

DECEMBER, 1884.

Now past, with all its joys and sorrows, its hopes and disappointments, has experienced perhaps the cold spell of the current winter. Beginning on the 14th it extended for three days into January, 1885 when thaw. The greatest term of frost and snow since 1858, set in, commenced December 22nd, 1861, and with partial brief thaws endured in this neighborhood from five to six weeks. The year 1858 is regarded as the real beginning of colonization here and on the mainland. In January, 1847, at Victoria, the thermometer fell to 5 deg. below zero, and severe cold continued for about three weeks.

LAST DECEMBER HAD

Of changeable weather with rain, snow or sleet,	3 days.
" " but dry, mild and cloudy, with occasional sunshine,	10 "
" cloudy weather with showers of snow or rain,	8 "
" clear frosty sunshine, truly enjoyable weather for well-happd sleighists or pedestrians,	10 "
	31 "

There, thus came eleven days of less or more rain or snow, and twenty of fair and frosty weather with much, but not uninterrupted sunshine. Around Victoria snow fell to a depth not exceeding ten inches and being dry, with a north-easterly wind, for several days it drifted greatly. Quail, and the recently introduced Chinese pheasant came boldly to farm houses, where, let us hope, they were fed by kindly disposed farmers, wives and children.

December's minimum temperature was 8 deg., its maximum 54 deg., mean or average 31 deg.

Before the dawn of the Railway era snow blockades drifting to great depths used to happen on by elevated roads in the United Kingdom, on that between Perth and Inverness, through the Grampians, especially. Delay of stage and mail coaches sometimes with loss of life would happen. Between Dalwhinnie and Dalnacardoch, the most elevated stretch of General Wade's "highland road" black cock and mair-fowl would, and doubtless can still, during cold weather, be met in large flocks scratching and picking at horse droppings on the smoothened, by travel, highway.

Would it not be well for our athletic youth to practice snow-shoeing. Last December, 1884, afforded a fine opportunity, and, if three winters out of five these shoes had to hang idle "in the hall," or in some other place more secure from the gnawings of rats and mice, what of that?

In the "Book of Days," so crammed with facts worth knowing, it is recorded that in the middle of the last century and later on, winter travel in the British Isles was, by stage-wagons at the rate of two

miles an hour, the vehicles often sticking in the mud. Of a morning, pedestrians were sometimes found stuck in the mud up to their knees, now dead, again resuscitated. Sheep were smothered in snow drifts and sometimes shepherds; pedestrians were found dead in fields, morasses and highways. In the latter half of last century a stout Highland drover, Hugh Fraser of Dell, Stratherrick, coming with a full purse from the southern cattle markets on horseback, got bewildered towards evening on a hill in a furious snow-drift. Making for the highest pinnacle of the eminence, he rode and walked alternately in a circle until daylight, thus saving his own life and that of his sturdy nag. After persevering travel, all the following day, although without correct ascertainment of his whereabouts, the much tired, famishing man, in the evening, reached the welcome shelter of a cottage within three miles of his own house on the bank of the id Farigak. Overjoyed he must, of course, have been not only on his own account, but on that of others who, had he perished, might have lost or, at least, been long without their rightful dues, for Fraser, according to a then general custom in the Scottish highlands, had in the south country, marketed, not only his own black cattle or kyloes, but those of many of his neighbors. His appointment with them for settlement was the day of his arrival at Dell. The anecdote, in itself interesting, was in 1816, first published as guidance to others in a like pinch. It is now reproduced as a warning how to act to such of our fellow provincials in this our western mountain land who may ever find themselves, in drifting snow, away from shelter and help. Fraser's welcome to friends at Dell, on the appointed day of trust, may have had a "blythe gae doon" such as according to Scott's Guy Mannering, Dandie Dinmont, of Glark Hope, Liddesdale, did to his after the fox hunt. In bulk, form, pluck, and generosity of disposition, in addition has it, that Hugh Fraser, of Dell, resembled the redoubted Dandie.

Therm't	Bar.	Bar.	Rain.	Wind.
Max. Min.	7 A. M.	9 P. M.		
40	30.12	31.12	0.11	Light N.E. to fresh S.W.
42	30.10	31.10	0.05	Moderate South West
43	30.02	31.12	0.29	Gale S. W.
44	30.03	30.91	0.11	Light N.E. to very fresh S.W.
45	30.01	30.82		Fresh S.W. to change, S.E.
46	30.00	30.77		Light N. W. to fresh S.W.
47	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
48	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
49	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
50	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
51	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
52	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
53	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
54	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
55	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
56	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
57	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
58	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
59	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
60	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
61	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
62	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
63	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
64	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
65	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
66	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
67	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
68	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
69	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
70	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
71	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
72	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
73	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
74	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
75	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
76	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
77	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
78	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
79	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
80	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
81	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
82	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
83	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
84	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
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86	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
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88	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
89	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
90	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
91	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
92	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
93	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
94	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
95	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
96	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
97	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
98	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
99	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.
100	30.00	30.77		Light North-east.

Mean Temperature, 31 deg. Rainfall, 1.95 in. Snow, about 1 in.