

to realize that such production has been secured only at the expense of certain sacrifices, and that in order to sustain and augment the present rate of production a radical change-over from wartime conditions, and the establishment of new units, will be required within the industry.

Among the factors that are tending to retard production are —

- (a) Shortage of both skilled and unskilled labour in bush and mill.
- (b) Shortage of essential supplies and inadequate maintenance.
- (c) Lack of suitable accommodation for workers.
- (d) Cutting out of convenient bush resources and transference of mills to less accessible areas.
- (e) Shortage of rail trucks where logs are transported by rail to the mill.

The majority of sawmills are still operating considerably below normal capacity, because of shortages of man-power. These deficiencies can only be remedied by the adoption of an ambitious training scheme, which has already been submitted to the Timber Production Advisory Committee, and as under-staffed units are brought up to full complement a substantial increase in production will be secured.

The erection of new sawmills and the maintenance of existing plant have been severely handicapped by the difficulty of securing equipment and supplies from overseas during the last six years. The effect of inadequate maintenance became increasingly apparent last year, when some mills were compelled to shut down temporarily in order to effect essential repairs. It is likely to be some time before the lag in this respect has been overtaken.

The necessity of providing adequate and suitable accommodation at or near the bush and the mills has been referred to earlier in this report. Vigorous efforts have been pressed throughout the year to have a scheme introduced under which this objective might be speedily realized, and it is anticipated with some confidence that finality will soon be reached and operation commenced during the current year.

After the drain of the war years on bush supplies, a number of established mills will soon exhaust immediately convenient resources, and if production is to be maintained it becomes critically urgent that new areas be demarcated and made available for the re-location of old and the establishment of new mills. It is for this reason that so much emphasis is now being placed on the expansion of timber-cruising staff for the reconnaissance and appraisal of some important reserves of timber throughout the Dominion. The transference of mills to new areas, which are usually if not always less-accessible areas, entails a period during which these units are not in production, but every effort is made to hasten such transfers.

The erection of new sawmills will assist in improving production. The labour for these mills is largely recruited from outside the industry, particularly when mills are set up in or adjacent to established centres of population. It is therefore all the more essential, if labour is to be attracted away from the neighbourhood of urban amenities, that schemes for improving the accommodation at or near the mills be expedited. It might almost be said that timber production is tied up with this exigency, as it is clear that for several years to come a large portion of the labour required to man the logging and milling operations of the Dominion must be attracted from the general labour pool.

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