

HOW BELAMY SOLVED AN INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM

"You say he won't do?" Cartwright's face betrayed just the least tinge of irritation. "Why, I thought you told me that his references were of the first order."

"They are," replied the manager of the Key City Carriage Works. "But for some reason he has failed to grasp the situation here at the factory."

Cartwright gazed reflectively at the speaker.

"Don't you think, Osborne, that it is about time we were doing something?" Belamy is the third man to try his hand on this job within the past year. Meanwhile we are slipping back on our competitors are closing in upon us in a manner that demands immediate action on our part if we expect to retain our hold upon the trade. Up to date the volume of our shipment does not approach that of the Parcoll people. They are not working as many men, yet, upon the first day of last week they had shipped one hundred and sixty more jobs, and many of them heavy carriages, than we have in the same period.

"The capacity of our plant is greater than theirs."

"There have been in the business for forty years against their ten, and our work, to tell the simple truth, does not look as good as theirs, although we get a little more for it."

"The first thing we will know we shall be so far in the rear that we won't hear the horn blow."

"Reputation of the house? Do you know that the reputation of a house can never be maintained in the face of fierce competition, unless we keep abreast of the times?"

"Internal vigilance, as father has so often said, and the adoption of latest methods, are the prime requisites in any business."

"Many houses that were leaders in their respective lines twenty, thirty and forty years ago, are but memories to-day."

"Lusty young firms are doing the bulk of the business. They are not shackled to false ideals and antiquated notions, but are alive to the demands of the trade and supply them."

"You or I may think that a fifty-three inch piano body looks better than a fifty-six, but if the majority, or a large portion of our customers, want a fifty-six, we should furnish it."

"I'm not in favor of attempting to supply the whims of Tom, Dick or Harry, unless their wants can be satisfied on our standard styles, but when there is a very decided demand for a size or style we do not carry in stock, we should add that particular job to our line of standard work."

"I would like to have a talk with this last man whom you say will not do."

"While I have no doubt you are right, for I know you are actuated by the best of motives, I think it high time we were all taking a little more interest in the business in which we have invested our money."

"Speaking as a body looks better, my respect to my colleagues should not stop short of the cashier's desk."

"Hereafter you can count on me to help you in any manner you may suggest. I am convinced that there is something wrong, and both self-interest and a pardonable pride in the welfare of the business my father created, prompts me to take an active part in its affairs."

"You are too sensible, Osborne, to imagine for a moment that this decision on my part rests upon a lack of confidence in you or your methods."

"I do think, however, that a man may become swamped by detail and some things may be overlooked at the very instant that prompt action would count for being better."

"One word, Harry, before you decide hastily in a business of this character there are so many things that even the brightest mind cannot understand unless one has had a practical training, extending over a number of years."

"Many questions will arise which you may think are simple, and to one familiar with the principles underlying them they are simple, but the most costly mistakes are made by those who are positive they are going upon a foundation that is both simple and accurate."

"That is all very well, Osborne, but you must bear in mind that this is a ground hog case, and we must adopt heroic measures. For I have no doubt you think my sudden weakening of the necessity, and determine to look after the affairs of this concern come under that classification."

"Cartwright, the junior member of the firm, owned a three-fourths interest in the business which had been founded by his grandfather and developed by his father, who, but a short time before his death the previous year, admonished his son to not permit Osborne nor any other person to assume entire control."

"He advised the young man to gradually familiarize himself with the details of the business so that he would be prepared to direct the affairs of the concern should an emergency arise."

"There are many things," cautioned the old man, "that you should know, that can only be acquired by a practical shop experience."

"But no man, unless he be trained upon a finer class of work than we build, will ever be able to distinguish between what is first-class and that which is medium grade."

"The secret of building fine vehicles and the tendencies of the times point toward a large demand for that grade of work is to secure for the heads of departments men who have been trained upon fine work. If you find that Osborne cannot, or will not carry out your direction, in this respect, employ a superintendent who has had a wide experience upon fine carriages and prevail upon Osborne to content himself in the sales department where he has been so successful."

