

he painted only the truth. So careful an author as Gibbon believes that the climate of Europe has changed since the days of the first Roman emperors.

In the first chapter of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" he says: —

"Some ingenious writers have suspected that Europe was much colder formerly than it is at present; and the most ancient descriptions of the climate of Germany tend exceedingly to confirm their theory. The general complaints of intense frost, and eternal winter, are perhaps little to be regarded, since we have no method of reducing to the accurate standard of the thermometer, the feelings or the expressions of an orator, born in the happier regions of Greece or Asia. But I shall select two remarkable circumstances of a less equivocal nature. 1. The great rivers which covered the Roman provinces, the Rhine and the Danube, were frequently frozen over, and capable of supporting the most enormous weights. The barbarians, who often chose that severe season for their inroads, transported without apprehension or danger, their numerous armies, their cavalry, and their heavy wagons, over a vast and solid bridge of ice. Modern ages have not presented an instance of a like phenomenon. 2. The reindeer, that useful animal, from which the savage of the north derives the best comforts of his dreary life, is of a constitution that supports and even requires the most intense cold. He is found on the rock of Spitzberg, within ten degrees of the pole; he seems to delight in the snows of Lapland and Siberia; but at present he cannot subsist, much less multiply, in any country to the south of the Baltic. In the time of Cæsar,