

For weeks these extreme colors remain, finally giving way before the severer frosts of approaching Winter, and then the leaves turn to a dull brown as they desert the trees, keeping to the finish an interesting picture, restful after the intense high carnival of color through which they have passed.

The Fall months in North Carolina are usually ideal. The Indian Summer, which is a close favorite with many with early Spring as the most agreeable season of the year, reaches its perfection in Moore County.

Indian Summer is a good time to be in North Carolina because after a frost or two to ripen things the Indian Summer delivers up everything for weeks. Then comes the mild sunshine, the clear air, the cool evenings when occasionally a fire of pine knots is lighted in the chimney. The roads are smooth and hard and dry. No freezing weather breaks up their surface and brings mud, as in the North. Snow, with its attendant slush, is hardly ever seen, and if it does come once or twice a year it is to be expected rather in February than sooner.

October, November and December in this part of North Carolina come as near a perfect climate as can be found in the United States. So at that period is a good time to be in the sand belt.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE

The woods then are alive with birds on their way from the long northern tour back to the South and to South America. The quail and the squirrel and the rabbit are met at every turn of the road. An occasional deer, and oftener a turkey, slips out from cover, to have a look at the world.

Sausage begins to be ripe about this time, and persimmons and collard. Opossum and sweet potatoes get together in skinned relative of the scuppernong. bouquets from every quarter, and deserves them. The muscadine, the dark-skinned relative of the scuppernong, hanging from thicket and hedgerow, brings back our boyhood days, except that the muscadine is fit to eat, while the wild grapes of boyhood were like much of the other plunder of boyhood, eaten only because it was of a size suitable to go into the mouth.

CHEATING THE ALMANAC

The almanac says Winter begins December 22. Between you and me the almanac is a narrow-minded provincialist. Winter begins some places soon after it lets up in the Spring. When you see an August frost nip the buckwheat crop, as it does once in a while up in God's country, you know Winter begins some time between then and the November election. Here Winter begins usually the week after Christmas, and that is about all it does. It never gets far enough with the job to produce much more than a decent sample. Frequently the impatient peach tree puts forth its flowers in January. It does not need to put them back again. Frosts are not finished in January, the opinion of the peach tree notwithstanding.

Fruit trees keep on taking chances right along until finally they beat Jack Frost at his own game, and then they set their fruit, and live happily ever afterward.

Straggling wild flowers blossom up until Christmas. At times a misguided one holds over until January. It is sorry before it is through, for January is not a real month for flowers in this latitude and at this altitude. Down on the coast they may work the bluff all right, but up here they must show cause.

THE FLOWER SHOW

But sometimes the early Spring flowers are making a venture in January, and from that on they come in increasing numbers. The pyxie and the arbutus are the boldest. They come in such quantities that when the tourists from the North begin to pick arbutus to send home you would imagine they are trying to put the postoffice department on a self-sustaining basis. If the Winter resort postoffices could have the salaries of the postmasters determined by the postal receipts of the season when early Spring flowers go out, Mr. Burleson, of Texas, would see a more enthusiastic and interesting scramble for places at that section of the postoffice pie counter which is in North Carolina than he sees as it is.

You never know when Spring begins in the sandy country. Folks start to make gardens in January, and they keep at it until Fall. Some of the early planted stuff pulls through. Some of it falls by the wayside, like the seed sower of Bible days, and some brings forth fruit in season, the season running any where through the year. In February you still remember to drain the automobile unless you use a mixture that will not freeze. In March the ball clubs come down from the North to play ball and try to get fresh with the girls of the South. In the sand they play ball. In those sections where clay is the dominant soil type they do neither. You can't play ball well in mud.

During the Winter the revival at the colored church affords a chance to learn of the earnestness and religious enthusiasm of the dark-complexioned brother. Don't be thinking it is a vaudeville. It is a most serious effort on the part of these people to show their devotion, and many places making greater pretensions show less of honest seriousness. Give them a quarter when you go out. They can use the money, and it does not hurt you to help the work along, no matter how humble it may appear, nor how crude its form at times. If a higher authority than we approves of it, let us approve also, and commend the effort.

Spring makes several efforts to register, and then backs away. Then comes a frost, a chilling frost, and the early garden truck recites a portion of Wolsey's soliloquy, and falls as he did.

But Spring finally arrives. It comes with the thermometer making a dash for the top of the tube, flowers coloring the gardens and the forests, and for a few months the floral exhibit of North Carolina is on again in all its generous display. This State has a greater variety of plants than any other in the Union. From that variety it manages to have a good sized bunch of blossoms from February to December, Spring getting its full share. North Carolina in March, April, May, and into June, is good enough for anybody. If this does not tell the story it is necessary to call another witness.

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