

Weather in Massachusetts.

REMINISCENCES OF AN OLD STAGER.

(Correspondence of *The Argus*.)

PITTSFIELD, June 1.—The weather is still the topic here. Yesterday, while I was driven over the mountain by one of the old settlers of this country, the old man became loquacious and strong in reminiscences. I referred to the weather we had been having. He looked me over a moment to get beyond my day, and dated his story in the spring of '33!

Said he: "In the spring of '33, on the 26th day of May, the snow fell eight feet on the level. In the morning we all awoke in the old farm house and found ourselves kivered. Father had 1,200 sheep! We climbed the chimney, got on to the roof, jumped into the snow and burrowed for the northeast side of the farm. We found the sheep nicely housed under a twenty five feet drift; splendid accommodations, bath room and water closet annexed! Next morning there came a sudden thaw, and we rafted them sheep into the barn!"

But have you ever experienced such cold weather here at this season?

"Lordy, gracious! on the 17th day of July, '31, we cut ice on the pond!"

What did you want of ice, if the summer was so cold?

The old fellow gave a kind of a dry swallow, as if he had some uncooked oatmeal in his throat, but "came up smiling."

"Well, you see, we had to water the cattle!" I kept quiet a moment; his mind worked again.

"In the month of August, '29—the 16th, I think. No, that was in June, before sheep shearing, there came on a sudden fall of wet, clinging like snow; father's sheep hadn't been sheared; the snow stuck to their wool and broke 'em down. You have heern tell of the bone-setters, the Sweets. Well, one of them was in Pittsfield at that time, and father has told me a thousand times that Sweet put splinters on over 500 sheep's legs before sundown that very day!"

I remained quiet; he began to appear uneasy, finally he ventured, "You seem to doubt what I say."

Well, my friend, I might as well acknowledge right here, said I, that I am quite a liar myself! The old fellow sadly fixed his eyes on his horse's ear, and kept it there until he dropped me at the mill. I wonder if the pathetic words of Hood ever occurred to that old liar.

"'Tis little joy
To know I am further off from heaven
Than when I was a boy!"

—If ever the happy time arrives when official weather books will be published annually in both Canada and the United States; when rainy days will be calculated prospectively with as much certainty as eclipses; when the date, nature and duration of every storm will be rigorously determined two years in advance—then, evidently, the astrologers will have to abandon their profession. Meanwhile, however, they will probably continue to exercise it without much hindrance; the only serious competition they have as yet, is, not meteorology, but nature herself, for she is generous enough to place at our disposal a variety of little signals, which render us some service as it is, and would render us much more if only we knew how to read them aright. In her hands coming events do really cast their shadows a few yards before time; and if we were clever at discerning the meanings of the shadows, they would perhaps tell us more about the movements of weather than we have hitherto been able to learn from the united observatories of the world.

Wet Summer, Cold Winter.

The direction of the winds is always an important point to note during any of these peculiar seasons. During the wet season (1858) noticed, the most prevalent wind during the year was the N. E. by E.; the next in frequency the W. by N; and, strange to say, the least prevalent the south.

Following this very wet year, in the Province of Quebec, came

THE COLD JANUARY OF 1859.

The month of January, 1859, immediately following the unusually wet summer of 1858, was remarkable on account of the intensity and duration of the cold. In fact, the severity of this month was unprecedented. The weather early in January (1859) was inclined to be mild, the mean temperature of the first day being 39° F. On the morning of the 3rd the thermometer fell to 4° below zero, and on the 4th day there was a slight snow-fall. On the 8th the thermometer indicated 0° (zero), wind west by south. The thermometer continued falling, and attained a record of temperature I believe unequalled in Canada, both as to intensity and duration. The following temperatures were recorded at the St. Martin's Observatory by Dr. Smallwood:—

January 8th, midnight,	16° 4 below zero.
" 9th, " "	36° 0 " "
" 10th, 6 a.m.,	43° 0 " "
" " midnight,	31° 6 " "
" 11th, 6 a.m.,	37° 0 " "
" " midnight,	18° 1 " "
" 12th, 6 a.m.,	19° 4 " "
" " midnight,	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 and at zero. Mercury froze 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.

