

contrast between the pale green of the young foliage and the black green of the old is vivid.

**The Lilacs** are blossoming well this season and are now at the height of their beauty. The rejuvenation induced by severe pruning three years ago is now complete and the bushes are shapely in habit and even in size. The flower trusses are much larger than before the pruning but the individual flowers show no increase in size. To those who have Lilacs more or less decrepit with age the Arboretum's experiment is of importance. It is astounding how well such Lilacs respond to drastic pruning, however, to those contemplating such work it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the pruning be done as early as possible in the spring, the ground about the roots broken up and the plants well fed. Also it is well to avoid half measures since Lilacs push forth young growth immediately below the cut and unless they are pruned low the after effects of strong winds is disastrous. The popularity of the Lilac is steadily on the increase, and rightly so, for where winters are cold and summers hot no shrub gives greater returns. For a greater length of time than any other exotic shrub it has been associated with the American home and of all hardy flowering shrubs it is the one which people irresistibly bury their noses among the flowers to inhale the fragrance. Of the 290 varieties of the Common Lilac growing in the Arboretum nearly all are now in full blossom and those interested would do well to visit the collection and appraise them at their own worth. The Persian Lilac (*Syringa persica*) and the hybrid between this and the Common Lilac (*S. chinensis*) are also in flower and so, too, is *S. pubescens*, the most fragrant of all Lilacs.

**The Asiatic Crabapples** almost invariably give a good three week's succession of blossom but this year they were over within ten days. The American species and forms are now beautiful, both in the collection at the foot of Peters Hill and on the left of Forest Hills Road near its junction with Meadow Road. The favorite Bechtel Crabapple (*Malus ioensis plena*) is garlanded with rose-like, fragrant blossoms. This is essentially a tree for the lawn or for proximity to the house, but its wild parent, *M. ioensis*, and other American species are well adapted for planting in the wild garden and on the margin of woods; their fragrance is suggestive of that of Violets and their floriferousness is scarcely inferior to that of their Asiatic relatives.

**In the Shrub Garden** a general miscellany of bushes are in bloom and for the next six weeks this part of the Arboretum will well repay a visit. It may be taken for granted that all the plants flourishing in this garden will thrive in almost any part of New England. The Japanese Quinces in variety are laden with their brightly colored blossoms, varying through different shades of red to pink; in some cases the flowers are white. The low growing tufted *Iberis sempervirens* suggests a sheet of snow and nearby the yellow blossomed *Cytisus* and *Genistas* afford striking contrast.

**Bussey Hill** is the heart of the Arboretum and the mecca of those interested in Azaleas and newer Asiatic plants. Of Azaleas the flaming



*Rhododendron Kaempferi*, the American *R. roseum* and *R. nudiflorum* are a wealth of bloom and viewed from a vantage point on the right of Bussey Hill Road present a charming picture beneath the unfolding foliage of Oak trees. The double-flowered Japanese Cherries due to the warm weather in February are not flowering so freely as usual, although certain trees of *Alba-rosea* and *Sekiyama*, better known as *Kanzan*, are as abundantly strung with white and pink blossoms as ever before. In the case of the rank and file, however, many blossoms were blasted. Some of the early flowering Brooms are in full bloom and so, too, are many Barberries, Cotoneasters, and Honeysuckles. The *Enkianthus* also are fast opening their blossoms.

*Daphne cneorum*, the Garland Flower, is a general favorite but it is one of those plants that has strong likes and dislikes, thriving marvelously in some gardens and in others an abject failure and in both cases no reasons are apparent. For many years the Arboretum has had difficulty with this plant but at the moment it seems to have made itself at home in a planting at the foot of an outcropping of rock on the right of Valley Road, entering from Centre Street Gate. The situation is well-drained and to the natural soil a liberal admixture of crushed stone has been added. The latter has also been used as a winter mulch to the great enjoyment of the plants. This low-growing *Daphne* with its terminal, hemispherical heads of deep pink, fragrant blossoms is excellent for rockeries and also where it is happy as a groundcover. From the experience of the Arboretum it is essentially a sun loving subject. Besides the type there is a variety (*major*) with large, deeper pink blossoms, and another (*Verlotii*) which has narrower leaves.

*Rhododendron reticulatum*, better known as *R. rhombicum*, is now in flower on the southern slope of Bussey Hill. This is a Japanese species common throughout the greater part of Japan, although it is rare in Hokkaido, the northern island. In the Nikko region and on the lower slopes of sacred Mt. Fuji and surrounding mountains it is extraordinarily abundant both in the open, in thickets, on the margin of woods and an undergrowth in thin forests. It varies in height from a low, broad bush 3 to 4 feet tall to a bushy tree fully 25 feet high and has erect and spreading rigid branches, more or less rhombic leaves, membranous but firm, prominently reticulate and each from about 1 to 2½ inches in length and from 1 to 2 inches broad. The flowers are borne in pairs or in clusters of three or four at the end of the naked shoots. The corolla is rosy purple, varying from lighter to darker shades, about 1½ to 2 inches across, usually unspotted with a short tube and spreading lobes which are often divergent giving the corolla a lipped appearance. In the autumn the leaves change to vinous or blackish purple or occasionally to yellow with splashes of red purple and are strikingly handsome. This Azalea is somewhat difficult when young but with age it is perfectly amenable and like all Azaleas does best when massed. The oldest plant in the Arboretum was raised from seed collected in Japan by the late Professor Sargent in 1892.

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