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No. 19

# ARNOLD ARBORETUM

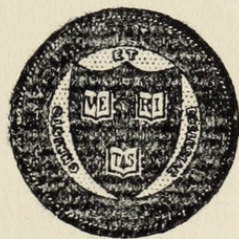
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## BULLETIN

OF

## POPULAR INFORMATION



JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

APRIL 25, 1912



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In the last issue of these bulletins something was said of the effects of the winter on a few of the new Chinese trees in the Arboretum. The number of new Chinese shrubs which promise to be hardy in this climate is naturally much larger than the number of trees. We can speak, however, only of a few of these now. Of Lilacs Wilson found eleven species in China. Nearly all of these were discovered by him and most of them are now growing in the Arboretum where three species have been sufficiently tested to show that they will be hardy here. These are *Syringa pinnatifolia*, *S. Komarowii* and *S. Wilsonii*. The flowers and flower-clusters of the first are small and not conspicuous, but the deeply divided leaves are unusual among Lilacs and form the chief interest in this plant. The others are large shrubs related to *S. villosa* with handsome foliage and flowers. More interesting, although not yet fully tested for hardiness, are *S. reflexa*, with long pendulous flower-clusters, thus differing from all the other known Lilacs, and *S. Sargentiana* with long acuminate leaves and shorter nodding not pendulous flower-clusters.

The genus *Cotoneaster*, which is valued chiefly for its black or red, often long-persistent fruits, has been poorly represented in our gardens as few of the species previously known have proved hardy here. Wilson, however, found an unexpectedly large number of new species of *Cotoneaster* in western China and at least a dozen of these have passed through the winter without injury and promise to become valuable garden plants here. Among these may be mentioned *C. Dielsiana*, with weeping whip-like branches and small red fruits persistent late into the winter, *C. divaricata* with dark red fruits, *C. foveolata* with large leaves which turn in the autumn to brilliant shades of orange and crimson and black fruit, *C. moupinensis* also with black fruit, a plant remarkable in the brilliant colors the leaves assume here in the autumn, and *C. hupehensis*, a strong-growing, shrubby black-fruited species with graceful spreading branches, ornamental white flowers and crimson globose fruit.

Among the new *Spiræas* introduced by Wilson are three species which are now known to be perfectly hardy and to be among the most ornamental of all the numerous species and hybrids of this genus. These are *S. Henryi*, *S. Wilsonii*, and *S. Veitchii*.

The Chinese Witch Hazel, *Hamamelis mollis*, a common shrub of the central provinces, has now lived unhurt in the Arboretum for two years. It is one of the late winter or early spring-flowering species and its flowers are said to be more beautiful than those of the other Witch Hazels. Several of the Chinese *Hydrangeas* are uninjured by the winter. Among these may be mentioned *H. xanthourea* and its several varieties, all handsome shrubs with large corymbs of flowers. In *Exochorda Giraldui* New England gardens have a new and perfectly hardy plant of first-rate importance. It grows to a height of twelve feet or more and produces larger and handsomer flowers than the well-known Pearl Bush of gardens, *Exochorda grandiflora*.

Of the beautiful genus *Abelia* we have before been able to cultivate only the hybrid *A. grandiflora*, so it is particularly gratifying that the large-flowered, strong-growing *A. Engleriana* proves to be hardy here. It is of interest, too, that the new monotypic genus *Kolkwitzia* flourishes here. It is a shrub from four to six feet high with large terminal pan-



icles of flowers followed by crimson hairy fruits, and is related to *Abelia* and *Lonicera*. Another beautiful plant of this family, *Dipelta floribunda*, of a genus new to cultivation, with large and showy *Weigelia*-like flowers, can also be numbered among the hardy Chinese plants.

Of Wilson's numerous Honeysuckles which are flourishing in the Arboretum we can only mention now *Lonicera prostrata*, which promises to be a useful plant for covering rocky slopes and banks. It is very hardy and free-growing, with prostrate stems, small oval bluish-green leaves small white flowers turning yellow when fading, and orange-red fruits; *L. Henryi*, a vigorous climbing plant which has preserved its large dark green leaves through the winter, and *L. tragophylla*, which in habit and general appearance resembles the Woodbine of Europe although the flowers are golden yellow. An important addition to very early-flowering shrubs is *Corylopsis Veitchiana*, with short pendulous racemes of primrose-yellow fragrant flowers produced before the leaves unfold. A majority of the large collection of Chinese Brambles are uninjured, especially those showy species with nearly white stems, like *Rubus lasiostylus* and *R. coreanus*.

