

February, the second and shortest month of the year, came in upon us with a bright, clean face. It opened clear and cold, too, thus giving strong premonition of a plenty of wherewithal to replenish ice-houses—but we shall see.

February derives its name from *Februus*, to purify; hence *Februarius* was an appellation assigned by the Romans to the expiatory sacrifices which they were accustomed to offer at this season. *Pisces* or fishes, the constellation over which Neptune was supposed to rule, the ancients regarded as the last of the Winter signs; it now is first in the order of stella groups of the Zodiac, and presides over the vernal equinox.

Sanders tells us that the Saxons called February *Sproun-fele*, also *Sol-month*, or pancake month, from their custom of offering pancakes to the Sun, in gratitude for his increasing power! It is a short, and to some sweet month. St. Valentine is honored largely on the 14th, and with a vast deal of bad as well as good poetry, as well as with kindly and malevolent indulgences. We trust there may be no unseemly interchange the present year; but of all that in good time. We shall have something to say of the Saint, doubtless, and his votaries, at the proper season.

The cold Februaries since 1790, have been those of 1809, 1815, 1831, 1836, 1838, while last year, the atmosphere was by no means mild. We will take them up in order for details.

In 1809, the medium temperature was twenty-six degrees; the Delaware closed with ice during the first week, and for several miles below the City. The mercury was several mornings in succession several degrees—in some cases eleven and twelve degrees—below zero. On the 27th of the month, the merchants employed a great number of men to cut the ice from Pine street wharf to Gloucester Point, in order to get out of port several vessels that had been for some time loaded, and awaiting a breaking up. Severe weather continued until nearly the close of March.

In February 1815, the medium temperature was below that of 1809, by twenty-four degrees. Almost the entire month was intensely cold. On several mornings the mercury was twelve degrees below zero. There was also considerable snow on the Earth, when the month opened, while several storms occurred before its close. The snow was deep everywhere, North and East as well as West. The Delaware river, which closed for the second time in January, remained closed all through February, and even until the second week in March. Fuel was very scarce and dear. Oak wood sold in Philadelphia as high as \$14 a cord, while hickory went up to \$16 and even \$20.

In February 1831, the medium temperature was two degrees higher than in 1815, but the month was frequently intensely cold. There were several deep snows in Pennsylvania, and all through the Western, Middle and Eastern States, as also in Maryland, and the Western parts of Virginia. Snow even fell in the Carolines and Alabama. The Earth, hereabouts, was robed in the wintry white mantle, from the first week in January to the first week in March. It was abroad pretty freely, too, during the whole of that time, from Maine to Maryland. In some places between these points, it stood in banks of from ten to twenty feet in depth. There was great suffering among the poor, not only for fuel, but for the common necessities of life. During the month there were also many melancholy shipwrecks.

During February 1836, the medium temperature was twenty-four degrees, down, as will be seen, to that of 1815. From the 2d to the 6th of the month, the mercury ranged from one to four degrees below zero. There were besides this, from twelve to fifteen intensely cold days during the month. There was good sleighing from Maine to Virginia. There were eight heavy snow storms; indeed, it was estimated at the time, if the snow had fallen on a level and remained to the end of the last snow, it would have been from eight to ten feet deep. In some places it was blown into banks twenty-five and thirty feet in height.

The medium temperature of 1838 was also twenty-four degrees. During the month there was a great deal of very severe weather, and had it not been for the Iceboat, which had then just been introduced, the Delaware would probably have been closed the whole month. The average temperature of the month at Sunrise was eighteen and a half degrees, which is thirteen and a half below the freezing point.

As we have said, February of last year was an intensely cold month, but it is of too late occurrence to require any details. The most of our readers remember its exact character, doubtless.

Now for some warmish Februaries, since 1790, and we have done. Those of 1828 and 1840 are all that we find which particularly demand notice; we mean, of course, up to the year 1846, later than which period we did not propose in the onset to examine.

