The Yellow Wood or Virgilia, common names of Cladrastris lutea, has been covered during the past week with long drooping clusters of pure white pea-shaped flowers which make it one of the most beautiful trees in the forests of eastern North America. It is a round-topped tree sometimes sixty or seventy feet in height, with pale smooth bark which resembles that of the American Beech-tree, and large light green compound leaves which turn clear yellow in the autumn before falling. In the forest this is a rare and local tree, and is found growing, usually on river cliffs, from western North Carolina to Tennessee, Kentucky and northern Alabama, and in southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. It is most abundant probably in the neighborhood of Nashville, Tennessee. Sent to France by its discoverer, the elder Michaux, it has been in cultivation for more than a century. One of the first, and perhaps the first specimen planted in the United States was standing a few years ago in the grounds of the Philadelphia Cricket Club near that city. The Yellow Wood was planted in Massachusetts, where it is perfectly hardy, at least eighty years ago. This tree flowers well in France and Germany, but rarely produces flowers in Great Britain where the sun is not hot enough to ripen sufficiently the flowering wood. Here the trees flower only once in two years and, with few exceptions, all individuals planted in the northern states flower the same year. Although one of the handsomest trees that can be used for the decoration of parks and gardens in the eastern states, the Virgilia seems to be less commonly used here than it was seventy-five years ago. Fortunately it can still be obtained in a few American gardens.
Styrax japonica. The large plant of this Japanese shrub on Hickory Path near Center Street is now opening its abundant flowers. These are bell-shaped, white, and arranged in two- or three-flowered racemes which hang down from the branches on long stems and make this shrub during a week or ten days a beautiful and interesting object. The glabrous, drupe-like dry fruit is not particularly ornamental and the leaves fall late in the autumn without change of color. That Styrax japonica is perfectly at home in its present position in the Arboretum is shown by the numerous seedlings which every year spring up under the plant. There appears therefore to be no good reason why this handsome shrub should be so rare in American gardens. Although at least one hundred species of Styrax are now recognized by botanists, with four species in the southern United States and one in California, only two species, S. japonica and another Japanese species, S. obtusifolia, have been successfully established in the Arboretum. The latter is a small tree thickly covered with nearly round leaves from eight to ten inches in diameter. These entirely hide the flowers which are nearly three-quarters of an inch long, fragrant and arranged in drooping racemes from six to eight inches in length. The healthy specimen of this plant on the upper side of Azalea Path bloomed earlier in the season. Styrax americana, a native of the southeastern United States from Virginia to Florida, lives in the Arboretum in sheltered positions and has occasionally produced its small fragrant flowers here, but it is not hardy enough ever to become valuable in northern gardens.

Summer-flowering American Viburnums. For many flowers the Arboretum is indebted in early summer to four American species of Viburnums which have been used in large numbers in its borders and roadside plantations. The earliest of these, V. dentatum, is already in bloom; it has handsome dark green leaves conspicuously toothed on the margins, and broad flat clusters of white flowers which are followed in early autumn by bright blue fruit on erect stems. This is a common roadside and meadow shrub in the northeastern part of the country. The second of these four Viburnums, V. cassinoides, is also in bloom. It is native of swamps in the northeastern part of the country where it sometimes grows twenty feet high with slender straggling stems. In cultivation it forms a broad, low round-topped bush, and has proved one of the handsomest of all the Viburnums introduced into the Arboretum. The leaves are thick and lustrous and vary greatly in size on different individuals. The fruit is larger than that of the other summer-flowering American species, and at first yellow-green later becomes pink, and finally blue-black and covered with a pale bloom, fruit of the three colors occurring in early autumn in the same cluster. The third of these summer-flowering Viburnums, V. venosum, resembles in its general appearance V. dentatum, but it flowers two weeks later, and the young branchlets and the lower surface of the leaves are thickly covered with a coat of stellate hairs. This Viburnum is found growing naturally only in the neighborhood of the coast from Cape Cod and Nantucket to New Jersey. A larger and a handsomer plant with larger leaves, showier flowers and larger, later-ripening fruit, V. Canbyi is the fourth of these species. It is a native of eastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware where it is not common, and of central Indiana; and
it is the last of all the Viburnums in the Arboretum to flower. There
are large specimens of this plant in front of the Administration Build-
ing and at other points on the Meadow Road. All these Viburnums
can be improved by cultivation and with generous treatment grow into
larger and handsomer bushes than the wild plants, and bear larger
leaves and better flowers and fruit. Few shrubs better deserve a place
in American parks and gardens where they are still less often seen
than they should be. Two rare American Viburnums can now be seen
in flower in the Arboretum, *V. molle*, a native of southern Kentucky
and southern Missouri, with which *V. venosum* was once confused, and
*V. bracteatum* which is known to grow naturally only on the cliffs of
the Coosa River near Rome, Georgia. One of the few plants in culti-
vation is on Hickory Path near Centre Street. *V. molle* is in flower
near it.

