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## Co-operation the Keynote of Success of the Abitibi

Committees of Employees Do Good Work at Iroquois Falls for the Town and for the Industry. All Work Together to Make the Falls and the Abitibi Co. the Best Yet.

The pulp and paper industry is one of the leading industries of this North Land, and the Abitibi Power and Paper Co. at Iroquois Falls is the leader in this industry in this North. Consequently an outside view of this industry and of the neighbouring town of Iroquois Falls will be of double interest. In a recent issue of The Pulp and Paper Magazine there was a lengthy article on "Abitibi," together with a number of photographs. The article is reproduced below in part:

"Some time ago the Pulp and Paper Magazine commented editorially on an incident which took place at Iroquois Falls. The Abitibi Power and Paper Co. celebrated the definite establishment of 500 tons per day as their normal output of newsprint paper, by giving a dinner at which the management entertained the skilled employees. In the course of the evening, Mr. R. A. McInnis, the mill manager, explained briefly to the men just how he sized up the situation in the pulp and paper trade. He explained the factors influencing the demand for paper, and the advantages and disadvantages of Abitibi in successfully competing with other mills, more or less favorably situated. He pointed out particularly that the success of the mill is a personal responsibility for each member of the organization.

"This incident is typical of the Abitibi policy, of having each department know what is going on, and where improvement is possible and necessary to maintain or improve the quality, and the output of the company's product. The result has been a steady increase in production, with maintenance of quality, until the mill celebrated the birthday of Madame Anson, mother of the late F. H. Anson, the founder of the company by setting up a record of 529½ tons of standard newsprint paper, on Friday, the 13th March.

"The editor had the pleasure of visiting the mill recently and spending several days just browsing around. Two important points should be particularly mentioned; first, the Abitibi Railway and Navigation Co. is now completing its third season, hauling pulpwood, and has proved very efficient; second, the system of operating on a budget and manufacturing according to technical control, has proved decidedly successful.

"The organization of work at the Abitibi mill may be classified under five headings, all of which may be considered as departments under the direction of the manager. 1st. Budget, 2nd. Control, 3rd. Production, 4th. Maintenance, 5th. Personnel.

"The budget system is perhaps a novelty in the paper industry. The theory is to foresee conditions that are likely to obtain in the various departments for a definite period ahead. This is accomplished by means of the basic data of a controlled operation. The budget operation is then followed by means of frequent reports on production and supplies. By compiling the salient points in the various reports, it is possible to tell how much raw material is being used and where it comes from, as well as the amount and cost of the production from the various departments. This checkup on operation enables the management to determine what changes are necessary, and occasionally even to deliberately plan on increased costs for certain departments, where necessary to meet the general needs of the mill.

Through the department of research and control, there is constantly available the essential information on quality of product at each stage in its manufacture. This department knows how much raw material has been used and knows the amount and character of all waste. Research work is carried on for development of improved control and utilization or prevention of wastes. New developments are studied for their application to operation, and fundamental work in connection with the operation is continuously under way.

"The maintenance department of the Abitibi Company is a real engineering organization. The chief engineer is a man of broad training and has had long experience in the layout of construction and maintenance work at Iroquois Falls. In connection with him is a store room, machine shop, drafting room under competent management. The store room issues all materials, from pins to pulp stones, and a running balance is kept on the perpetual inventory basis. Instead of various departments of the mill having spare parts and other equipment lying about, such articles are held in the store room labelled with a special tag to show that they have been charged off the books, and may be obtained at any time by the department to which they belong.

"The production department of the mill would be considered by some people to be the most important but the organization of the Abitibi mill does not recognize degrees of importance. Every man's job is important and every man seems to recognize his responsibility in keeping the

wheels turning. The operation men are co-operation men, and work with the other departments in every particular, with the result that a mill built to produce 450 tons of paper has turned out 75 tons more than this amount in one day.

"The personnel department or the employment office, is the gate-way to the mill. The work of this staff is most carefully done and complete records of all employees are kept on file. When a man applies for employment a card is filled out, on which a very full biography could be constructed. It is significant that the application carries an agreement to join the local Union, and it may be stated at this point, that the relations between Abitibi Company and the various Unions represented in the mill have been happy in the extreme. It is interesting to note that an increasing number of applicants are men who have worked in Iroquois Falls before, and who have thought they would find the grass greener on the other side of the fence, have decided to come back to the fold. Such men are given preference when their previous record has been satisfactory.

