

New York is the great fur-mart in this country, and is the main depot of the shipping trade. There are no organized fur-companies at the present time. The business is carried on by private firms of large means and long experience. The New York Directory gives the names of more than one hundred furriers and fur-merchants, thirty of whom are wholesale dealers.

The leading fashionable fur for this country is the Mink ; but the furs that are within the reach of the masses, and most worn, are the Muskrat and the Opossum.

The wearing of furs in this country is very little affected by *climate*, but is regulated almost entirely by *fashion*. In Europe, on the other hand, the state of the elements determines the extent of the call for furs as articles of clothing. Hence, notwithstanding the winters on both continents are growing milder, the demand for furs is continually increasing in this country, while in Europe it is falling off.

The more thickly settled parts of the United States show a large decrease in the "catch" of furs ; but new territories are continually opening to the trapper ; and though he moves from year to year farther north and west, the supply steadily keeps pace with the demand.

SEASON FOR TRAPPING.

All furs are best in winter ; but trapping may be carried on to advantage for at least six months in the year, *i. e.* any time between the first of October and the middle of April. There is a period in the warm season, say from the first of May to the middle of September, when trapping is out of the question, as furs are worthless. The most trapping is done late in the fall and early in the spring.

The reason why furs become worthless in summer is, that all fur-bearing animals shed their coats, or at least lose the finest and thickest part of their fur as warm weather approaches ; and have a new growth of it in the fall to protect them in winter. This whole process is indicated in the case of the Muskrat, and some other animals, by the color of the inside part of the skin. As summer approaches, it becomes