"Osborne is a faithful, energetic man, and devoted to the business, but he has his limitations, and will not, I'm afraid, be able to handle the workmen, or meet changing conditions."

"The elder Cartwright, recognized in the forceful, energetic Osborne, a resourceful man who would not permit anything to hinder his efforts in any given direction, when once convinced he was right, or for the sake of expediency."

"There are some qualities when coupled with the absence of exact technical requirements of the business would, he well knew, invite trouble and hasten disaster. Pleasant to get along with

perience with men had been varied, a delight in trying out every new man or boy that worked in the same factory, and a keenness to see that slight in stature and below the medium height, he was an object of special attraction in his younger days for the browsing bullies that took their delight in the sturdy resistance that he applied to his work, which he never let a piece leave his hands until it was as near perfect as he could make it. He read trade journals at night and piled his foreman with questions during the day, whenever he had a chance. His advancement was rapid, which, of course, made him enemies among the careless, rough class who possessed more muscle than intellect, and who excelled in the trade. While serving his time Belamy boarded with his foreman, a first-class workman, named Driscoll, who took a special delight in the young fellow's rapid progress and as a result of the foreman's patronage, he was an all-around workman on carriages, figure and ornamental drawing and painting. His home contained many creditable specimens of his skill in handiwork.

Driscoll gave the lad good advice and his wife looked after his wants with the care of a mother.

Having lost by death both father and mother, Belamy was all the more sensible of the homelike and refining influence of his surroundings.

"In after years he often said that he owed what measure of success he had attained to Steve Driscoll and his good wife, who laid the foundation of his career."

Of artistic temperament and literary tastes, he had picked up a choice collection of books ranging from the classics in general literature (many of them reprints, it must be confessed), to studies in art, lives of eminent painters, natural history, popular economics, and scientific and many volumes treating on religious topics. In this healthy atmosphere Belamy's natural taste for the decent and beautiful things of this world, which he absorbed with an eagerness that he found in no other work, began to flourish. On the third day after he went to work a hard-fisted young tough, Belamy's senior by three or four years, picked a quarrel with him, and in the heat of the moment, he belatedly came down to supper that night, an instinctive dislike for anything bordering on quarrelling or bickering, he took up his pen and wrote a letter which would follow his participation in the row. Decent people, he told himself, would regard him with suspicion and distrust.

Driscoll, who had learned all about the trouble, told his wife not to bother the lad.

Shortly after 8 o'clock he knocked on Belamy's door. He found the boy seated at a window in the twilight, his hand belonging to one up in a little bundle at his feet.

"Hello, Phil! You're not sick are you? Mother's got a nice supper waiting for you, and she says she won't sleep a wink to-night if you don't get up for supper."

Driscoll's cheery greetings and friendly manner started the tears in Belamy's eyes. Clapping his bruised face in his hands, his frail body twitched and trembled convulsively, he crouched low in the little room.

"Waiting patiently until Phil recovered in a measure from the effects of the revolution of feelings which followed his act of unexpected kindness, Driscoll drew up a chair.

"Don't feel so bad over it, son. I've been through the same thing myself. It's nothing when you get used to it," he said, and he pulled up his stool to the fire, which he kindled, and he took up his pipe and began to smoke, and he said, "You're not sick, are you? Mother's got a nice supper waiting for you, and she says she won't sleep a wink to-night if you don't get up for supper."

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training upon fine work. That such is the case is no reflection upon the gentleman's intelligence or capacity to secure correct knowledge regarding the manufacturing of carriages.

"There is not, and never has been, and never will be, a man endowed with an intuition which will solve the many problems that confront the manager of any manufacturing proposition."

"Neither can a man who may be quite successful in handling a gang of ditchers or directing the efforts of laborers in any fixed endeavor where muscle is the chief contribution, to result in years of experience in an attempt to manage skilled labor."

"It is an accepted fact among properly trained mechanics in the carriage trade, that association with skilled workmen, and years of service in the employ of concerns that build fine vehicles, will not equip the brightest and most intelligent of men with the technical knowledge that is a must for the many of their competitors who refuse to give up the methods that clarify the particular question involved."