Of the Grape Family at least six new species have come through the winter without injury. Of these perhaps the most interesting is *Ampelopsis megalophylla* with canes from twenty to thirty feet long and large divided leaves often more than three feet in diameter. The Barberries have probably suffered more from the winter than any of the other deciduous-leaved shrubs planted in exposed situations, but many species and varieties of Roses, *Deutzia*, *Philadelphus*, *Viburnum* and *Ligustrum* are in excellent condition and promise to make important additions to these groups in northern gardens.

Near the Administration Building the Asiatic Magnolias, which flower before the appearance of the leaves, are beginning to open their flowers; indeed the fragrant flowers of the shrubby *Magnolia stellata* and its pink-flowered form have been in bloom for a week. This is a perfectly hardy, usually free-flowering and very desirable shrub. The small flowers of *Magnolia kobus* from central Japan and its larger-flowered northern variety (var. *borealis*) are open. This northern variety is a large, hardy, fast-growing tree of good habit and handsome foliage, but it has never flowered freely here and the petals hang down in an unattractive way soon after the flowers open. It is a much less valuable ornamental plant than the Chinese *M. conspicua*, often called the Yulan Magnolia, which is one of the most beautiful of all early-flowering trees, although unfortunately the flowers are frequently touched by late frost or injured by storms. That the flowers may be seen to the greatest advantage the tree should be planted in front of evergreens which would also protect the flowers from frost. The hybrids, which have been mostly raised in France by crossing *M. conspicua* with the shrubby, purple-flowered *M. denudata* (or *purpurea*), flower rather later than the species and are therefore less liable to suffer from frost. These hybrids have flowers more or less tinged or striped with purple or rose color and the best known are *M. Soulangeana*, *M. Alexandrina*, *M. Lennei*, *M. Norbertiana* and *M. speciosa*.

The Forsythias are fast opening their flowers. This genus has given to gardens some of the most beautiful and most generally satisfactory of all hardy shrubs. The species are all Chinese with the exception of *F. europaea* which was discovered in Albania a few years ago. As we are learning every year, hybrids are often more desirable garden plants



than the species from which they originate, and certainly the handsomest of the Forsythias in flower is a hybrid between *F. suspensa*, var. *Fortunei* and *F. viridissima*, called *F. intermedia*. Of this hybrid there are a number of forms differing in habit and in the color of the flowers, showing opportunity for still further variation and improvement. Of the species and varieties var. *Fortunei* is now the most generally used and the most vigorous and desirable garden plant, although *F. suspensa*, with its long slender drooping branches is best suited for draping high walls or steep banks. The European species is of much less value as a garden plant, and *F. viridissima* the first species cultivated in Europe and America and the latest of all to flower, is of comparatively little ornamental value.

The Buffalo Berry (*Shepherdia argentea*) is in flower in the Oleaster Group on the left-hand side of Bussey Hill Road just above the Lilacs. The Buffalo Berry is a shrub or small tree with handsome silvery leaves, minute, clustered, axillary, precocious flowers, and small handsome crimson or yellow subacid fruits. It is a common inhabitant of the borders of streams from Saskatchewan to the Rocky Mountains as far south as New Mexico. In recent years much attention has been paid to it as a fruit plant in the dry cold interior parts of the continent.

The earliest of the Peaches, *Prunus (Persica) Davidiana*, is in flower, although the plants in the Arboretum are blooming sparingly this year. This is a native of the mountains of northern China, and some writers have considered it the wild type of the cultivated Peach. There are pink and white-flowered varieties. This tree flowers, however, so early that the flowers are too often destroyed by frost and therefore it is not of great importance as a garden plant here.

The earliest of the Cherries to flower, *Prunus tomentosa*, is also from northern China, and will be in bloom within a week. This is a broad vigorous shrub of excellent habit which every spring is covered with large flowers, the white petals more or less tinged with red toward the base. The small, bright red, slightly hairy fruits are of good flavor. This interesting shrub was raised from seeds sent to the Arboretum from Peking in 1882 and is now somewhat cultivated for its fruit in Alberta, Dakota and in other cold dry interior regions of the continent where other Cherries are not hardy. It should be much better known than it is in northern gardens. Very large specimens can be seen along the Boston Parkway between Perkins Street in Jamaica Plain and Forest Hills, and there are small plants on the right-hand side of Forest Hills Road, entering from the Forest Hills Gate. A number of interesting forms of this plant discovered by Wilson in northern China have recently been described.

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An illustrated guide to the Arboretum containing a map showing the position of the different groups of plants has recently been published. It will be found useful to persons unfamiliar with the position of the different groups of plants. Copies of this guide can be obtained at the Administration Building in the Arboretum, from the Secretary of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 300 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, from The Houghton, Mifflin Company, 4 Park Street, Boston, at the Old Corner Bookstore, Bromfield Street, Boston, and at the office of the Harvard Alumni Bulletin, 50 State Street, Boston. Price, 30 cents.

**The Arboretum will be grateful for any publicity given these Bulletins.**





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