latest consumer magazine. The Japanese do not talk quality; they produce it. Americans, however, have developed a reputation for talking it but seldom producing it.

The root of America's lack of quality can be traced to the individual workers' attitudes and daily efforts. To try to get away with producing poor quality products while advertising quality is less than honest.

I vividly remember my father teaching me to rod joints. He emphasized the importance of getting them smooth and straight. He warned of rodding them before they had had a chance to dry and of letting them get too hard. Despite these admonitions, I would sometimes try to finish early, making an unsightly mess on the bricks, or I procrastinated, making dark, ugly marks in the joints. It took a while for me, childlike as I was, to realize that my ineptness and procrastination or hastiness could affect my father's reputation as a mason.

Many workers have the idea that they have fulfilled their obligation if their production is good enough to get by. "That's good enough for government work," I've heard some say, implying that government employees are frequently guilty of this attitude.

Samuel Smiles pointed out the danger of this attitude when he wrote in *Thrift*, "'It will do!' is a common phrase of those who neglect little things. 'It will do!' has blighted many a character, sunk many a ship, burned down many a house, and irretrievably ruined thousands of hopeful projects of human good. It always means stopping short of the right thing. It is a makeshift. It is a failure and defeat."

The old Newport-News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, prior to being taken over by Tenneco, tried to combat the "It will do!" mentality. Their slogan was, "We shall build good ships here—at a profit if we can, at a loss if we must—but always good ships."

Be Patient

The present generation of American workers has grown up in an "instant" age. We have instant coffee, instant tea, instant potatoes, instant winners, and instant pain relief. We have become so accustomed to receiving everything "instantly" that we have great difficulty waiting for anything.

When workers today want a wage increase, improved working conditions, or an additional benefit, they are too impatient to make known their desires and then wait for the employer to study it and eventually "get around to it." Instead, they present "demands" and an ultima-

tum. They expect instant compliance or they will initiate a work slowdown or go on strike.

They fail to realize that perhaps the employer sees a problem in their demands that could be solved in time but which will only complicate matters if the demands are granted immediately. They fail to recognize what their belligerence is doing to their reputations as employees or the harm they are doing to young people soon to enter the labor market. They are actually developing a subconscious association with their employer as an adversary rather than as the co-laborer he is.

What if an employee has a legitimate complaint against the employer? The employee should diplomatically let his views be known, suggest changes that need to be initiated, and then patiently wait for results.

What if the employer continues the undesirable action or refuses to make the suggested changes? The employee then has several choices. He can "grin and bear it," ignoring the problem and continuing as though there is no difficulty. He can once more approach the employer, repeat his opinions and suggestions in a more convincing but still civilized manner, and give more time for the changes to be incorporated. Or he can exercise the most valuable right of any free worker: he can resign and search for a position where the con-