**Red-fruited Viburnums.** With the exception of the two species which
belong to the Opulus Group no American Viburnum has red fruit, but
in eastern Asia there are several red-fruiting species. The handsomest
of these in the Arboretum is *V. dilatatum*, which is a native of Japan,
Korea and western China. It is a large, shapely and vigorous shrub
with broad, abruptly pointed leaves and wide flat clusters of flowers
which are followed by small bright red fruits. This is a good shrub
for the decoration of summer and autumn gardens. It is in the gen-
eral Viburnum collection, and there are good plants on the right hand
side of the Bussey Hill Road opposite the upper end of the Lilac Group.
There is a form with yellow fruit (var. *xanthocarpum*) which is an
attractive and interesting plant. The fruit of *V. dentatum* is smaller
and less showy than that of another red-fruiting Japanese species, *V.
Wrightii*. This is a smaller shrub and flowered some time ago. The
flower-clusters are smaller than those of *V. dilatatum* and the plants
are not always perfectly hardy in exposed situations, but the fruit is
larger and handsomer than that of the other red-fruiting Viburnums of
eastern Asia. Another of these plants, *V. theiferum*, from western
China is not yet in flower. It is a tall narrow shrub with erect stems,
small leaves and small flower-clusters. It has little to recommend it
as a flowering plant but the fruit is large, abundant and of good color,
and the plant has an economic interest as an infusion of the leaves is
the "sweet tea" used by the monks of the monasteries on Mt. Omei,
one of the five sacred mountains of China.

**Hydrangea petiolaris.** The specimens of this vine, the Japanese
Climbing Hydrangea, on the southeast corner of the Administration
Building is now one of the great sights of the Arboretum as it is cov-
ered with flower-clusters from the ground to the eaves of the building.
The leaves of few plants unfolded here as early in the spring and there
is but one other climbing plant with conspicuous flowers really hardy in
this climate, *Schizophragma*, able to attach itself firmly to a brick or
stone wall or to the trunk of a tree. The flower-clusters of the Climbing
Hydrangea are surrounded by a circle of white sterile flowers and are
from eight to ten inches in diameter; they are terminal on short lateral
branches which stand out from the main stem of the plant and give it an
irregular surface which adds to its beauty and interest. This Hydrangea
was first raised at the Arboretum in 1878 and can now be occasionally
seen in American gardens. It might well be better known and more generally used for there is no other plant so well suited to cover the brick or stone walls of tall buildings in the northern United States. *Schizophragma hydrangeoides*, also a native of Japan, can be seen on the wall of the Administration Building next to the Hydrangeas. It blooms later.

**Rhododendron (Azalea) calendulaceum.** The plants of this Appalachian Azalea now in flower on Azalea Path and the Laurels and Rhododendrons at the northern base of Hemlock Hill have been during the past ten days the brilliant features of the Arboretum. The flowers of this Azalea vary from clear yellow to flame color, and unlike the Azaleas which bloom in early spring like the Appalachian *R. Vaseyi* and the Korean *R. Schlippenbachii* the leaves are fully grown before the flowers open. This adds to the beauty of this Azalea when it is flowering and makes it for many persons the most beautiful as it is the showiest of the American Azaleas. The flame-colored Azalea has been largely used in Europe in the making of the Ghent Hybrid Azaleas, and these are hardy, long-lived and valuable in this climate in proportion to the preponderance of this American plant in their parentage.

**Cornus kousa.** The attention of northern gardeners is again called to this tree which is the Japanese representative of the "Flowering Dogwoods" of North America. Here in Massachusetts the western species *Cornus Nuttallii*, which has never been a particularly successful plant in cultivation, is not hardy; and the flower-buds of the eastern species (*Cornus florido*) and its varieties are often killed in severe winters unless the trees are in exceptionally protected and sheltered positions. During the past winter the flower-buds on nearly all the trees in eastern Massachusetts were killed, with the exception of those on the branches which had been covered by snow. It is interesting therefore to find that the Japanese tree has not before been more thickly covered with open and uninjured flowers than it is this week. The flower-bracts, which are the conspicuous part of the inflorescence, are narrower than those of *Cornus florida* and are pointed, not rounded at apex. The individual inflorescence of the American tree is larger and perhaps more beautiful than that of the Japanese tree, but as this does not open until the leaves are nearly full grown *Cornus kousa* at this season of the year is an object of exquisite beauty. The form of this tree discovered by Wilson in western China and now growing with other Chinese plants on the southern slope of Bussey Hill is also now covered with uninjured flowers and their bracts. The bracts are wider and closer together than those of the Japanese plant making the Chinese form even a handsomer garden plant. In the American plants the scarlet drupes are gathered in an erect head but are not united, but in the Asiatic plants they are firmly joined together in a compact globose head which is suspended from the branch on a slender stem. This habit of the fruit adds to the beauty of the plants in autumn when the leaves assume as brilliant a color as those of the American plant. The Chinese form of *Cornus kousa* produces quantities of fruit in the Arboretum and there is no reason why it should not become common in American gardens.