

# Douglas—The Man and the Tree

Romantic Life of the Man After Whom the Douglas Fir Was Named.

Douglas was the family name of Lord Selkirk, founder of the Red River Settlement, and it was the name of other men who have been prominent in Western Canada, so that considerable doubt exists in the popular mind as to the particular man after whom the famous Douglas fir was named. It is found that it was not named after a founder, governor, or chief justice, but after a remarkable man in a humbler sphere of life. It should also be noted, too, that while the name of Douglas will always be associated with the common name of this magnificent tree, yet the scientific name fails to show any connection. It is called scientifically *Pseudotsuga*, literally, false hemlock. It is not false hemlock, and it is a much finer tree than any hemlock, and it is to be hoped that a later generation of botanists will change the name and give Douglas a place in it.

Regarding Douglas, Dr. Charles S. Sargent, Director of Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University, has this to say of him

in a footnote in his famous work 'Silva of North America':—

'David Douglas (1798-1834), a Scotch gardener sent by the Horticultural Society of London to explore the forests of the Northwest Territory, is, from his courage, energy and success in the presence of great difficulties and dangers, and from his untimely and horrible death, a conspicuous figure in the annals of American botanical exploration. Douglas, who had been trained by Sir William Hooker, and had made a short botanical journey in eastern America in 1823, was sent, in 1824, by way of Cape Horn, to the Columbia River, where he arrived in April, 1825. He spent two years in Oregon, discovering some important trees, including *Abies nobilis* (noble fir), *Abies amabilis* (lowland fir), and *Pinus Lambertiana* (sugar pine), the largest of its race.

'In March, 1827, Douglas started from Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia River, crossed the continent by Hudson's Bay



Among the Big Trees that Douglas Discovered on the Pacific Coast.