

## IN MANY WOODLANDS.

Since the wood has been found so pre-eminently excellent for the making of pulp, the spruce forests of Canada have excited the interest of all the world. Apart from the making of pulp for paper purposes, however, our spruce wood has always been a valuable asset, and in the eastern provinces it is the chief wood used for house building and flooring, being tougher, stronger and more elastic than pine. So far as white spruce alone is concerned, it is said that the value of the growing timber is already as great as that of all our other trees combined. The white spruce (*picea alba*), is easily recognized and separated from the black spruce (*picea nigra*) by the difference of the cones. In the black spruce they are quite short, seldom an inch long, and the scales are corded and deep purple, even when quite old. The white spruce, on the other hand, has narrow, drooping cones, never under an inch in length, and the scales are pale straw color or brown at maturity. *Picea nigra* is abundant in Newfoundland and in every part of Canada, except southern Ontario and the prairie region. Prof. Macoun says it climbs the highest on the Shick-shocks, in Gaspé, and creeps the closest of any of our creepers to the cold waters of the Labrador coast and Arctic Sea. At its northern and southern limit it nearly loses its tree form, becoming in the north a bush, while in the south, in the deep swamps, it is little larger than a hop-pole. All specimens of spruce obtained from Labrador and the far north are this species. It is closely related to the red spruce, and prefers

damp situations, while white spruce prefers drier, well-drained soil. According to the late Prof. Dawson, it is very likely a common tree in northern British Columbia, having been observed on the Blackwater and other rivers up to 55 degrees. The black spruce in suitable soils attains a height of a hundred feet, but is a little inferior to white spruce in the quality of its wood for joiners' use. With the tender shoots of the black spruce is made the noted 'spruce beer,' the favorite beverage of the 'Canadian' during the summer months. Both black and white spruce have been found to increase in value as pulp woods the further north they grow.

Respecting the distribution of *picea nigra* and *picea alba*, Sir John Richardson and Prof. Sargent assert that *picea alba* is really the more northern one, while Prof. Macoun holds the contrary opinion. He has specimens from Truro, N. S., from Gaspé, from Nepigon, north of Lake Superior, and from various points on the prairie, and from the foothills and slopes of the Rocky Mountains but not one from north of the Saskatchewan, except Dr. Dawson's, from the Athabasca, all the specimens from that quarter and northern British Columbia being most decidedly black spruce. The white spruce in habit is totally different from the black spruce. *Picea nigra* is a lover of damp localities, as we have said, while white spruce prefers comparatively dry woods, and is found mixed with poplar, birch and other trees. On the prairies it is found on sand-hills and dry slopes of river banks, and, this