

Section 4.—Forest Resources.

Areas.—The total land area of Canada, revised according to the Labrador Boundary Award of 1927, has been estimated at 3,542,049 square miles, of which 560,000 square miles is considered as being suitable for agricultural or pastoral purposes. According to the 1921 Census about 220,134 square miles of this agricultural land was occupied and about 115,770 square miles was improved.

The total area covered by existing forests has been estimated at 1,151,454 square miles, of which about 82,260 square miles is land, which if cleared would be suitable for agriculture. Under the most economic arrangement about 52,000 square miles of this last area should be cleared and devoted to field crops and pasturage and the remaining 30,000 square miles should be and no doubt will be left under forest cover in the form of farmers' woodlots. This leaves an area of 1,099,194 square miles of land which can be utilized to the best advantage under forest.

Of the total area under forest at the present time, amounting to 1,151,454 square miles and including the 82,260 square miles of agricultural land, about 200,000 square miles carries mature, merchantable timber, 111,234 square miles carries immature but nevertheless merchantable timber and 554,641 square miles carries young growth which if protected from fire and other damage will eventually produce merchantable timber. All this area is so situated as to be commercially exploitable at present. The remaining 285,574 square miles is considered as inaccessible or unprofitable to operate under present conditions. As the result of the constant and inevitable improvement in conditions affecting profitable exploitation, such as the extension of settlement and transportation facilities, the increasing world scarcity of forest products, and the ever increasing demand for these products, due to the development of industry and the discovery of new uses for wood, and the improvements in the methods, equipment and machinery used in logging and manufacturing forest products, much, if not all, of this inaccessible timber will eventually become commercially exploitable.

In Canada as a whole 6.6 p.c. of the total forest area has been permanently dedicated to forest production. This area includes the National Forests and all those provincial forest reserves and parks in which forest utilization is permitted. The National Forests include 34,170 square miles, the British Columbia forest reserves 10,146 square miles, the Ontario reserves and parks 22,815 square miles, and the Quebec reserves and parks 8,914 square miles, making a total of 76,045 square miles.

Of the total forest area 9.6 p.c. has been permanently alienated, being owned in fee simple by private individuals or corporations. On 13.2 p.c. of the area the Crown still holds title to the land but has alienated the right to cut timber under lease or license. So far 77.2 p.c. has not been alienated in any way. It may be said that 90.4 p.c. of Canada's forest area is still owned by the State and, subject only to certain temporary privileges granted to limit holders, may at any time be placed under forest management and dedicated to forest production.

Volume of Standing Timber.—In 1923, the total stand of timber in Canada was estimated to be approximately 246,792 million cubic feet, of which 198,410 million cubic feet was of coniferous species and 48,382 million cubic feet of broad-leaved species.