The Forest Hills Gate, the most popular of the entrances to the Arboretum, is just now the mecca of all interested in early flowering shrubs and trees. On the right just within the gates a collection of Japanese Cherries is in full blossom and in the distance, on the left, the Forsythias still form a cascade of rich yellow. At almost every season of the year there is something of particular interest immediately within this gate and the Japanese Cherries assembled there are a never-failing feast of spring beauty. The sunny situation suits them and the well-drained sandy and gravelly loam is to their liking. Each year they make a good growth and clothe themselves with a crop of blossoms. An occasional dressing of bone-meal or cow-dung is amply repaid by the increased quantity of flowers. They are among the simplest plants to cultivate if a proper beginning is made. We have stated that their successful culture is dependent upon starting right and this means that the plants must either be of seedling origin or be grafted or budded on a congenial stock. The need of budding or grafting applies mainly to the double-flowered Cherries with which at the moment we are not concerned. The single-flowered types with a few exceptions may be raised from seeds, a fact that should delight that ever-increasing class of tree-lovers who enjoy raising their own plants. These Cherries fruit more or less freely each year and if one can outwit that voracious immigrant, the European Starling, there is no difficulty in collecting a sufficient quantity. The pulp should be washed away, the seeds dried, stored in a cool place and sown in beds or boxes the following autumn and allowed to get frozen in the winter. A few, sometimes many, will germinate the following spring but the majority will lie in the ground until the second season. The seedlings grow rapidly and by transplanting several times and pruning to a single stem a supply of young trees ready to set out in permanent situations may be had in three or four years from the time of germination.

The Cherry-blossom season in Japan is, as lovers of flowers well know, the great spring festival of that land and the occasion of a national holiday decreed by the Emperor. Like all festivals, de-
pendent upon the weather, it is of a somewhat movable nature but usually it takes place early in April when thousands of Cherry-trees in Tokyo burst into bloom. At what period in the history of Japan the Cherry became established as the favorite flower is unknown, but its roots are in the dim and distant past. According to Japanese folklore the Cherry-tree itself is a lovely princess named Konohana Sakuya-Hime, reincarnate, the color of the petals being that of the blushes which suffused the cheeks of this bewitching damsel. From this pretty legend is derived the name Sakura now universally applied to the Cherry-tree in Japan. According to one Japanese authority the double-flowered varieties have been known for fully a thousand years and the single-flowered types were favorites before them. Today throughout the length and breadth of Japan Cherries are planted in temple grounds, in the parks and courtyards surrounding the old castles, in the cottager's little garden along the roadsides, and as street trees in the greater cities. That Japanese Cherries can be cultivated as successfully in this country as in Japan, is now being demonstrated. The largest collection and one that is fast becoming famous is that in Potomac Park, Washington, D.C., which owes its origin to the generosity of the city of Tokyo, which, in 1912 presented some 2,000 trees. Among them were nearly 1,000 trees of the Yoshino or Tokyo Cherry (Prunus yedoensis) which, planted around the tidal basin, in March and early April now draw thousands of visitors to the capital. In New York City this same Tokyo Cherry does well, flowering profusely each spring and the city fathers would be well advised to plant ten thousand of this tree in Central Park. They would probably prove short-lived on the shallow soil and under the conditions which obtain in New York City, but with a little forethought a continual supply of new trees could be maintained, for they are exceedingly rapid growing. In Boston the winters are a little too severe for the Tokyo Cherry to give of its best, and to insure a Cherry-blossom season here the Spring and Sargent Cherries have to be relied upon. In California all the Japanese Cherries can be successfully grown, including, around Pasadena and Los Angeles, the wonderful P. campanulata with its multitude of bell-shaped, red flowers.

Prunus subhirtella, the Spring Cherry of Japan, is one of the most beautiful of all the lesser flowering trees. It is exceedingly floriferous year after year, and its blossoms last longer than those of other single-flowered types. The first trees to blossom in western gardens are the two which now form a broad, rounded mass on the right within the Forest Hills Gate. These were sent to the Arboretum from the Botanic Garden, Tokyo, in 1894. Visitors to Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto and other well-known cities will not see this particular Cherry, the explanation being that it is known only from the western and more out-of-the-way parts of Japan which accounts for its late appearance in western gardens. The when or how of its origin is unknown but it is undoubtedly a dwarf form of a Cherry widely distributed throughout Japan, southern Korea and
China, which is known by the name of *Prunus subhirtella ascendens*. This is a large tree, sometimes 75 feet tall with a trunk 12 feet in girth with a wide crown made up of stout branches. In some of the Tokyo parks, notable that of Ueno, groves and avenues of this Cherry-tree may be seen, but the display of blossoms is never very abundant. The Rosebud Cherry (*Prunus subhirtella pendula*) is another sport and this, on account of its pleasing habit of growth, was one of the first trees brought to this country from Japan. Another Cherry belonging to this group is *Prunus subhirtella autumnalis*, a small tree with many twiggy branches and more or less vase-shaped when young. It is a precocious plant with semi-double pink blossoms, which sometimes appear in the autumn but in other years sparsely in autumn and abundantly the next spring as is the case this year. Owing to this peculiarity, it is known when it flowers in the autumn as the Jugatsu-zakura or October-flowering Cherry and in the spring as the Yaye-higan or Double-flowered Spring Cherry. *P. subhirtella* and its varieties when raised from seeds mostly revert to the wild type (var. *ascendens*) but a certain percentage come true. The type suckers and all the varieties may be rooted from softwood cuttings taken with a heel in June but they are difficult to establish afterwards. Of this Cherry, to obtain long-lived examples they should be budded or grafted on their own seedlings. They form a little group by themselves and are apparently not happy when worked on any related stock.

*Prunus incisa* is absolutely hardy in the Arboretum and rivals *P. subhirtella* in abundance of blossom. This Cherry is a feature of the region in and around Mt. Fuji and is of particular interest in that it blossoms freely when quite young. As the petals fall the calyx becomes bright colored and adds fully a week to the spring beauty of this tree.

*Prunus triloba*. Among the spring-flowering shrubs are several different species of *Prunus* closely akin to the Cherries. Of these *P. tomentosa*, *P. japonica* and *P. glandulosa*, the two latter with double-flowered forms, are well known and highly appreciated. The most popular of this group, however, is *P. triloba*, the so-called Chinese Almond. When well grown this makes a broad bush 12 feet high and 20 feet in diameter. Its slender rigid stems are densely packed with double pink blossoms, which look like small Roses. It is a very satisfactory shrub and one that can be used in many ways in gardens. In England a favorite custom is to grow this plant against a wall espalier fashion, pruning it severely each year after flowering. Grown in this manner it is a curtain of pink in the early spring. More beautiful perhaps is the semi-double variety (*multiplex*) which was sent to the Arboretum by William Purdom in 1909. The wild type (var. *simplex*) is a charming shrub with small pure pink blossoms, yellowish red fruit the size of an ordinary Cherry, hairy but not palatable. This was first raised in this country from seeds which Dr. E. Bretschneider sent to the Arboretum in 1883. *Prunus triloba* is much cultivated in gardens of Pekin, where it is known as the Elm Leaf *Prunus* (Yu-ye-me).

E. H. W.