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Rhododendrons. In the Bulletin issued April 28th attention was called to the damage which the Rhododendrons in the Arboretum had suffered during the winter, and it was suggested that it was caused by the severe drought of the autumn, followed by the unprecedented drought of March and early April, and not by cold which had not been exceptional. The Arboretum Rhododendrons certainly suffered from drought, but dryness alone will hardly account for such a destruction, for in other places near Boston plants in much drier and more exposed positions than those in the Arboretum are reported to have come through the winter uninjured. Some of the plants which were killed here have been twenty-five or thirty years in the country. These plants were grafted on *Rhododendron ponticum*, a plant which is not hardy here and is therefore not a suitable stock for Catawbiense hybrid Rhododendrons to be grown in this climate. It is well known that these old grafted plants often lose large branches from what gardeners call "canker," and it is not impossible that the old plants killed in the Arboretum have been gradually failing for several years from the influence of the stock on which they had been grafted, and were therefore susceptible to extreme climatic conditions. This view is borne out by the fact that when plants of a particular kind were killed and others of the same kind were not killed it was always the oldest and largest plants of the variety that suffered. It has generally been supposed that it was the cross with *R. arboreum* and other Indian species which has made so many of the varieties of *R. catawbiense* tender in this climate, but some of the varieties which show in their bright red flowers this influence, like *Atrosanguineum*, *Charles Dickens*, and *H. W. Sargent* are uninjured, while many of the pale-flowered kinds like

Lady Grey Egerton, Mrs. H. S. Hunnewell and Delicatissimum have been killed. The last is a hybrid between *R. catawbiense* and *R. maximum*, and for the last thirty years has been considered one of the hardiest and most desirable of the Rhododendrons which have been planted in New England. Plants of the following Catawbiense varieties have been killed in the Arboretum, but of the varieties marked with a star one or more, but not all the individuals in the collection, have been killed. On many plants which have not otherwise suffered the buds have been killed or injured. *Adolf, Alarich, Albin, Alfred, *Atrorubrum, *Bismarck, Bluebell, *Butlerianum, Circe, Daniel, *Delicatissimum, *Diana, Duchess of Connaught, Earl of Shannon, Egge, Elysium, Fee, *F. L. Ames, *F. B. Hayes, *Hanna Felix, Herkules, Jay Gould, *King of the Purples, *Lady Grey Egerton, Madame Wagner, *Marquis of Waterford, Mum, *Mrs. Harry Ingersoll, Mrs. H. S. Hunnewell, Mnemoisyne, *Prometheus, *R. S. Field, Salmonum roseum, Sir H. Haverlock.

Rhododendron caucasicum. On the whole the different forms of *R. caucasicum* have come through the winter in comparatively good condition. The plants of the varieties Cleo and Ochroleucrum have been killed, and the flower-buds of a few others have suffered. The following varieties, however, are uninjured or have suffered only slightly: Boule de Neige, Coriaceum, Jacksonii and Mont Blanc.

The Rainfall of Recent Years. Whatever may have been the cause of the death this spring of so many Rhododendrons the small rainfall of the last seven years must account, at least in part, for the generally poor condition of Rhododendrons in eastern Massachusetts, for the death in this part of the country of many old Oaks and other native trees in the woods, and for the great number of dead branches on many native Ash trees, even on young trees which should be healthy and vigorous. It is interesting, therefore, to study in this connection the statistics of the rainfall in recent years on the watershed of the Sudbury River in Massachusetts, about twenty miles from Boston. For the following figures the Arboretum is indebted to Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald of Brookline. During the years 1875-1903, inclusive, the average rainfall on the Sudbury basin was 46.34 inches; from 1904-1914 the annual average rainfall was, however, only 40.79 inches, or an annual deficit of 5.55 inches. During the seven years from 1908-1914 the annual average was only 39.24 inches, or an annual deficiency of 6.76 inches as compared with the period from 1875 to 1907, that is, the loss of rain in the past seven years is rather more than the entire rainfall of one normal year; and, moreover, in these seven years there has not been a single year of normal rainfall.

Rhododendrons in the United States. In some years, when conditions are comparatively favorable, Rhododendrons flourish in this climate; in other years when conditions are less favorable they suffer. Compared with these plants as they grow in England and Scotland Rhododendrons are never really successful here. This is not a climate for Rhododendrons, that is for the sort of Rhododendrons European nurserymen usually propagate and send to this country. It is true

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