

TIME STUDIES

READERS to appropriation bills forbidding time studies in arsenals and other government establishments may have led many persons to believe that their use as a mechanism of management may be on the wane in industry. Such is far from being the case. In fact their use has steadily increased and it is probable that there has been too great an increase in attempts—dangerous in their outcome—to establish standards and set rates based on superficial studies made by incompetent persons. The planning and making of time studies, and the computations and the determination of rates based on them, require a degree of engineering knowledge and skill comparable to that required in the designing and drafting rooms. That such engineering competence—the same competence which originally conceived time studies as an industrial mechanism—has been steadily at work and has made the results of its labors available to all managers, is a relief to those concerned with promoting wise administration and the sound and safe utilization of managerial devices.

Merrick's *Time Studies*¹ is a noteworthy contribution to the literature of management. Accepting the distinction between administration and management presented on page 10 of this Bulletin, and excepting works concerned with the philosophy of scientific management, such as Taylor's *Shop Management* and *Principles of Scientific Management*, it may safely be said that this is the most important contribution to the science of management since Taylor's *On the Art of Cutting Metals*; that is, the most important contribution presenting the results of the application of the scientific method to the study of detail facts involved in industrial operations for the purpose of establishing standards for exact procedure. It also describes the technique of the scientific method employed, and proves why the making of time studies and setting of rates should not be left to the inexperienced clerk.

For another reason this book is to be classed with *On the Art of Cutting Metals*. It is a lineal descendant of that book. Mr. Merrick had the good fortune to be associated with Mr. Taylor from 1898 until Mr. Taylor's death in 1915. It was a vision of Mr. Taylor's that there should be and some day would be an encyclopedia of time study data, usable

¹*Time Studies as a Basis for Rate Setting*, by Dwight V. Merrick, New York, The Engineering Magazine Company, 1919, pp. xiv-366.

in industry at large, pertaining to every standard machine. Under Mr. Taylor's inspiration and with financial support by him, the studies and the recording of the necessary data was begun. After Mr. Taylor's death the accumulation of data was continued by Mr. Merrick, with the cooperation of other associates of Mr. Taylor, with the result that we now have available what may be called the first volume of the encyclopedia of which the father of scientific management had a vision.

The economic justification of the making of time studies is that they yield dependable knowledge of what a first-class workman can do under given conditions, whereas the casual judgments of even the most experienced foremen and skilled workmen show wide variation. Procedure such as the determination of wage rates, for instance, based upon variable judgments must, to insure profits, make an appreciable allowance for the errors in judgment, always in favor of the party assuming the risk of making the profits. This is natural and is the conscious or unconscious practice in all industry. Wage rates based upon time studies, however, run somewhat higher than those based upon guess, even when other things remain the same, because the allowance for error can be reduced to a minimum. But other things do not remain the same; the precise knowledge yielded by time studies includes knowledge of better working conditions and better procedure which may be brought under precise control, and the result is accretions of certainty from the processes at the machine or bench back through the lay-out of work in the shop to the seasonal lay-out in the production manager's office. The sum total is an increased productivity which may be shared between employer and worker.

The book is divided into three sections: "The first presents the principles, methods and implements of time study; the second is an illustration of time study as applied to a line of machine tools—Gisholt boring mills—together with a series of tables giving the detailed times as established by study; while the final section, in the nature of appendices, includes detailed times for a number of other kinds of work, and thus shows conclusively the wide adaptation of the principles and methods outlined."

Mr. Merrick wisely does not include discussion of the administrative problem of the utilization of time studies. That he may safely leave to others. He contents himself with a straight-forward and complete exposition of the technique of making scientific time studies and of the results of those he has made.

FOR YOUR TICKLER

ANNUAL MEETING of the TAYLOR SOCIETY, Engineering Societies Building,
29 W. 39th St., NEW YORK, Friday DECEMBER 5 and Saturday DECEMBER 6, 1919.

Plan to be present; make hotel reservations now

PARTIAL LIST OF CONVENIENT HOTELS

Algonquin,	59 W. 44th	Manhattan,	Madison and 42nd
Astor,	Broadway and 44th	Marlborough,	Broadway and 36th
Belmont,	Park and 42nd	Martinique,	Broadway and 32nd
Biltmore,	Madison and 43rd	Murray Hill,	Park and 42nd
Commodore,	Lexington and 42nd	Pennsylvania,	Seventh and 32nd
Continental,	Broadway and 41st	Ritz-Carlton,	Madison and 46th
Imperial,	Broadway and 31st	Touraine,	9 E. 39th
Iroquois,	49 W. 44th	Vanderbilt,	Park and 34th
Knickerbocker,	Broadway and 42nd	Waldorf-Astoria,	Fifth and 34th
McAlpin,	Broadway and 36th	Woodstock,	127 W. 43rd

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

(details to be announced later)

Friday afternoon	Dec. 5.	Meeting of Committees.
Friday evening	Dec. 5.	Annual Business Meeting.
Saturday forenoon	Dec. 6.	Papers and Discussion: "Standards: Their nature, necessity, use, accomplishments."
Saturday noon	Dec. 6.	Society Luncheon.
Saturday afternoon	Dec. 6.	Papers and Discussion: "Unemployment within Employment."
Saturday evening	Dec. 6.	Society Dinner.
Saturday evening	Dec. 6.	Papers and Discussion: Either "Some Problems of Railroad Management" or "Summary of Papers Given at the Boston Meeting and Continuation of Discussion."

Everyone testifies that the Boston meeting was most stimulating. The official stenographer puts it as well as anyone: "If I may make a comment 'off the record', I don't know when I have reported a more stimulating affair; one where the participants seemed more keen and alive, or where there was more 'ozone' in the atmosphere." Bring your particular brand of ozone to the New York meeting.

Send in at once the names of persons to whom you desire to have notices of this meeting sent.

H. S. Person, Managing Director,
Room 710, 29 W. 39th St., New York.