

# PROGRESS

With which is Incorporated  
**THE SCIENTIFIC NEW ZEALANDER.**

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## BRIEF FOREWORD.

It is very gratifying to announce that the first issue of PROGRESS has been received throughout New Zealand and Australia with marked expressions of approval. Knowing well the little shortcomings that somehow seem inseparable from the first issue of any paper, the Publishers are nevertheless bent on having complete all the forces necessary to the production of PROGRESS in as perfect a form as possible. The list of quite voluntary opinions printed elsewhere testifies more eloquently to the merits of this newspaper than any editorial statement.

## WORKSHOP ECONOMY.

WORKSHOP economy is an attractive subject, truly, since it may mean much in increasing the margin between profit and loss in many an implement and machinery manufacturer's establishment, whereas inattention to details may often mean great waste. The thoughtful consideration of engineers should, in fact, always be given to anything suggestive of economy in the workshop, and we welcome, therefore, a notable contribution of a contemporary on this subject, especially in relation to the question of overtime. Overtime is a condition of production which may be either used or abused, and the writer under consideration appears to correctly direct his observations against the latter policy, admitting that overtime cannot entirely be done without. There are always arising, and always will be, those contingencies of breakdowns and other urgent necessities affecting hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of factory workers, which it would be folly on the part of the engineering firms not to meet by requisite overtime to expedite repairs. At the same time it will, he argues, be conceded by many thinking men who have looked at the matter from more than a superficial standpoint, that much of the overtime which is worked is due to nothing more nor less than bad management, and is therefore undoubtedly bad economy. What then, he asks, gives rise to so much overtime in engineering trades? Many causes can be cited, some of which in reason we must allow as quite admissible. Others there are, however, such as orders behind time, congestion in various departments, and the saving of increased plant, that require at least a little explanation. We consider that in some cases contracts are accepted for delivery at impossible dates, just to get hold of the work, and without the possibility of its being conveniently executed within the specified time. It is under such conditions that overtime has often to be resorted to, yet probably when the contract was estimated for, nothing was put on for extra wages involved by time and a quarter, time and a half, extra lighting, or other disproportionate expenses; and overtime under such circumstances can hardly, he argues, be conducive to economy. As to the effect of overtime upon the life of machinery, some notable observations are offered dealing with a point which is too often likely to escape attention, namely the excessive wear and tear of machinery and plant. There is a tendency to work machines all the hours it is possible, and particularly automatic machines. "We could lay our hands," declares our contemporary, "on scores of machines that, in point of the amount of work done, have lived twice the life of a similar machine that has run the normal working day. It would seem to be hardly fair to the maker; for when people use them so inconsiderately, it is not likely, when the machine is worn out in, perhaps, less than half its computed working days, that its owner will readily own to its excessive wear-and-tear. The position often taken up, it is correctly pointed out, is that they bought the machine at such a time, that it should have lasted so long, but that it is now run in half or less than half the time expected." Such facts speak for themselves in this connection of overtime in relation to workshop economy. On the physical, moral, and social aspect of overtime, this authority speaks very definitely, and his argument is quite correct, namely that, after all, "men are only human." We know very well the human limita-

tions. It therefore follows that only for so long per day can a man perform efficiently his appointed skilled task, both as to quality and quantity. Beyond that limit both the latter suffer considerably. When, therefore, decreased quality and quantity are accompanied by increased wages, wear-and-tear of machinery, and often lighting, it will more easily be seen where the question of overtime stands in relation to real economy in workshops.

## IMPORTANT ISSUES.

The president of the Wellington Provincial Industrial Association, on important issues.—

"The well-being of our industrial enterprises will at all times depend upon the capabilities of our producers to take advantage of and develop the natural advantages with which this colony is so richly favoured."

"I am quite sure neither the workers or the community will suffer any serious hardship by the decrease of many unions that commonsense should have prevented the formation of. The conditions applying to a man not able to earn the wages as set forth by the Arbitration Court are of a character that will practically prevent such men getting employment. How many are there of these poor unfortunates suffering for the necessities of life consequent upon the arbitrary laws in vogue, and how many more are there receiving help from the State and other sources that would not be needed if, while the workers protected their rights and improved their conditions of living, they extended to their unfortunate brothers that right of honest labour which all free men under our glorious constitution are entitled to."

"The colony has passed through a long period of prosperity, and we believe that, notwithstanding the slight falling off in the colony's chief products during last year, we have not arrived at the end of the general prosperity that is all-important for the happiness of the community; but it behoves us, whether in the ranks of the employer or employed, to think and act in a manner that shall be conducive to the well-being, not only of the present community, but of the coming generations, whose trustees we are in administering this splendid asset, the colony of New Zealand, whose climate and natural advantages are second to no other country."

"It was all-important that the high standard which obtained in the industrial life of this colony as compared with conditions in the older world should not only be maintained but improved upon. To give effect to this desire the natural resources of New Zealand should be developed so as to better meet the competition of people outside. The bill introduced by the Government this session, aiming at the prevention of trade monopolies, was a matter which should engage the serious attention of all manufacturers. While it was the duty of the State to prevent any system of trade that would bring about the evils manifested in connection with some trade monopolies in other countries—the only outcome of which was the accumulation of enormous wealth in the hands of a few individuals on the one hand, and the lowering of the standard of comfort of workers, together with increased cost to the purchaser consequent on the throttling of the smaller manufacturer. On the other hand it was felt that unless great care was exercised in dealing with this matter, harassing conditions might be imposed that would result in diminished activity in those concerns already established, and the prevention of new enterprises which, if established, would be of great benefit to this colony."