

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 miles of this agricultural land is occupied and of this 213,236 square miles is classified as improved and under pasture and 41,637 square miles as forested.

On p. 27, the area of forested lands is shown in detail. It will be seen that the total area covered by existing forests is 1,223,522 square miles, including 41,637 square miles of occupied agricultural land still forested. Most of this will, no doubt, be left under forest cover in the form of farmers' woodlots. There is also a considerable area of forest land which is of agricultural value and will eventually be cleared, but it is estimated that 1,100,000 square miles is essentially forest land which can best be utilized for forest production. The accessible and productive forest area is estimated to be 769,463 square miles, of which 360,548 square miles carries timber of merchantable size and on 408,915 square miles there is young growth which, if protected from fire, will eventually produce merchantable timber. The remaining area of 454,059 square miles carries forests of value either because of their influence on water control, climatic conditions, game conservation, or by reason of their attraction to tourists and their value as a source of wood for local use. On account of their geographical location or because of unfavourable growth conditions these forests at present are considered as non-productive from a commercial viewpoint.

As a 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, the discovery of new uses for wood, and the improvements in the methods, equipment, and machinery used in logging and manufacturing forest products, some of this inaccessible timber will eventually become commercially exploitable. It is estimated that of the accessible forest area 442,354 square miles is producing softwood or coniferous timber, 221,138 square miles mixed softwoods and hardwoods, and 105,971 square miles hardwood or broad-leaved species.