

1962

states that this species was introduced into Europe by Linden in 1839, and it has been cultivated at the Museum in Paris since that time. He adds that Hooker attributes its introduction to Schiede and Deppe. Its native home is held to be in the states of Vera Cruz and Oaxaca, Mexico, and possibly also in Guatemala. Apparently it has received very little attention at the hands of European horticulturists.

Wilson Popenoe

Prunus Mume

As an ornamental plant for mild-wintered regions of the eastern United States, *Prunus mume* has received attention from this office since 1903, when the first introduction was made. In 1922, a splendid collection of the best Japanese varieties was secured from Prof. T. Onda, of Okitsu. These were described in Plant Immigrants for April of that year, under S.P.I. Nos. 54709 to 54725, inclusive, and budded trees of several varieties, propagated from the original introductions, have been distributed during the past season. Because of its being one of the first trees to blossom in the spring, and because of the fragrance of its flowers as well as their beauty of form and color, *Prunus mume* deserves to be cultivated widely as an ornamental.

The Plant Introduction Garden at Chico possesses a number of trees, which have been flowering and fruiting for several years. At Washington the tree rarely bears fruit, though it flowers profusely. The Japanese prepare from mumes an extremely salty pickle, which is highly appreciated. It is popularly said, in fact, that the Russo-Japanese war was won by this product. It was an important item in the rations issued to Japanese soldiers, and, as evidenced by this popular saying, one of the most esteemed.

National differences in taste preclude the likelihood that pickled mumes will become as popular in the United States as they are in Japan. The mume may have other uses in this country, however, as evidenced by the following extract from a letter received from J. E. Morrow, superintendent of the Chico Plant Introduction Garden, dated April 4, 1924:

"The pectin content of *Prunus mume* is remarkable, indeed. It seems to me that with a half dozen fruits one could jelly a bucket of water. Last summer we called the attention of the office to this remarkable quality of the fruit. In addition to this, we would say that it is extremely frost resistant. These trees are the first at the garden to flower each spring, and they set a heavy crop of fruit regardless of frost or minimum temperatures. In looking over the test nursery this morning, I found the trees of *Prunus mume* heavily laden with fruit, while apricot trees near by were without a single fruit, and other introduct-