The most interesting event, perhaps, in the Arboretum this week is the flowering of several Japanese Cherries, which may be seen on the left hand side of Forest Hill Road from its junction with the Meadow Road to the Forest Hill gate. The first of the Japanese Cherries to flower is *Prunus Sargentii*. This is a tall tree in the native forests of the Northern Island where it is valued as a timber tree. There are six specimens of different sizes on the Forest Hill Road, and they are now covered with clusters of large pink or rose-colored single flowers, for the color of the flowers of this tree vary considerably on different individuals. The small black fruits which ripen in June are almost hidden by the large dark green leaves which in the autumn turn to shades of orange and red; the smooth, shining, reddish bark adds to the beauty of this tree. Travellers who have seen Cherry blossoms in many lands declare that *Prunus Sargentii* as it now appears in the Arboretum surpasses in beauty all other Cherry-trees. Whether this is an exaggeration or not it is certainly a tree of first rate importance for New England; and its hardiness, rapid growth, large size, the abundance of its flowers even on small plants, and its handsome foliage make it the most valuable deciduous leaved tree we have yet obtained from Japan. The trees in the Arboretum produce large crops of seeds and these germinate readily so that there is no reason why *Prunus Sargentii* should not become a common tree if nurserymen will recognize its value and make a business of making it known to the public.

The better known *Prunus pendula* flowers a few days later. This tree is remarkable for its long, slender, pendulous branches which before the leaves expand are covered with small pink flowers. *P. pendula*, which does not appear to be common in a wild state in Japan, is often planted in Japanese gardens in which it sometimes grows to a large size. It was brought to the United States many years ago, and specimens from twenty to thirty feet high can be seen in the neighborhood of Boston. By nurserymen it has usually been propagated by grafting on tall stems of the common Cherry, with the result that the trees look unnatural and are rarely long-lived. Plants produced by grafting at the ground level grow to a larger size, live longer, and when in flower look like fountains of pink mist. It has been shown at the Arboretum that the drooping habit of the branches is reproduced in seedlings, and as this Cherry bears seeds freely, seedling plants will, it is to be hoped, become more common.

A plant with even more beautiful and more abundant flowers than *Prunus pendula* is *Prunus subhirtella*, or as it is now labelled in the Arboretum, *P. pendula ascendens*, a small tree, or as it has grown here a large shrub, from central Japan, and now known through Wilson's collections to occur also in western China. It is perfectly hardy and flowers freely every year. Introduced into the Arboretum twenty years ago, and from here sent to Europe, it is surprising that this handsome plant has remained so little known in gardens.

*Prunus triloba* can be seen in flower near *P. tomentosa* just below the entrance to the Shrub Collection at the Forest Hill gate. It is a shrub with bright clear pink flowers which are about an inch in diameter and appear before the leaves. The double flowered form of this shrub (var. *multiplex*) is a favorite garden plant in China whence forty or fifty years ago it was introduced into Europe and the United States where it is often
cultivated. The much more beautiful single-flowered plant grows on the mountains near Peking and appears to have been cultivated for the first time in the Arboretum to which seeds were sent from China in 1882. Although perfectly hardy P. triloba is not a particularly vigorous plant. It well deserves a place, however, in every garden for the charming color of the flowers.

The Plum-trees in the group next to the Cherries and at the principal entrance to the Shrub Collection from the Meadow Road are beginning to open their flower-buds. The earliest is the Canada Plum (Prunus nigra). This is the most northern of the American Plums, being distributed from Newfoundland to the shores of the Strait of Mackinaw and southward to the northern borders of the United States. It is a small tree with rough dark bark, rather erect, ridged, spiny branches, and flowers slightly tinged with pink and becoming rose-colored in fading. This is not one of the handsomest of the American Plum-trees, but it is valuable on account of its hardiness, the early appearance of the flowers, and the early ripening of the fruit. Several selected forms are grown by pomologists. The flowers of P. nigra will soon be followed by those of the Chinese P. triflora. This is a common fruit tree in China and Japan, and from it or from some of its varieties the so-called Japanese plums, now so popular in the United States, have been derived. The plants in the Arboretum were obtained from seed brought in 1892 by Professor Sargent from Japan. With P. triflora will probably flower one of the Siberian Apricots, P. dasycarpa. In the Arboretum it has grown into a large shrub with spreading branches. This plant is chiefly interesting on account of the dark purple or black color of the fruits which, however, have little value in comparison with those of the common Apricot.