"The labor turnover has been decreased to a remarkable extent. Whereas, in 1919, there were 2,443 men released from 840 positions, there were only 1,640 released in 1924, from 1,060 positions. When it is taken into consideration that these releases of temporary men, such as a day on the block pile, etc., these figures show a surprisingly low turnover. In the paper mill, there are 162 positions and only 21 new men or 12½ per cent, were engaged in this department during the past twelve months. The number of married men employed at the Abitibi mill is constantly increasing. Fifty new houses were built in 1923, and twenty-five more were constructed in 1924.

"Iroquois Falls has a population of about 2,300, but with a neighbouring community depending upon the mill, this centre has a total population of about 5,000. The company has instituted a very careful sanitary inspection, and makes a daily analysis of milk and water, and occasionally inspects other food supplies. The result has been almost complete elimination of diseases usually carried by milk and water, and the increased health of the community has far more than paid for the expense. The decrease in infant mortality alone has been sufficient to compensate for all the effort in this department.

"A new church has been completed since the editor's last visit and it is understood that a fully equipped hospital is to be organized and built in the near future.

"With an excellent school, organizations and facilities for amusement and entertainment, Iroquois Falls is an ideal community.

"The Safety work of the Abitibi mill is carried on by a committee of the men themselves. There is a chairman, secretary, and eight members, the Secretary being the Compensation Clerk. The members of the committee hold office for three months at a time. The committee meets each week and makes an inspection of some part of the Mill suggesting changes where necessary; their recommendations are given priority in repair work. The work of this committee in the past two years has resulted in reducing, to a very large extent, the hazards in the mill. They have devoted a great deal of time also to preaching the gospel of safety to men in every department. Posters and an accident board showing daily the accidents by departments, are used but the committee relies chiefly on education in order to get greater effect. The Safety Committee also has the authority to hold an investigation of all accidents, either by itself or by a specially appointed committee, and in case of serious accidents an investigation is always held. The work of the committee is somewhat away from stereotyped safety lines, but has achieved very satisfactory results.

"The Abitibi Company has two special committees as a link between management and employees. One is directly connected with the mill, the other is a community committee. The Federated Committee is a committee representing different Unions and the members are appointed by these Unions. The idea of this Federated Committee is to take up questions laid before it, either by the Management of the Mill or by the men, which deal with mill matters that affect all the Mill and not one Union only. If either the management or the men have some scheme, which they think would be beneficial, it is laid before this committee, which studies the situation and if, in their opinion, it is a good thing, this same committee will work out the details satisfactory to both parties.

"The other Committee is called the Executive Council, and deals with no matters connected with the mill, but with all matters of community interest. This committee meets once a month or oftener, when necessary and takes up questions such as

coal, wood, and all other questions affecting the whole community. Any complaint made by a citizen is also investigated by this committee and a decision come to.

"At the time of our previous visit to Iroquois Falls, the railway to Timson on the Trans-Continental was nearing completion. The sixteen miles of main line are now in fine shape after three seasons' operation, and about twelve miles of branch line have been laid into the woods at various points for bringing out pulpwood. The advantage to the mill of having this railway is quite evident in the small size of the block pile for such a huge output. Approximately 10,000 cords is all the wood that was carried over from the drive, and it is anticipated that even this small amount may be decreased. It will always be necessary, however to have a small amount at hand to provide for any emergencies. The operation of the railway, however, has been so dependable that no difficulty on this score is anticipated. Settlers' wood is brought in from as great a distance as railway rates will permit, and considerably more could be purchased if the short haul freight were more nearly on the same mileage basis as the long haul rates on pulpwood, which is exported. This would provide railways with a higher class of outgoing freight in the form of paper.

"We were able to participate in what is probably the most important

operation in the woods, namely eating. It happened to be just dinner time at the loader, and we had the pleasure of participating in a very pleasant and hearty meal at the cook camp. No warning had been given the cook, and the regular noon menu was served, and it was good. If the editor ate as much every lunch as he did at that one, there would either be a job for a tailor or the doctor. The loader crew is housed in two sleeping cars right at the camp. These are equipped and furnished according to the regulations of the Ontario Department of Health.

"After lunch, we went back to the main line on the Shay with some more cars of pulpwood, and then transferred to the van of the mid-day train and returned to the mill, having had one of the most interesting experiences we remember.

"The impression of the whole plant was that we had visited a community of co-operators—not a closed organization to obtain the greatest amount at the lowest price, or a combination to sell at the highest figure, but a community held together and inspired by a true desire to accomplish something worth while. We felt a tinge of regret that the late Mr. F. H. Anson, the founder of the Abitibi Power & Paper Company, was not there to see the practical accomplishment of the idea and the ideal that was evidently in his mind when the mill was started in 1914."

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