

Section 4.—Forest Depletion and Increment

A general account of forest depletion and increment is presented in this Section. Details of the scientific control of those influences that account for wastage, viz., forest fires, insect pests, etc., are dealt with in Section 5, Forest Administration.

Depletion.—The average annual rate and cause of depletion of reserves of merchantable timber during the ten years 1941-50 are given in Table 4. Of the total depletion, 79 p.c. was utilized and 21 p.c. was destroyed by fire, insects and disease. The utilization of 2,842,687,000 cu. feet comprised 39 p.c. logs and bolts, 31 p.c. pulpwood, 26 p.c. fuelwood, and the remaining 4 p.c. miscellaneous products. Approximately 6 p.c. of the logs and bolts and pulpwood were exported in unmanufactured form.

The more efficient utilization of timber that has been cut is one factor related to forest depletion. There is little doubt that in the past too high a percentage of the sawn log was discarded. Changes of great significance have been taking place in the uses of wood, permitting the utilization of sizes and qualities previously considered unmerchantable. The development of the manufacture of rayon, cellophane and numerous other products in the cellulose industry is rapidly extending the use of wood. Plastic-wood products, fibre board and laminated wood are providing an increasing demand for the formerly inferior classes of wood, resulting in the more complete utilization of forest resources and in the elimination of much waste.

