

firs were classed together under the one generic name *Abies*. Link, in 1841, separated the two groups into distinct genera, restoring the classical names, *Picea* for the spruces, and *Abies* for the firs. But in Britain, where Coniferæ have been grown to an enormous extent, both for ornament and use, especially since the middle of the present century, a silver fir continued to be almost universally called a *Picea*, and a spruce an *Abies*,—until within the last few years, when English scientific writers have adopted Link's use of the names, and thus adapted their nomenclature to continental custom and classical usage. Among English foresters, gardeners, and nurserymen, however, the old way, so long familiar, will be given up slowly, and not without regret.

The Canadian Spruces, so far as regards their distinctive specific characters, have been a puzzle to botanists. They were not known to Linnaeus. Miller and Aiton recognized two species, *alba* and *nigra*, and Lambert introduced a third (*rubra*) that had been recognized by the younger Michaux as a variety of *nigra*. Accordingly, in most of the works on Coniferæ published since Lambert's (1825) by European and English botanists,\* we find the three species described without hesitation. But, there have not been wanting expressions of doubt as to the permanent distinctness of the third species, and of suspicion even, that all three were connected by intermediate forms so closely as to be doubtfully entitled to rank as more than varieties of one species. A full statement of synonymy would occupy too much space, and indeed be out of place, in this publication; a brief indication of the views held by a few prominent botanists will suffice for the present.

In Persoon's *Synopsis Plantarum*, 1807, (the authorship of which is believed to belong to Richard), *rubra* is described with rubicund cones, slightly bilobed scales, and red brown bark, and is curiously enough assigned geographically to Hudson Strait; *alba*, with incurved leaves, lax subcylindrical cones, entire scales, whitish bark; *nigra*, with straight leaves, ovate black-purple cones, scales undulated at the margins, bark blackish.

Endlicher, in the standard work on Coniferæ for the time (1847), "*Synopsis Coniferarum*," characterized three species as follows: (pp. 112-15): *alba*, cones subcylindrical, lax, pendulous, scales broadly

\* Persoon, Antoine, Don, Loudon, Link, Parlatores, Endlicher, Gordon, etc.