

COLD WINTERS.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF COMPARISON.

The month of January, 1850, was scarcely ever equalled for the low reading of the thermometer (which indicated 0.21 degrees lower than the mean temperature of January for the seven preceding years, and was the coldest January on record here). The mean temperature of the month was 4.05 degrees.

February of the same year was the warmest February on record, the mean temperature being 21.61 degrees, and 8.30 degrees higher than the mean for February for the seven preceding years. The lowest temperature was observed on the 18th January, and was 31.8 degrees below zero. There were three or more cold terms or spells in January of this year. These were felt generally in Canada and through the Eastern and the Northern States. On the 18th January, at Missisquoi, the thermometer attained a minimum of 42 degrees below zero. The fact was furnished by Mr. J. C. Baker. At Sherbrooke, the greatest cold observed was on the morning of the 24th January, when the mercury in the thermometer was frozen in those instruments using it and Professor Miles, of Lennoxville College, observed his spirit thermometer at 44 degrees below zero; while at Missisquoi, on the 24th, Mr. Baker's record showed a temperature of 24 degrees below zero, and at this place on the 24th day, the mercury stood at 29.6 degrees below zero, and the spirit thermometer stood also at the same temperature. At Watertown, N. Y., on the 18th, the temperature was 36 degrees below zero; and on the 24th, at the same place, frozen mercury was carried about in a vial for exhibition. At Harvard College, at 7 a.m., on the 24th, the thermometer indicated a temperature of 16° below zero,—at Albany it reached 30°—, at Providence it reached 32°—, at Quebec, 39° 5'; while farther south the weather was somewhat moderate, but was accompanied by very heavy snow storms.

In Montreal, a record kept by the late Dr. Hall indicated on the 15th a temperature of only 20° below zero on the 23rd, —27°, and on the 24th, —25° 7'.

TABLE OF THERMOMETER READINGS FOR JANUARY, 1850—(ST. MARTIN'S OBSERVATORY, MONTREAL.)

January	8th	6 a.m.	— 4° 1	(Below zero).
"	"	noon	— 2° 9	"
"	"	10 p.m.	— 13° 6	"
"	"	midnight	— 16° 4	"
"	9th	6 a.m.	— 29° 9	"
"	"	noon	— 23° 8	"
"	"	10 p.m.	— 34° 2	"
"	"	midnight	— 36° 0	"
"	10th	6 a.m.	— 43° 6	"
"	"	noon	— 20° 1	"
"	"	10 p.m.	— 29° 2	"
"	"	midnight	— 31° 6	"
"	11th	6 a.m.	— 37° 1	"
"	"	noon	— 34° 8	"
"	"	10 p.m.	— 21° 6	"
"	"	midnight	— 18° 1	"
"	12th	6 a.m.	— 19° 4	"
"	"	10 p.m.	— 5° 0	"
"	13th	6 a.m.	— 3° 1	"
"	"	7 a.m.	— 0° 0	(Zero).

Thus, for a period of 124 hours, the temperature was below zero mercury free in open vessels, but the column of mercury in the tube of the thermometer did not cease to contract at the lowest temperature—43° 6 (below zero).

At 10 p.m. on the 9th the barometer attained the usual height of 30.614 inches.

EXTRAORDINARY SEASONS.

During the December of 1877, a western newspaper remarked that not since 1837 has any December season been known so mild. Lawn grasses were growing finely, and dandelions were in bloom navigation was perfectly open. And now, again, in 1881, we have had to record a very similar state of affairs or the same month of the year.

THE OPEN WINTER OF 1877-78 IN THE NORTH-WEST.

This remarkable weather knocks the Old Settler's Association on their beam ends. They never saw anything like it, not even in 1840, and nothing so grieves an old settler as to be compelled to admit that he can't find a parallel in ancient times for modern meteorological phenomena. Here is the 22nd day of December, with the mercury dancing on its silver heels to the music of 50° above zero; the Mississippi River bursting its crystal bonds and giving us open water from St. Paul to the lake; the steamer "Aunt Betsie," with its barges, grounded on a bar three weeks ago, firing up and bringing herself and convoy in safety to the St. Paul levee; ten boats of the St. Paul boat club, each occupied with scullers or crews of oarsmen, sporting upon the placid bosom of the ancestor of meandering streams—all this and more too is the result of the remarkable weather which now prevails in Minnesota. The movement and disappearance of the ice night before last reopens navigation from St. Paul to Lake Pepin, and this fact is worthy of being placed on record for the benefit of all coming investigation of climatic facts and theories in Minnesota.—*Pioneer Press*, St. Paul, Minn.

THE WEATHER AS IT WAS AND IS.