February, 1828, was an extremely mild one. The weather was indeed more like that of April than a Winter month; the medium temperature was forty degrees. Apricot and peach trees were in blossom on the 20th, but some frosty nights in March destroyed much of the promised fruit.

From the 1st to the 6th of February, 1840, it was intensely cold, the mercury ranging, indeed, from zero to fifteen above, and the Delaware being closed below Pine street. On the 6th, the wind changed to the South, and the weather suddenly became very mild. This warm puff from the tropics, broke up the ice, and the month continued mild.

The present February, as we have said above, opens most brightly, and we trust it may be a happy month for all. The chances are that we shall have some considerable cold weather. We can hardly expect to get through the Winter with such a mild atmosphere as has thus far blessed us. We believe whatever may come, our people are prepared for it. The times are a shade better, and there are many organizations in operation for the relief of the really deserving poor. It is astonishing how little money will answer to help a great many, when this little is judiciously expended. This fact was clearly demonstrated at a meeting in favor of the Episcopal Aid Office, which occurred on Tuesday week at St. Stephen's Church. Hardly \$600, it appeared, had been appropriated the presex year, and yet it was marvellous to hear the amount of good done. Our other Relief Associations are conducted in the same manner as the one we have noticed incidentally, and, we repeat, the deserving poor will find them ready to respond to every demand which they may make.

(For the Philadelphia Bulletin.)

Review of the Weather, &c., for First Month (January).

	1857.	1858.
Rain during some portion of the		
24 hours.....	0 dys.	4 dys.
Do. all or nearly all of the day.....	2 "	5 "
Snow.....	10 "	2 "
Cloudy without storms.....	8 "	6 "
Ordinary clear.....	11 "	14 "
	31	31

TEMPERATURES, RAIN, DEATHS, &C.

	1857.	1858.
Mean Temperature of the Month,		
per Penna. Hospital.....	22.37 deg	39.72 deg
Highest Do. during the month.....	42	62
Lowest Do. " " " "	5 below	22
Rain " " " "	3.63 in.	2.60 in.
Deaths, counting five current weeks	1387	907

The average *mean* Temperature of this month for the past *sixty-nine* years has been.....31.12 *degrees*
The Highest during that period present year.....39.72 "
Lowest " " do 1840.....24 "
From the above it will be seen that the month just closed has had *no equal* for average height of Temperature during the past *sixty-nine* years, and most likely for a much longer period; the records in our possession extending *no* further back. For a number of years the corresponding month of 1828 bore off the palm in this respect, and as it then reached 39 deg., the present year has not much to boast of over that.

As the present winter thus far has elicited many comparisons between that of 1827 and 1828 it may be well to record a few items in reference to both.

Mean Temperature of Twelfth Month (December), 1827.....	36 — deg.
Mean Temperature of Twelfth Month (December), 1857.....	40 25 “
Mean Temperature of First Month (January), 1828.....	39 — “
Mean Temperature of First Month (January),	

1858..... 39 72 "
In PEIRCE'S Records we find the following—January,
528—This was indeed a remarkably mild month. The
Delaware as free from ice as it is in June; and not a flake of
snow was seen in Philadelphia during the month. A
flood of rain, however, prevailed until the
16th, when it cleared delightfully, blossoms of the
shrubbery and trees were beginning to put forth their
buds. On several days the mercury ran up to *seventy* in
the shade. Two inches of rain fell during the month.

From the foregoing extract it will be seen that, although the month the *present year averages* a little higher, yet we have had no day to equal several there recorded—the highest having been 62 degrees. We have dotted down, at various dates through the month, such facts as the following, for future reference, viz: "Honeysuckles, Sweet Williams, Forget-me-nots, Chrysanthums, Narcissus Rose Bushes, Lillies, &c., in leaf in my garden—leaves of the latter full six inches in length." "In some places Dandelions are to be seen." "Yellow Jessamines in full bloom, in some situations in the open air." "Farmers now plowing and some rolling their wheat."

