



An Asiatic Crabapple, *Malus baccata*.



Korea, and southward. In open country it often forms broad carpets, but in habit of growth it varies from a dense groundcover a few inches high to a bush from 5 to 6 feet tall. It has relatively large lavender-purple flowers, a color which some people do not find attractive, but when massed and alone it is by no means displeasing. It is abundantly floriferous, the flowers very fragrant, and the habit of the plant is compact and good. Its hardiness is beyond question and, all in all, it really is a worthy member of a beautiful clan, as those who will visit the group now in full bloom on Bussey Hill must agree.

**Crabapples.** The Asiatic Crabapples are now at their best. A majority of the sorts are blooming with great freedom but here and there a tree which overdid itself last year is taking a holiday. Among a group so beautiful it is hard to pick out the most attractive kind. Certainly, one of the very finest is *Malus theifera*, which was pictured in this Bulletin last year. The several plants now laden with blossoms are worth coming a long way to see. The habit of the plant is very distinct and the characteristic, stiff, erect-spreading branches are clothed from base to summit with blossoms which, quite red in bud, change to rose-pink and finally to almost white. The species is native of China and is one of the few Crabapples that breeds true from seed. The best specimens are to be seen in the general Crabapple collection at the foot of Peters Hill, which is most easily reached either from the Bussey Street Gate or from the Walter Street Gate. Another specimen may be seen on the left a short distance within the Forest Hills Gate and another on Bussey Hill.

*Malus spectabilis* was the first of the Asiatic Crabapples introduced into western gardens, being sent from China to England before 1780. This well-known Crabapple is a tree of moderate size, sometimes 30 feet tall with a vase-shaped crown of ascending-spreading branches and arching branchlets. The flowers vary from semi-double to quite double and are of a delicate shade of pink. It has been cultivated in China from immemorial time and its wild parent is unknown. In books statements that the flowers are single or double are frequently to be found and so long ago as 1825 a single flowered form was figured in Watson's "Dendrologia," yet this form appears never to have become common in gardens nor to have been endowed with a name. In 1917 the Arboretum received from the Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C., scions of an unknown Crabapple which were taken from a tree growing in the grounds of a temple west of Peking, China. These were grafted and one has grown into a handsome tree which is now in full blossom. It proves to be the single flowered form of *Malus spectabilis* and a plant of much garden merit. The flowers are fully an inch across, pink in color, and abundantly produced amid a wealth of bright green, young leaves.

E. H. W.



Wilson, Ernest Henry. 1928. "Crabapples." *Bulletin of popular information - Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University* 2(6), 23–24.

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