WHEN the Japanese cherries bloom in the spring they always lend a touch of exotic beauty and fragrance which is unsurpassed by any other group of flowering trees. In America the public is becoming increasingly conscious of their beauty, and because of the wide publicity given the plantings in Washington many cities and civic organizations are starting local collections. One of the most recent of these, and perhaps the largest, is in the Fairmount Park System of Philadelphia.

Japanese cherries were introduced into America approximately one hundred years ago. Prior to that time it was most difficult to send plant material of any kind out of Japan. In 1846 the old Ellwanger and Barry Nursery Company of Rochester, New York, listed a Japanese cherry in its catalogue, and this was probably the first time any were offered in America. It is probable that the variety first grown here was the pendulous form of Prunus subhirtella. In 1912 the Mayor of the city of Tokyo presented to the city of Washington as a token of friendship two thousand Japanese cherry trees, which have done much to promote American interest in these plants. Many of them were planted in Potomac Park in Washington where they are now creating nation-wide interest each spring when they bloom.

Unfortunately, most of the double-flowering Japanese cherries should be considered as comparatively short-lived trees. This is particularly true of many of the double-flowered forms, which often have to be replaced about every fifteen years. Under favorable growing conditions they may last considerably longer, but it is well to consider them as a short-lived group in order to avoid later disappointment. The Sargent cherry is the exception. This is the hardiest of all
and grows to a sizable tree of a ripe old age. One of the first plants in this country, introduced forty-six years ago, is still growing in the Arnold Arboretum and is in perfect condition.

In the colder sections of the United States the Japanese cherries are not hardy, but in general they may be considered as doing well in those places where peaches are hardy. In southern Maine, for instance, they cannot be expected to do well although in the states bordering the Great Lakes, where the temperatures are somewhat moderated, there are some excellent plantings. In the drier portions of the mid-west they soon succumb, but on the Pacific Coast they thrive from Washington to southern California. Even as far south as the middle of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi they are perfectly at home.

**Propagation.** Formerly it was advocated that the best understock for Japanese cherries was that of the Sargent cherry, *Prunus Sargentii*, formerly called *Prunus serrulata sachalinensis*.

Mr. William H. Judd, Propagator at the Arnold Arboretum, after long experience with these plants, now feels that the use of *Prunus avium* as an understock is perfectly satisfactory. This understock "works" slightly better than that of the Sargent cherry and is certainly much more easily obtained. It is widely used for this purpose by many nurserymen. Particular forms of *Prunus subhirtella* can be grafted on seedlings of this species. *Prunus yedoensis* may be grown from cuttings or grafted on *P. avium* stock. All double-flowered varieties can be grafted on *P. avium* stock. There are certain species which can be readily grown from seed, and would include *P. Sargentii*, *P. incisa*, *P. nipponica*, and often even the hybrid, *P. yedoensis* although in this species the plants do not always come true from seed. The Arboretum wishes to modify certain statements which have been made in the past in this Bulletin regarding understock for Japanese cherries and emphatically states that *P. avium* as an understock has certainly proved as good if not better than *P. Sargentii*.

**Prunus Sargentii.** Introduced about 1890 from seeds sent to the Arboretum by William S. Bigelow, this fast growing tree has proved the most hardy of all the Japanese cherries. It is the tallest, being a fair-sized tree, and is the only one of all the Japanese cherries that has any autumn color. This is a good deep red. The flowers are deep pink and single. It is one of the first Japanese cherries to bloom, usually opening before or at about the same time as the leaves appear. Because of its size, its hardiness, and its attractiveness in both spring and fall, this cherry is proving a valuable ornamental and is
Prunus Sargenti (formerly P. serrulata sachalinensis)

This is the largest and hardiest of all the Japanese cherries. It may be either upright and pyramidal in form (as in foreground) or considerably more rounded (see other tree at rear of bench).