The Shad-bushes (Amelanchier) are just opening their flower-buds and it is a delightful time in the Arboretum when they are in bloom for they have been planted freely in the borders and along the margins of the woods, and some of these plants have grown to a large size. Two species are native in the Arboretum, A. canadensis, which grows in woodlands and often becomes a tree of considerable size; this species can always be recognized in early spring by the purple color of the unfolding leaves; and A. obovalis, which is an inhabitant of low moist soil and more shrubby in habit, with gray unfolding leaves covered with a thick felt. There are good sized trees of the former at the base of the wooded slope on the right hand side of the Forest Hill Road and in the rear of the Apple Group, and there is a large plant of A. obovalis on the border of the North Meadow. It is this species which has been generally planted in the Arboretum.

Few of the forest trees of Europe really succeed in eastern North America, but in the half dozen exceptions to this rule the Norway Maple (Acer platanoides) must certainly be included. Just now this handsome tree is conspicuous from the clusters of bright yellow flowers which cover the leafless branches. More showy than the flowers of the native Sugar Maple they are less delicate in color, while the flower clusters lack the grace of the slender drooping racemes of the American tree, which make the flowering term of the Sugar Maple a term of peculiar charm.

In the last issue of these Bulletins something was said of the value of the hybrid Forsythia intermedia as a garden plant. Another hybrid of the same origin, which was raised in Germany and is called F. intermedia spectabilis, is flowering in the Arboretum for the first time. The flowers are larger and of a deeper color than those of the parents with narrower but longer corolla lobes. This new hybrid promises to be a garden plant
of exceptional value. It may be seen among the other species and hybrids in the rear of the bank of Forsythias on the left hand side and at the lower end of the Bussey Hill Road.

Many of the species of Ribes (Currants and Gooseberries) in the Shrub Collection are already covered with nearly full grown leaves; and a few of them, including the Rocky Mountain *R. cereum*, are in flower.

In the Rhododendron collection at the base of Hemlock Hill a number of plants of *R. praecox*, Little Gem, are covered with clusters of pale lilac colored flowers. This plant was raised several years ago in the Vietchian Nursery in England by crossing the Siberian *R. dahuricum* with *R. praecox*, *R. praecox* being a hybrid between *R. dahuricum* and the Himalayan *R. ciliatum*. The Little Gem Rhododendron is a dwarf and perfectly hardy plant, and the earliest of the evergreen Rhododendrons in the collection to flower. It blooms, however, so early that unless an exceptionally favorable place can be secured for it the flowers are too often ruined by frost.

Two American shrubs which have been used largely in the Arboretum for ground cover are now in flower and may be seen along the borders of several of the drives. They are the Fragrant Sumach (*Rhus canadensis* or *aromatica*) and the Yellow Root (*Zanthorhiza apiifolia*). The former is rather a straggling plant with slender stems sometimes three or four feet high, although in one of its forms this plant grows much more compactly. The flowers are bright yellow in small axillary clusters which appear before the three-lobed leaves. This has been found a useful plant in the Arboretum, although as a ground cover it has not proved as successful as the Yellow Root. This does not grow so tall, and spreading rapidly by underground shoots soon thickly covers the ground with its erect stems. The small purple flowers are produced on terminal erect or spreading racemes and open before or with the unfolding of the pinnate leaves, which become clear bright yellow in the autumn. On the whole this is the most satisfactory shrub, for covering the ground among trees and larger shrubs, which has been tried in the Arboretum.

The careful examination of the opening buds and unfolding leaves of trees and shrubs can give much pleasure and greatly help to an accurate knowledge of these plants. Nearly every species differs in the color of the very young leaves and in the nature and amount of the hairs which protect them in the bud. At this time the young leaves of the Horse-chestnuts or Buckeyes, of the Shadbushes, of several Maples, and especially of the Moosewood (*Acer pennsylvanicum*), of the Viburnums, and of many other plants in the Arboretum, are, if carefully examined, objects of great beauty; and in the young leaves are often found important characteristics for distinguishing species. All the American Oaks, for example, differ in their very young leaves, and some of them, like the Black and Scarlet Oaks, which are often difficult to recognize by their fully grown leaves, are easily distinguished by their very young leaves. All the American Oaks which are hardy in New England can be seen in the valley between the upper end of the Bussey Hill Road and the Valley Road, and in a few days their young leaves will be in condition to study.

The flowers of the Chinese Magnolias, Forsythias, Asiatic Cherries, and early Plum-trees and the expanding buds of a large number of trees and shrubs make this a good time for an early spring visit to the Arboretum.

The Arboretum will be grateful for any publicity given these Bulletins.