In the happy years of long ago, before people were made miserable by the gloomy predictions of barometers and the incorruptible integrity of thermometers, the months were known by their distinct and strongly-marked characteristics. January was famous for its quantity of cold to the square inch, and its mid-month breaking up, February was hailed by lovers of sleigh-riding, as generous with its gifts of snow; March was given the cold-shoulder because of its sleet-laden winds; April was detested for its showers and its slush; May was greeted gaily for its flower-perfumed breezes; June was a delicious month, filled with beautiful sights of fresh foliage and verdant fields, and was rendered more lovable by coquetish spells of tearfulness. In fact, each lunar period was so well known that time-keeping methods were unnecessary for its identification. But, alas! how things have changed! The year is but a hodge-podge. A man is in his duster to-day, and in his ulster to-morrow, and is happy in neither. Every citizen, in the attempted adjustment of his attire to the needs of the weather, becomes a lightning change artist. Some astronomer seeking fame has asserted that old mother earth is sheering from her pathway, like a colt newly-broken to harness and driven along a highway aligned by stump fences, and that the fickleness of the weather is the result. But that theory is not of sufficient opacity. It is too thin. Old mother earth is no such chicken. She has swung around the circle too many times to get dissatisfied and cut across lots. The real trouble may be attributed to the barometers and the thermometers. The weather clerk is like a horse car conductor. Ever since the introduction of the bell-punch and the hob-tail car, the horse car conductor has grown more careless in his attire and less inclined to look where he spits. You watch a man, and keep his books for him, and he gets demoralized and tries to make you miserable. It is the old story: the more you do for a person the more the person expects you to do. The weather clerk is taking his revenge for the slights put upon him, and asks you if you are any happier, since you know just what the weather is and what it is going to be. You reply "no."—*Argus*.

"Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside," (Judges vi. 37.) Gideon considered this a miracle, though he required a second one to satisfy him of his divine mission. In Southern California, in summer, it would scarcely be a miracle. Any such object as a fleece laid over night on the arid plain would be full of water, while around it the dust would be nearly as dry as at noontime.

YEARS OF HEAVY SNOW-FALL.

December, 1830, 1831, and 1834, on the Island of Montreal, showed a fall of 26.50, 27.45 and 27.70 inches respectively. In February, 1831, there was a fall of 23.30 inches; in 1832, 25.85 inches; and in 1835, 21.80 inches, but these are exceptions, for February has not generally been characterized by heavy snow-falls.

The heaviest fall of snow on record, in the neighborhood of Montreal, occurred on the 17th and 18th of January, 1827, when from 60 to 70 inches of snow fell, and drifts in the country roads were from 12 to 15 feet high.

1861 was a year of great snow-fall in Canada. At Montreal the total depth which fell was about 99.58 inches. In 1868, 103.27 inches fell, chiefly in November and December.

The winter of 1865-69 was characterized by exceedingly heavy snow-falls.

FREEZING OF ST. LAWRENCE AT MONTREAL.

From the year 1824 up to 1868, a period of 44 years, the ice left the River St. Lawrence in front of this city, varying from the earliest period, 16th March (1825), to the latest, April 28th (1855), showing a variation of 43 days during this period of 44 years, but these early periods are not confined to late dates, but occurred in March, 1825, 1828, 1834, and 1842; the intervening years vary from 3rd to the 28th of April, inclusive.

ICE OF THE HUDSON, N. Y.

JANUARY 26th.—The various ice dealers are busily at work harvesting the crop, and there are good prospects for a large production of this article. Above and below the bridges the ice ranges in thickness from eight to twelve inches, and is pronounced clear and solid. At Troy eight-inch ice is being harvested, and at points in the Upper Hudson the ice averages nine inches in thickness.

As regards weather recollections, says one of our "oldest inhabitants," it accords with my long experience that nothing is more general than the facility with which they lapse into oblivion, and that, too, not unfrequently within a short period after the facts have transpired. In this, as in many other departments of mundane affairs, we are very liable to fall into unwitting errors by bearing in memory only intermittent, salient facts, whilst, from the feeble impressions made by less striking, but more ordinary and continuous phenomena, we fail in our general summary, and, in consequence, enunciate conclusions alike antagonistic to rational judgment, and the establishment of useful knowledge.

The *Fargo Argus* tells of a new scheme for the winter navigation of the Red River. Captain Allsop, of the steamer "Pluck," has obtained a traction engine, and to this he will attach a number of bob sleighs, forming, as it were, a steam engine bob sleigh freight train on ice. The plan is to make regular trips up and down the river, running on the ice and bringing wood to Fargo and taking merchandise to the settlements along the river banks. He calculates that he will make six miles an hour, which will scoop the telegraph company on speed.

Snow-falls occurred generally throughout Canada and New York State on the 10th of January, 1881: this year (1882), a general snow-fall took place on the 11th. The recent heavy storm on the 22nd January had likewise its counterpart upon the same day of the month in 1881. Thus does the weather repeat itself.