

OUR CLIMATE.

The study of the climatology of British America is yet in its infancy. We have, it is true, a number of records of the variations of the barometer and thermometer and depth of rain-fall, at various points, in addition to the valuable series of meteorological observations taken at Toronto and Montreal, but they have hitherto been disconnected, not viewed as contributions to the climatology of British America at large. One of the happiest results of Confederation will undoubtedly be the establishment of a system by which the corps of observers now scattered, or to be scattered, over all British America, will receive their instructions from a point within our own territory, and transmit their experiences to a central station, not at Washington, but in our own Dominion—so that the critical examination of them may be made with a view to our own material interests, as well as to the advancement of climatological science.

Until such a system has been in operation for several years, it is impossible to write with accuracy a treatise on the climatology of our northern country. The necessary bulk of such a work would, moreover, preclude its admission into *The Year Book*, but a short essay on the subject with special reference to heat and cold, and their influence on vegetation, seems to be in place both here and now.

On a preliminary examination of the field, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, whose skies are more influenced by their position in respect of the ocean than the land, naturally divide themselves from the rest of British America as a separate climatological Province, having, perhaps, as a dependency, the southern shores of New Brunswick. The rest of the country, east of the Rocky Mountains, partakes of the peculiar features of the continent at large, and we may map out the following as its subdivisions most distinctly marked:—

1. The North Shore of the St. Lawrence, from Labrador to Quebec.
2. New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the South Shore of the St. Lawrence, to Quebec.
3. The Eastern Townships and the territory enclosed between the Upper St. Lawrence, the Ottawa, Lakes Huron and Ontario.
4. The Southern Peninsula of the Province of Ontario, jutting into and sloping towards Lake Erie. Also, the Peninsula between Lakes Erie and Ontario.
5. The North Shores of Lakes Huron and Superior.
6. The Prairie country of the great West.

The features common to all these regions are the severity of their winters and the heat of their summers, as compared with similar latitudes in Europe, and the rapidity with which summer treads on the heels of winter, leaving us but little spring, in the European acceptance of the word. Taking Montreal as a fair medium for all Canada, we find the following as the mean temperature of the several months, compared with London and Paris:—

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May.	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year
St. Martin's (Montreal) lat. 45.32 N.	14.5	15.4	25.1	39.4	55.7	65.2	72.3	67.5	58.7	45.0	32.2	17.4	42.4
Paris (France) lat. 48.50 N.	35.5	39.5	44.0	49.7	58.1	62.7	65.6	65.3	60.1	52.2	44.1	38.5	51.3
London (England) lat. 51.29 N.	35.5	37.4	44.6	46.4	54.1	58.5	59.6	62.7	58.0	47.4	42.9	40.4	49.0

Thus, while October, November, December, January, February, March and April, are colder here than in either London or Paris, and September colder than in Paris; our May, June, July and August are warmer than in either, and our September warmer than in London. The great difference will, perhaps, be best illustrated by graphical delineation, and the kindness of Lieut. E. D. Ashe, R. N. the director of the Observatory, Quebec, has supplied us with the following diagram on which are traced the curves of temperature of Toronto, Quebec, and England.

