Hydrangea petiolaris and Schizophragma hydrangeoides. Few specimens in the living collections of the Arnold Arboretum excite more surprise in the average visitor than do these two asiatic vines. They are evidently Hydrangeas or are at least closely related, yet they cover the north wall of the Administration Building with a solid coat of shrubbery which breaks dramatically into flower every summer. Though reaching to the eaves they remain essentially shrub-like and are perhaps more appropriately described as climbing shrubs than as true vines.

Once recognized, the two species are readily told apart, but until quite recently they were badly confused in nurseries, private collections, and botanical gardens. They are most easily distinguished by the large showy flowers which surround the flower cluster. In Hydrangea petiolaris this encircling tiara is composed of greenish white flowers, each one made up of four rounded sepals. In Schizophragma hydrangeoides these showy sepals are a purer white and they are borne singly rather than in fours. These and other technical differences are shown in the plates on pages 54 and 55. Gardeners will be more interested in the fact that Schizophragma blossoms later in the season, that its leaves are a lighter green, that the sepals remain conspicuous long after blossoming time and that in many ways it is a neater, cleaner, more garden-worthy vine than H. petiolaris.

Unfortunately neither vine blooms until it is fairly mature. For the convenience of those who are interested in identifying immature specimens, the outstanding vegetative differences are tabulated below.

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<tr>
<td>Leaves definitely heart-shaped.</td>
<td>Leaves scarcely rounded at the base.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower surface of the leaf of practically the same color as the veins.</td>
<td>Lower surface of the leaves much lighter in color than the veins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bark shredding off in silky strands.</td>
<td>Bark firm with conspicuous dots.</td>
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[ 53 ]
So badly were the names of these two species interchanged during the early days of their introduction to the western world that it is difficult to determine when each was first grown in America. The mere presence in a nursery catalogue of one name or the other is not enough. There must be a specimen or an exact description covering at least one of the features by which the two vines can be distinguished. One thing is certain. Though it may possibly have been brought in earlier through some unrecorded channel, *H. petiolaris* is definitely known to have been introduced in 1865 through the old Parson’s Nursery at Flushing, Long Island, whose material was obtained (though under the wrong name) from Thomas Hogg, an American consul. It was not until 1876 that the Arnold Arboretum obtained seeds from Japan, but so completely had the earlier introduction been overlooked that even the late Dr. E. H. Wilson listed the vine among the introductions of the Arnold Arboretum in his well-known book, “America’s Greatest Garden”. This mistake was perpetuated by the present author in the Bulletin for November 16, 1931; a mistake which it is a pleasure to set right, since it serves as an excuse for reminding present day gardeners of their debt to the fine old Parson’s Nursery, long since disbanded, and to Thomas Hogg, who once maintained one of the most interesting private collections in the United States.

Both vines have done well in this country and as they become better known will be increasingly useful in our gardens. They are perhaps a little too robust for the average house, but for covering stone walls and fences they are superb. In the rock garden of Mr. Thomas Proctor at Topsfield, Massachusetts, there are fine specimens of *H. petiolaris*, which have been allowed to clamber freely over a long boulder strewn slope. Used in this way they are so effective that one wonders if they might not well be used as a bank cover on rocky slopes. In their native home both vines climb the trunks of tall trees and blossom among the lower limbs. Although it is always a matter of personal opinion, there are many who, like the present author, believe that these two vines never look better than when one follows Nature and plants them at the base of an old tree.

EDGAR ANDERSON

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES


Page 55. *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* Sieb. & Zucc.

(From drawings in T. Nakai’s “Flora Sylvatica Koreana.”)

Insert. *H. petiolaris* and *S. hydrangeoides* (×1). (The latter includes a few leaves of *H. anomala.*) (From photographs by Dr. H. M. Raup.)