

JAPAN PLUMS IN IOWA.

S EVEN years ago, I planted a few Japanese plums in my trial orchard, that is situated eight miles south of this city. I had been led to believe, by Prof. Budd, that these plums were entirely worthless in our severe climate, he often having stated they were as "tender as weeds," therefore, my surprise was intense, when the second year from planting, my small trees were not only perfectly sound, after the thermometer had registered 22° below zero, but were loaded with handsome fruit. Since then, my first experiment with this oriental fruit, I have spared neither money or pains in collecting Japan plums, till I doubtless have the largest number of varieties in the entire North-West. I do not have the ground to set many trees of each variety—two to ten of a kind—except the Burbank. I now perhaps have over 50 trees in bearing, most of them just commencing to bear. On the older trees last year I had 25 bush. of these Japs. The Burbank, Normand and Abundance are best in quality, so far as fruited. The former is extra fine for canning. These older trees have stood 28° below zero, and bore a good crop of fruit; I refer more particularly to the Burbank. Kelsey is the only variety, so far, that winter killed; it is entirely too tender for this latitude. My object in planting these plums was not so much for commercial fruit, as to secure new seedlings cross-fertilized with our best natives, for I firmly believe all our best plums for this Prairie region must come from our native species, and my faith is

backed up by a collection of over 100 varieties of our best improved natives, that gave me over 200 bushels of fruit last season: of many of these, like the Japs, I have but a few trees on trial. Some of these natives are better in quality than most of the Japs, but the latter possess *other* qualities that our natives do not possess. Some of these are extremely small pits, and long keeping and shipping qualities. In my judgment—judging from my success with these Japan plums—they have come to stay, if for no other purpose than indicated in this article, inter breeding with our hardy natives, and in the near future evolving a new race of plums that will be far superior to either species. I select the Japanese for this purpose, because they are very closely allied botanically to our natives, hence, easily cross with them; also their beautiful color and extremely small pits make them more desirable for the purpose indicated, than the domestic class. I have found the first and second winter, after setting these plums, the most critical, for after that they seem to become more acclimated, perhaps also the rooted system becomes better established, so the vital forces of the tree become stronger, and hence can resist extreme temperature far better than when first set out. As I further test these plums and their American seedlings, I shall be glad to give my report of their success or failure to the readers of your valuable journal.

A. B. DENNIS.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa.