

weather when the Mississippi Valley in the same latitude is feeling the first rude embraces of winter.

#### COMPARATIVE FREEDOM FROM EXTREMES.

Nor is this all the Ontario climate owes to the Great Lakes. Frosts which prevail further south are often prevented and the rapid and sometimes trying changes of temperature characteristic of much of the United States and Canada are here felt only in a modified degree. And not only in regard to annual but also in regard to daily extremes, the lake region is more temperate than any other inland portion of America further north than Mississippi, Alabama or the Carolinas—and east of the Rocky Mountains. The record for two years of the American weather service show that of over one hundred inland stations selected from the western, north eastern, middle, northern and eastern States and the Canadian Provinces, Ontario stations are the only ones which do not show a change of forty degrees or more in temperature within twenty-four hours. Many of the stations whose records have been examined show such changes from twenty to sixty times in a single year. Even as far south as Texas the mercury has been known to fall within a few hours, from eighty degrees in the shade to fourteen degrees of frost.

#### WHAT ONTARIO WINTERS ARE LIKE.

The duration of winter in Ontario is about four months; though it varies a little in different parts. In Eastern Ontario it commences in the latter half of November and closes in the beginning of April. In South-western Ontario it is a few weeks shorter. At Ottawa the mercury falls almost every winter to thirty degrees below zero, or even lower, and the mean of the three mid-winter months is only fifteen degrees above zero. In Toronto the average lowest point reached during the year is twelve degrees below zero, and the mean of December, January and February is nearly twenty-five degrees above zero. At various points on Lake Huron it usually falls little, or not at all, below zero, and in the southern counties the winter mean varies from twenty-five to thirty degrees. Everywhere, however, the season is bright, bracing and pleasant. Sometimes the sky is cloudless for days or weeks together. The occasional extremely cold periods rarely last more than three days, and are almost invariably dry, bright and calm, with a great range of temperature between day and night. The cold is not felt to nearly the extent that people in moister climates would imagine, and a walk of half a mile bare-handed even with the mercury twenty below zero, often causes no unpleasant feeling of cold. In fact that temperature seems no colder than twenty degrees above zero generally does in Britain. The explanation is found in the dryness of the atmosphere not abstracting from the body the heat which would be absorbed by a more humid air. Snow lies on the ground to a depth of from several inches to two or three feet, for greatly varying periods, and except occasionally when snow drifts prove troublesome, the snow-covered roads are good and the sledges glide along rapidly to the music of the sleigh bells. The commencement of the sleighing season is hailed with delight, business is revived; the grain is readily marketed, and in fact almost every operation requiring good roads is greatly facilitated. Unfortunately, the whole of Ontario does not deserve the reputation for sleighing which current notices abroad regarding the Canadian winter give it. In Eastern Ontario sleighing usually lasts from three to four months and is depended upon as a prominent feature of every winter. But towards the south-west, the sleighing season gradually