

The Montane Forest Region.—This region forms part of what is often termed the Interior Dry Belt of British Columbia. It occupies an extensive series of plateaux, valleys, and ranges in the interior of the province, which extends northward from the International Boundary to the valley of the Skeena river. The climate is relatively dry, with low summer rainfall, and moderate to high temperatures. The driest conditions are found in the lower river valleys, where the forest gives way to open grassland.

The principal tree species are ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, and aspen. Towards the northern limits of the region ponderosa pine disappears and associations of Douglas fir and lodgepole pine become dominant. Towards the north and east, stands of Engelmann spruce and alpine fir grade into the forests of the Sub-Alpine and Columbia Regions. Aspen is an important constituent of the northern parts of this forest.

The Coast Forest Region.—This region includes the western slope of the Coast and Cascade mountains and the insular system, the higher elevations of which form Vancouver island, the Queen Charlotte group and other islands along the coast.

The climate in this region is mild and equable, with heavy precipitation varying from 40 to 200 inches per annum, about 70 p.c. of which falls during the autumn and winter months. These conditions are conducive to the luxurious growth of coniferous forests, and produce the largest trees and the heaviest stands in the Dominion.

The dominant trees are western hemlock and western red cedar. Associated with these are Douglas fir in the south and Sitka spruce in the north. All four of these species, of which the most important commercially is Douglas fir, grow to large sizes, and occasionally are found in stands running up to 100,000 ft. b.m. per acre. Other conifers which occur in the region but are of much less importance include yellow cedar; mountain hemlock; amabilis, grand, and alpine firs; and western white pine. Of the broad-leaved trees, several alders are widely distributed, and Garry oak and madrona are found in the vicinity of the straits of Georgia. Broad-leaved maple and vine maple occur at low elevations in the southern sections, and black cottonwood, which is perhaps the most important hardwood from the commercial point of view, is found on alluvial soils in the valleys.

Section 2.—Important Tree Species.

In Canada there are approximately 125 species or distinct varieties of trees. Only 33 of these are conifers commonly known as "softwoods", but they comprise over 80 p.c. of the standing timber and 70 p.c. of the wood utilized for all purposes. While the number of deciduous-leaved or "hardwood" species is large, only about a dozen are of a commercial importance comparable with that of about two dozen species of conifers.

For descriptions of the individual tree species, the reader is referred to pp. 283-286 of the Canada Year Book, 1936, where the chief tree species were covered, and to Dominion Forest Service Bulletin No. 61, "Native Trees of Canada", published by the Department of Mines and Resources, where the subject is treated in detail.

Section 3.—Forest Resources.

Areas.—The total land area of Canada, revised according to the latest surveys, is estimated at 3,466,556 square miles, of which 549,700 square miles is considered as being suitable for agricultural or pastoral purposes. About 254,873 square