"That is why the most successful carriage manufacturers select their foremen with an eye single to their qualifications, and then choose a man preferably from the ranks, who has had a foreman's experience, to guide their efforts in the right direction."

"These firms not only save thousands of dollars a year, but they otherwise would be lost by paying for mistakes that are eternally recurring in factories that do not recognize the importance of having a trained man in every position that demands his service."

"They are also repaid by being able at all times to keep on hand a construction force which can be depended upon to turn out work rapidly at a low cost that many of their competitors pay for a less quantity imperfectly finished."

"I have arrived at my point of view by the only route that can furnish fair results, and that is by having had a practical experience on the line work and a training in factories which employ systems that have given best results."

"I am extremely anxious to place you under supervision of my staff, however, care to pay the price that would be exacted, should I be required to act in conjunction with Mr. Osborne."

"Your president, Mr. Cartwright, has informed me that personally he knows absolutely nothing about the manufacturing end of the business, except in a general sort of a way."

"When people know their own limitations they have gone a long way toward solving problems that have proven stumbling-blocks to many who possess a mere smattering, but who fondly imagine they know it all."

"History is full of instances of men who have had a dangerous thing, rings true in our line."

"You may talk your arm off to a man whose head is crammed with odds and ends of misinformation which he has been industriously engaged in collecting during a long or short lifetime, and nothing less persuasive than a crack on the skull with a piece of lead pipe will ever get them to get up to their wagers."

"No," Belamy continued, "I think you would not care to be continually worried and harried by the contentions and bickering which would ensue in an attempt to continue to maintain me and keep Mr. Osborne on the job, too."

"I have told as much to Mr. Cartwright and it is at his request that I have informed you of the situation and outline my policy by answering any questions you gentlemen may wish to ask me."

"I presume most of you gentlemen, if not all, have made a success of your own line of business. If you have, it is because you are thoroughly familiar with all the details that are incorporated in your respective callings."

"There are many things connected with carriage manufacturing which you can never hope to know, nor is it necessary that you should be familiar with, for the very good reason that you have not employed who are supposed to understand what is required of them."

"You are, therefore, in a position to be influenced by any information regarding a policy which promises a larger amount of money you have invested in this business."

"The one thing you should guard against is the likelihood of your accepting the statements of a plausible talker who may know but possess only a small little fortune, the foundation of which has been laid in early manhood, and by paying strict attention to, and humoring the eccentric and peculiar whims of the great fortune he has inherited, he is able to operate at State fairs in the fall, and making shrewd realty deals at other seasons of the year."

"He, together with Charlie, who has been given a straight tip by the manager, at a former period in the history of the carriage company's career, that they could play to win if they invested in the concern, home to Charlie's advice, that I have had during his Oxford days, and the two years following his father's death, had contributed to his poverty of knowledge concerning the business, and I do not know any other than your own workings of the concern, was now gradually absorbing large chunks of inside information and rapidly acquiring a habit of probing and delving into details, and the manager of the directors, was a successful farmer and an old friend of the elder Cartwright. A refined looking old gentleman, with gray mutton-chops completed the group. Charlie sat in the open air of his father's proxy, together they held an eighth interest in the business."

Another eighth was owned by Osborne and the other seventh by Belamy.

"Doesn't that sound like a fair deal?" asked Osborne. "I've been given a straight tip by the manager, at a former period in the history of the carriage company's career, that they could play to win if they invested in the concern, home to Charlie's advice, that I have had during his Oxford days, and the two years following his father's death, had contributed to his poverty of knowledge concerning the business, and I do not know any other than your own workings of the concern, was now gradually absorbing large chunks of inside information and rapidly acquiring a habit of probing and delving into details, and the manager of the directors, was a successful farmer and an old friend of the elder Cartwright. A refined looking old gentleman, with gray mutton-chops completed the group. Charlie sat in the open air of his father's proxy, together they held an eighth interest in the business."

(CONCLUDED NEXT SUNDAY)