

at a distance are apt to think. Not much fuss is made about a New York or Boston winter, but when we have what is called a "cold snap," the markings of the thermometer at the cities just named are about the same as at the average of localities in Western Canada. On that memorable cold day which occurred during the winter of 1860-61, the thermometer fell to 20° below zero in Boston, and from 20° to 30° in the adjacent towns of Massachusetts. We have no record at hand of the markings in and about New York on that day, but we are very clear in our recollection that the cold was no more intense in Toronto and other places in this province, on the day in question, than in Boston and its vicinity. It is a peculiarity of our climate that extreme cold only lasts a very short time, seldom beyond three days at once, while our usual winter weather is far from being unpleasantly severe. During most of it, exercise and labour in the open air are not only practicable, but bracing, blood-stirring, and positively enjoyable.

The study of climatology is as yet in its infancy in this country. Careful meteorological observations have not been taken at many points for a sufficient number of years to give us a trustworthy average. So far as ascertained, the following are the mean degrees of cold at the several Canadian points named, during the month of January:—

MEAN TEMPERATURES FOR JANUARY.

Stratford	18° 42
Hamilton	22° 80
Barrie	15° 56
Toronto	20° 70
Belleville	17° 61
Montreal	12° 10
Quebec	17° 20
St. John, N. B.	14° 37
Halifax	20° 00

February is a somewhat milder month, in our climate, than January. This is not the popular impression, but it is nevertheless the fact, as established by the unimpeachable testimony of the thermometer. The popular impression may, perhaps, be accounted for to some extent by these two things: first, there is no thaw at the beginning of February to mitigate for a little the rigour of the season; and secondly, in addition to steady cold, we are liable this month to have storms, which make the weather seem more severe than it really is.

Winter begins astronomically about the 22nd of December, viz., at the time of the winter solstice, as it is termed. Then the day is shortest. But curiously enough, winter does not often truly set in until after the sun has turned the corner, and is daily shining higher and higher in the heavens. Hence the proverb, "As the day lengthens, the cold strengthens." Dr. Holmes observes, "We do not commonly feel that winter thoroughly in earnest until after the Christmas holidays, which include the first of January. And inasmuch as on the 14th of February our thoughts are led, by the ingenious fiction of St. Valentine's day, to look forward henceforth to spring, which is at hand, we may say that the

white pith or marrow of winter lies locked up in the six weeks between these two festivals." Another sprightly writer says:—"There is an old artistic tradition which puts the month of January in the guise of a young babe (typical of the New Year of course) making a bold front of it, and not like Shakespeare's babe—

'Mewling and——'

to the great discomfort of the nurse. For my own part, I can never think of January as a babe, whether methodical in its habits or the contrary, but rather as a fine old gentleman with frosted beard, who has seen his best days and is content to take his ease by his own chimney corner. And if I were to symbolize February, it should be as a decorous, white-haired, venerable lady—something shorter than January—who is not over-clamorous for rights, but yet has her storms, and who is most effective when most serene."

MEAN TEMPERATURES FOR FEBRUARY.

Stratford	26° 06
Hamilton	23° 90
Barrie	18° 64
Toronto	22° 50
Belleville	20° 36
Montreal	22° 00
Quebec	15° 80
St. John, N. B.	21° 42
Halifax	25° 00

March, with his lungs full of wind, blows the trumpet of the year as the herald of spring. He is a blustering fellow, who, though he may sometimes commence his career in disguise, is sure to reveal his true character before we have done with him. Hence the proverb, that if March comes in like a lamb it will go out like a lion. The sprightly writer whom we quoted, as representing January and February in the character of a venerable couple with snow-white hair, speaks of March as "some shrew of a maid, following up the old people with a tremendous clatter of brooms and great clouds of dust."

The rigour of winter sensibly abates during this month, as experience testifies and the meteorological tables demonstrate.

MEAN TEMPERATURES FOR MARCH.

Stratford	25° 51
Hamilton	29° 14
Barrie	35° 02
Toronto	27° 60
Belleville	28° 85
Montreal	26° 16
Quebec	21° 00
St. John, N. B.	29° 00
Halifax	29° 00

Dr. Holmes tells us that the good people living in that extreme "down East" point, the State of Maine, are wont to talk about having six weeks' sleighing in March, but he says, "we in Massachusetts do not expect more than a month's sleighing in March—in fact, not so much as that." The Maine style of comment on the month indicates continued plenty of snow, along with a milder temperature and greater length of day. Maine has undoubtedly a less hospitable