"A friend of mine, whose garden has a warm southern exposure, has now Johnny Jump-Ups, and other early Spring flowers, in full bloom; while another has a Peach Tree in blossom."

In broad contrast to all this stands the following, which we find in our own diary for

FIRST MONTH (JAN.), 1857.
The average mean temperature this month has been
22.37 deg.

We can find nothing on our record as low as this, for this month, as far back as 1790 inclusive—nothing less than 26 deg. has occurred during that entire period, except in the years 1832, 25 deg.—1840, 24 deg., and last year (1856), 24.15 deg.

The 23d and 24th days of the present month of this year may well be remembered for intensity of cold in this city. Thermometer varying from 3 to 7 degrees below zero.

It is useless to attempt to chronicle all the items in reference to the late "cold spell." It may safely be said not to have been equalled in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant." "All along the frontier of New York State the mercury was down *ten, twenty, and forty* degrees below zero, and at Watertown the quicksilver froze up at *thirty-seven* below!" (so says the New York Tribune.)—The terrible snow storm of the 18th has not been equalled for many years. The humorously-called "Express Train" from New York, being 48 hours in making the trip, while on the Baltimore Railroad *nineteen* locomotives were employed in endeavoring to clear the track, which was even then accomplished with difficulty. The James River, in Virginia, is frozen over, as also Long Island Sound, from the Connecticut Shore to Long Island. New Haven harbor is frozen tight, and nothing but ice can be seen from the topmast of a vessel with a spy-glass, &c., &c.

In reference to the rain of the month the present year, it might have been mentioned previously that, of the 2.60 inches recorded, 1.20 inches fell during the night of the 16th, and 1.04 inches on the 11th, forming the greater portion of the whole quantity. J. M. E.

Phila., Second Mo., 1st, 1858.



N. E. cor. Gresham & 4th. St. - 1858

Warmth of January, 1858 — The average temperature of the month, at noon, was 45.15 degrees. In January, 1843, the average temperature at noon, was 45.63 deg. The thermometer at McAllister's, a record of the thermometer has been kept since January, 1824. The month of January, 1843 and 1858, are the only ones on our record in which the monthly average at noon, has been as high as 45 degrees. By reference to a table published in "Blodgett's Climatology," embracing a record of meteorometrical observations at Philadelphia, from the middle of the last century, we notice that the month of Jan. 1802, has been the warmest January known, being however, but little in advance of January, 1858.

Hunting Park.—Mr. Wm. Saunders, of Germantown, who has had the entire superintendence in laying out and beautifying Hunting Park, which was presented to this city a year or two ago, has progressed rapidly with the improvements to be made there. The entire park has been staked out on the ground, roads and walks have been opened, and the soil out of them mixed with manure, in order to furnish material for planting trees. 1250 trees have been planted and are now in successful growth, and nearly 2000 holes, eight feet in diameter and eighteen inches in depth, have been prepared for trees. In the performance of this work, 9000 loads of inferior soil have been removed and substituted by an equal quantity of the prepared compost. Upwards of 9000 feet of drain tiles have been inserted, four from two and a half to three feet below the surface, to keep the ground free of stagnant surface water—the position of the ground and the tenacious character of the sub soil rendering this work necessary. Of the 1250 trees planted, 600 are evergreens of choice varieties, 250 shrubby trees for undergrowth have been planted, and there is ground prepared for an equal number more. A large portion of the roads and walks have been graded, and are now ready for stoning. The park, when fully completed, will be one of great beauty, and no doubt will be resorted to by thousands of our citizens. The completion of Hunting Park, and when necessary improvements are made to the Sedgely property, now united to the Lemon Hill estate, will afford beautiful retreats for all those who desire to (escape from the heat and dust of the built up portions of the city.