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

The cold term ended by a fall of snow which commenced on the evening of the 12th, and ceased only on the morning of the 13th day. The "snap" was felt pretty generally throughout Canada and the Eastern States, and seems to have travelled from the west, eastward.

At Rochester, N.Y., the cold was felt some hours earlier than at Montreal, and 10° below zero was the maximum temperature.

At Brooklyn, N.Y., the lowest temperature was 9° below zero, and was the lowest in a period of 70 years.

At Boston it was	14° below zero.
" Toronto "	38° " "
" Quebec "	40° " "
" Huntingdon "	44° " "

At this last point mercury was frozen solid in about fifteen minutes when exposed in a saucer.

—A large part of America takes the exact shade of its character for each day from the weather which it finds when it opens its eyes in the morning. It is true that in the majority of cases, we are almost unconscious of the subtle influence which is at work upon us, not only because its effects are usually too minute to attract our attention, but also because we are so accustomed to them that unless they happen to be exceptionally marked, it does not occur to us to investigate their cause. This indifference applies, however, to a good many other things besides weather, and the fact of its existence no more indicates that the action of weather on us is not real, than our forgetfulness that we are always breathing implies that we could do without air.

A Dissonter—Valuable Records.

WET SUMMERS AND FOLLOWING WINTERS.

To the Editor of the *Chicago Tribune*.

CHICAGO, May 5.—In the predictions of Vennor for May published by you this morning, he says "that a cold and wet summer is invariably followed by a cold and stormy winter is a truth now so well proven and borne out by testimony of past records, that we cannot lightly put it aside, and if we have good and sufficient grounds for predicting the former, as we most assuredly have at this time, it is but right that we should warn the people of the latter in good season"—*Tribune*, May 7.

That this statement is not warranted by the facts as regards this section of country for the past thirty five years I will show by records. Commencing with the winter of 1848 '49, a long cold one with heavy snow, the preceding summer of 1848 was warm and moderately dry, and the fall very dry. The summer of 1851 was excessively wet, warm and cold at times, the winter following was a moderately open winter. The summers of 1854, 1855, and 1856 were all warm and dry, and the three winters following those summers were the most severe we have ever had. The summer of 1857 was very wet and cold, and so was the fall; but the winter was mild and moderately open. The summer of 1858, and the fall also, was excessively wet and cool, and the winter following was a very wet, open winter. The summer of 1859 was cold and dry, with frosts every month; the winter following dry, cold and short. The summer of 1862 was wet and cool, and the following winter was extremely mild. The summer of 1863 was very cold, but very dry, and the winter following was very cold in January, February, and March. The summer of 1865 was excessively wet and cool at times, and the following winter was an open one. The summer of 1866 was both wet and cold, and the following winter was cold, but not severe or long. The summer of 1869 was excessively wet, and the coldest in thirty-five years, and the winter was short and moderately open. The summers of 1870, 1871, and 1872 were very dry and warm, and the winters following were cold, and the winter of 1872 '73, an excessively cold, long winter, with heavy snow. The summer of 1873 was very cold and quite wet. The winter following was a mild winter, with no severe weather or storms. The summer of 1874 was hot and dry, with grasshoppers in Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska, and the winter was long and excessively cold. The summer of 1875 was both wet and cold, and the following winter was very open and mild. The summer of 1876 was rather wet and cold (July was hot and dry), and the following winter was long, cold, and heavy snow-storms. The summer of 1880 was dry and very warm, and the following winter was long, cold, and heavy snow-storms. The seasons I have omitted have no especial bearing, but the facts are that a dry, warm summer and dry fall are always followed by a cold winter, and a wet fall by an open winter in the Western States. Whenever mention is made of a cold winter in the foregoing the Mississippi River at St. Louis and the Ohio River have been closed by ice two months or more. I find but two winters from 1848 to 1882 where a cold, severe winter has followed a cold, wet summer. Since 1872 the winters have regularly alternated cold and open.

A. B. H.

Men's minds are as variant as their faces. Where the motives of their actions are pure, the operation of the former is no more to be imputed to them, as a crime, than the appearance of the latter, for both, being the work of nature, are alike unavoidable.—George Washington.