

"The winter lasts about four and a half or five months, from November to March. During the greater part of that time we have continuous frost; and rain and thaw are unknown, or nearly so. The thermometer frequently registers, especially in December and January, considerably below zero. Living in England, where 5° above zero is thought extremely cold, I am sure such figures must convey to you an idea of cold quite unbearable. Such an idea is false. But 20° and 30° below zero, when there is scarcely a breath of wind, and the day is bright, clear, and full of sunshine, as is frequently the case, is simply glorious. I don't know of anything more enjoyable in the shape of wintry weather, whilst a sleigh ride or a walk under such conditions is invigorating and health-imparting in the highest degree. There are many days when the thermometer is above zero, and sometimes in the middle of the day it scarcely freezes at all. I have often seen men working out of doors without their coats on in winter, and if you are in the woods, where men are working, you may see this every day. The cold is steady for four and a half months, and the season dry, with only a slight snowfall. We usually have a clear blue sky and bright sunshine.

"Knowing what weather to expect we prepare accordingly, and, as a result, are inconvenienced by the cold but little. The winter, too, is a great time for amusements. Sleigh riding, tobogganing, socials, and surprise parties are the order of the day. I don't know what you would think if 20 or 30 ladies and gentlemen walked up to, or rather drove up to, your house some night about six o'clock and said they had come to spend the evening with you. Such a thing often occurs in Canada, and very pleasant times are spent at these surprise parties. Dancing and all kinds of games are indulged in. If you happen to live in a settlement where the neighbours are sociable and fond of enjoyment, there will be something of the kind two or three times a week; and this is your golden opportunity, if unmarried, to look after a wife. Women are scarce in the country districts, and any who are worth having are very soon appropriated by some of the farmers. You will have to find out the best and perhaps the quickest way to win a woman's love, for competition is keen, and no slow coaches need apply. The summer is warm, some few days extremely hot. During the summer months we have very heavy thunderstorms, the lightning being specially vivid. In June, July, and August the mosquitoes are troublesome, especially to new comers. With the advance of settlement these troublesome insects, to a great extent, disappear. The summer is really very enjoyable, for no matter how hot the day there is almost invariably a cool breeze on the prairie, and the extremely hot days when there is no breeze, like the extremely cold days of winter, are but few. Upon the whole, the climate is decidedly enjoyable. The great North-West is a veritable happy hunting ground for the sportsman. There are numerous wild animals in the country. The buffalo is seldom met with, though occasionally a few are seen. They have been ruthlessly slaughtered by Indians and by white men, and are almost extinct. Bears are still to be met with in some parts of the country. There are a few wolves and foxes, and in the wooded neighbourhoods moose, elk, and various kinds of deer are to be met with. There is also an abundance of small game, wild turkeys, geese and ducks, prairie chickens, and plover; and other smaller birds are to be met with all over the country.