

As the rainfall is abundant throughout the zone, the herbaceous vegetation, where light and soil conditions are favourable, is rich in both species and individuals. In the woods proper it is rather insignificant after the foliage of the trees is fully developed. In the spring, however, it is very luxuriant and, especially where the soil is rich and deep, there is a magnificent display of beautifully coloured and showy flowers, for instance trillium, bellwort, dog's-tooth violet, showy orchis, jack-in-the-pulpit, spring beauty, violets (blue, yellow and white forms), hepatica, dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn, bloodroot, pepper-root, barren strawberry, flowering winter-green, blue phlox, etc. Others, less conspicuous but characteristic of the hardwood forest's spring flora, are species of sedges, wild ginger, blue cohosh, mitrewort, star flower, showy lady's slipper, etc. Characteristic of the bogs of the zone are, among others, various species of orchids and the pitcher-plant. The autumn flowers are chiefly members of the composite family, with asters, golden rods, and joe-pye in greatest profusion.

Very characteristic of the hardwood forest zone is the autumnal colouring of the leaves of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants which lasts a comparatively long time, from about the first week of September to the second week in October, dependent on the dryness of the season. During that period a splendid display of colours is exhibited, especially in open, mixed woods where the underbrush is well developed. Shades of yellow, golden bronze, red and scarlet are mixed in a gorgeous symphony of colours, generally marvellously modulated by the sombre, deep, dark or bluish green of the conifers which are dotted among the deciduous trees. No such wealth of autumnal colour is met with in any of the other zones.

The Carolinian Zone.—This zone is confined to a small tract of land in southern Ontario, bounded to the south by lake Erie and to the north by a line running approximately from the northern shore of lake Ontario to Windsor. In general physiognomy it is rather similar to the hardwood forest flora just described, but differs greatly in its characteristic species which are decidedly southern. It exhibits a large number of plants, woody as well as herbaceous, which occur nowhere else in Canada.

The most characteristic trees are the hickories (six species), the oaks (ten species), black walnut, chestnut, and sycamore. Less abundant and more local in their distribution are the cucumber tree, the tulip tree, the flowering dogwood, which all have beautiful and very conspicuous flowers, the papaw, the red mulberry, the American crabapple, the sour gum, the sassafrass, and others.

The herbaceous vegetation is very rich and at least a hundred species which occur nowhere else in Canada are found in the zone. A few of the most conspicuous ones may be mentioned, viz.: yellow nelumbo or lotus flower, may apple, wild lupine, tick trefoil, flowering spurge, swamp rose mallow, wild pansy, prickly pear, poke milkweed, wild potato vine, downy phlox, water-leaf, bee balm, fox-glove, tall bell flower, great lobelia, ironweed, dense button snakeroot, prairie dock, cup plant, sunflowers, tall coreopsis, Indian plantain and showy lady's slipper.

Golden seal and ginseng were at one time abundant but are now practically extinct. Indeed a similar fate is also threatening many of the other species characteristic of the zone, on account of the clearing of the land for agricultural purposes.

The Prairie.—Under the general term prairie is understood the vast grass-covered area of the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. It is bounded to the east and north by the sub-arctic forest and to the west by the foothills of the Rocky mountains.