

The wood is used chiefly in construction, especially for house-framing and bridge-planking, but it also supplies the demand for a moderately strong wood for many purposes, including railway ties and mining timbers, while its bark is a valuable source of tannin. Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) is found in Canada only in the Province of British Columbia. It has always been used extensively for box shooks and for pulp, but in the past its use for lumber has been overshadowed by Douglas fir. More recently, however, its excellent lumber properties and large size have resulted in its increasing use for all but the heaviest construction.

The True Firs.—In the genus *Abies*—the true firs—there are four commercial species. Lowland fir (*Abies grandis*) and amabilis fir (*Abies amabilis*) occur on the coast of British Columbia, alpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) in the mountainous regions of British Columbia, and balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) in Northern and Eastern Canada from the Atlantic to the Yukon. The wood of the four species is similar and is put to much the same uses, although the two western-coast species attain a much larger size than the others. The true firs usually grow in stands intermixed with spruce or hemlock and are usually cut with these woods, no differentiation being made between the species when marketed as lumber. They provide excellent wood for pulp and are used extensively for that purpose.

Cedar.—There are two species of the genus *Thuja* native to Canada. They are both of commercial importance, each in its own range. White cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) is found from the Atlantic to the southeastern part of Manitoba, but does not extend as far north as some of the other conifers and is nowhere very plentiful, being confined to moist locations. Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) is found only in British Columbia. It is one of the giants of the Pacific Coast, being surpassed in size only by Douglas fir. Both the eastern and western species are extremely durable, surpassing the other conifers in this respect, and are used extensively as poles, posts and lumber, and generally where resistance to decay is important. The cedars produce over 70 p.c. of the wooden shingles cut in Canada. Western red cedar provides important amounts of long, clear, straight-grained material, and is being increasingly used for plywood. The light weight and durability of the wood make it especially suitable for construction of boats and canoes.

Tamarack or Larch.—Of the three native larch, two are of commercial importance. The eastern species (*Larix laricina*) is found in every province of the Dominion east of the Rocky Mountains, and grows usually in swampy locations. It is one of the strongest softwoods of Eastern Canada. While not an important lumber species, it is valuable for uses such as railway ties, piling and boat-building on account of its hardness, strength and durability. The western larch (*Larix occidentalis*) is found only in the southern interior of British Columbia and grows to a greater size than the eastern tamarack. The wood is hard, heavy and strong, resembling Douglas fir in these respects, and is used for railway ties, small structural timber, piling, and exterior and interior finish.

Birch.—Birch is Canada's most important hardwood. There are seven native species, but only two are of much commercial importance. Yellow birch (*Betula lutea*) grows in Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritime Provinces, and is the source of valuable lumber for flooring, furniture, cabinet-work and interior finish. It is used extensively for veneers and plywoods, as well as for railway ties. It is a hard, heavy, strong wood that works easily and takes a smooth finish.