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Rhododendrons. The flowers of some of the early flowering evergreen Rhododendrons have already faded and those of *R. maximum* will not be in bloom for several weeks, but when this Bulletin reaches its Massachusetts readers a large number of the varieties of the Catawbiense hybrids will be in flower; and these plants are carrying this year an exceptionally large number of flower-buds. Of the species of evergreen Rhododendrons only the eastern American *R. maximum*, *R. catawbiense*, *R. carolinianum*, the mountain form of *R. minus*, the Caucasian *R. Smirnovii* and *R. caucasicum*, at least in some of its forms, are truly hardy in Massachusetts. The two species of the European Alps, *R. hirsutum* and *R. ferrugineum* can live here sometimes for a number of years but they are usually short-lived and unsatisfactory plants in this climate. The Japanese *R. brachycarpum* formerly lived in Massachusetts gardens for many years and longer trials will probably show that it can be successfully cultivated in this climate. Including this still doubtful Japanese species and the two little European species, there are only nine species of this great genus of several hundred species hardy in this climate, and there is little hope that another species able to support this climate will be found. The poverty of our gardens in these plants appears when the Arboretum collection is compared with that in a garden in Cornwall in England, in which some three hundred and sixty species of these plants are growing and in which on a day in May of this year sixty-five species were in flower. Such a collection, and perhaps even a better one, can be made in a garden in the neighborhood of Portland, Oregon, or in some favorable place on the shores of Puget Sound, but the sooner it is real-

ized that northeastern North America is not a good *Rhododendron* country in any broad sense the better it will be for the gardens in this part of the United States. For the last seventy years a large amount of thought, labor and money have been expended in attempts to cultivate these plants in the New England and Middle States; during this time many hundreds of thousands of these plants, principally hybrids of the American *R. catawbiense*, have been imported from Europe but the collections of *Rhododendrons* in the eastern states at all satisfactory or comprehensive can be counted on the fingers of one hand. In this climate unfortunately only a few of the *Catawbiense* hybrids, which are the popular *Rhododendrons* here, can be grown. The American parent of these hybrids is perfectly hardy, but the influence of the tender Himalayan species with which it has been crossed has made most of the varieties of this hybrid unsuited to this climate. The influence of the tender *R. ponticum*, the stock on which these plants have been almost universally grafted in European nurseries may account in part for the fact that plants of these hybrids which have lived here for thirty or forty years have then died without any other apparent cause. If evergreen *Rhododendrons* are ever to become hardy and permanent features of eastern gardens we must give up trying to make European-grown plants successful here, and confine our efforts to the few species which are hardy here and to crossing these among themselves in the hope of obtaining hybrids which will be able to grow here permanently. Something can perhaps be accomplished by the selection of seedlings. For example the flowers of *R. catawbiense* are of a peculiar shade of magenta which does not harmonize with any other color but white. Comparatively few seedlings, however, of *R. catawbiense* have ever been raised and probably not much attention has ever been paid to selecting from among the plants growing on the high Appalachian peaks individuals with flowers of unusual colors. *R. catawbiense* is perhaps the hardiest here of all *Rhododendrons*; the habit is excellent and the leaves are handsomer than those of the other hardy species. Improvement in the color of the flower is all that is needed to make it a first-rate plant for this climate. It is doubtful if this can be accomplished by crossing it with other species, but through patient selection it may be improved and possibly a white-flowered form discovered. Hybrid *Rhododendrons* are hardier or less hardy than their parents. The few hybrids which have been made between *R. catawbiense* and *R. maximum*, the hardiest of all *Rhododendrons* here, are less hardy than their parents; and only a few of the hybrids of *R. catawbiense* with *R. arboreum* and other Himalayan species are hardy. On the other hand by crossing some of the *Catawbiense* hybrids with *R. Metternichii*, a delicate Japanese shrub, a race of hybrids has been produced in England which is quite hardy in the Arboretum; and the hybrids of the two species of the European Alps crossed with one of the forms of the American *R. minus* are excellent dwarf garden plants here. In this country the breeding of *Rhododendrons* for American gardens has never been systematically undertaken with full knowledge of the species available for the purpose. The field is an inviting one, for these plants and other hardy broad-leaved evergreens are greatly needed in American gardens.

Chinese Lilacs. Most of the Chinese Lilacs have the advantage of flowering later than the common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*). Several of

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