

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND AT GIBRALTAR AND MALTA, WITH A CHART OF RAINFALL CONTRIBUTED BY THE BRITISH RAINFALL ORGANIZATION.

ISSUED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.

PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE. To be purchased through any Bookseller or directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:—IMPERIAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2, and 28, ABINGDON STREET, LONDON S.W.1; 37, PETER STREET, MANCHESTER; 1, ST. ANDREW'S CRESCENT, CARDIFF; 23 FORTH STREET, EDINBURGH; or from E. PONSONBY, LTD., 116, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN; or from the Agencies in the British Colonies and Dependencies, the United States of America and other Foreign Countries of T. FISHER UNWIN, LIMITED, LONDON, W.C.

FORTY-THIRD YEAR.
Vol. XXXV. (New Series)

No. III.

MARCH, 1918.

[Price 6d., Post free, 7d.]

Temperature above the Normal; Rainfall below it.

During the greater part of the month the distribution of atmospheric pressure over the British Isles was anticyclonic, the weather in accordance with these quiet conditions being dry and comparatively free from strong winds and gales. Of the latter, the more violent were experienced during the first week. On the 1st and 2nd a north-easterly gale, which was accompanied by snow and hail, blew on the South-East coast, where there was much damage to shipping. During this gale hundreds of tons of shingle were displaced by the heavy seas on the foreshore at Deal, and large portions of a cliff carried away near Ramsgate. About this date snow fell in Yorkshire and the Peak district, and blizzards were reported from Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, the snow at West Linton, Pentland Hills, falling to a depth of 150 mm. As a rule the day temperatures during the month were higher than those experienced during February, but the night temperatures were lower, so that the temperature of the month, as a whole, was in most localities a trifle below that of its predecessor. Very little rain fell until towards the close of the period, the monthly totals being everywhere below the normal. There was moreover very little snow, though the month opened with snowstorms in the northern and eastern districts, storms which were associated with the depression which caused the wintry weather experienced on Feb. 28th. Less heavy falls occurred between the 26th and the 28th. Ground frosts, especially at some of the inland stations, were numerous, but as the average temperature was ahead of normal, conditions were again very favourable for agricultural and other outdoor work. In Scotland the month was everywhere a very dry one; wide areas had less than one-half, and considerable areas less than one-third of the normal rainfall, and various stations aggregates of less than 25 mm. At Edinburgh and Leith the 30th was the only day with as much as 4 mm. of rain. Owing to the anticyclonic conditions "radiation weather" was much in evidence in many localities, the range in temperature, especially about the 23rd and 24th, being very large. Thus, on the former day at Chelmsford the maximum temperature was 29.5a and the minimum 27.1a, showing a daily range of 2.4a; while on the 24th the readings at Raunds and also at Woburn were 29.4a and 27.1a, with a range of 2.3a. On the 10th the anticyclonic conditions gave rise to local fogs, principally at some of the East Coast stations, so that there were again some striking contrasts in temperature, the maximum on this day being only 27.7a at Yarmouth but 28.8a at South Farnborough. Associated also with these radiation effects were some very rapid changes in atmospheric humidity, which occurred at many places between the 22nd and the 24th, the variation between the early morning and the midday readings being very marked. These quick changes are illustrated by the readings at Benson-on-Thames, where at 7h. on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th the percentages of humidity were 95, 95, and 83, the corresponding values for 13h. being 51, 48, and 45. At Tenbury, Worcestershire, the humidity values at 9h. on these days were 82, 76, and 80, and at 15h. 37, 39, and 40.

The following notes are supplied by observers in various parts of the country:—*Allons Green, Northumberland*.—The month will be remembered as one of great dryness and general mildness. There were one or two sharp frosts, but they did no harm as the weather was so dry. Spring corn has nearly all been sown on a good seed-bed and harrowed in well. *Ardross Castle, Ross-shire*.—A fine open month for the time of year. *Bromyard, Worcestershire*.—Larch in leaf on 23rd, elm in flower and plum in blossom on 30th. *Cargen, Kirkcudbright*.—An ideal March with a very low rainfall, light-drying winds, a normal temperature, and only very slight frost. Marvellous progress with farm and garden work. *Carrigoran, Co. Clare*.—For this locality we have had exceptionally fine dry weather throughout until the 27th, the rainfall being 38 mm. below our normal and the rain-days nine below. On the first four nights we had very keen frosts, but great freedom from them after this. *Copdock, Ipswich*.—Trees, shrubs, flowers, etc., are all backward in spite of the mild and fairly bright month, no doubt retarded by the cold nights, there being more ground frosts than in any previous March during the past 20 years. *Dublin (City)*.—On the whole a fine dry month, at first cold, then warm from 18th to 24th, and finally unsettled and rainy. Although the mean temperature was 1.3a below that of February, it was 0.9a above the normal for March. *Fethard, Waterford*.—The first dry March here for years. First week was cold with hard frost. After that it was mild and dry and vegetation came forward very rapidly. Heavy rain fell during the last five days (27 mm., 27th to 31st). *Hurdlestown, Co. Clare*.—A very fine and dry month and very favourable for farm work. Nearly half the total rainfall fell on the 29th (28 mm.). *Kenninghall, Norfolk*.—Generally a fine cold month and very suitable for agriculture, the work on farms being from five to six weeks earlier than last year. *Morpeth*.—Remarkably good weather experienced during the last fortnight for preparing the seed-bed and getting in the corn. *Oundle*.—A very dry open month with lowest March rainfall in nine years. *Rochford, Worcestershire*.—Fine month, vegetation very forward. *Sheepstor, Devon*.—Although it came in with very deep snow it was the finest and pleasantest March

in 11 years. Gloriously fine 20th to 27th. *Totland Bay, Isle of Wight*.—Maximum temperature on 24th was 29.0-8a, or 8.2a above the normal, and, except for 29.1-4a on March 31st, 1914, was the highest recorded in March during the past 32 years. Full bloom on gooseberry bush on the 17th. *Wallington, Surrey*.—Plum tree in flower on the 23rd. On the 26th the "Times" reported that blackthorn hedges were in full bloom round Wells, Somerset, and on the 27th that several cuckoos had been seen in Dorset.

Air Pressure.—During the greater part of the month high pressure prevailed over or near the British Isles, and as shown by the map on p. 27 the isobaric gradient was slight, pressure ranging from a little above 1017.5 mb. over the major part of Great Britain to a little below 1014.5 mb. off the North-West of Ireland. Everywhere the monthly mean was above the normal, the excess being 9.7 mb. at Lerwick and 2.5 mb. at Falmouth and Cahirciveen (Valencia Observatory). Of the month's cyclonic disturbances, the most important of those which crossed the British Isles were one that came from the North of Ireland on the morning of the 28th and another which came from the South of the same country during the night of the 30th-31st. During the gale caused by the latter disturbance a gust of 32 m/s was recorded at Pendennis Castle and one of 27 m/s. at Scilly. Of the individual barometer readings, the highest was 1036 mb. at Lerwick on the 6th and the lowest, 978 mb., at Holyhead on the 31st.

Temperature.—In all districts the temperature was above the normal, the excess varying from 1.1a in Scotland North to 0.3a in the English Channel. Very commonly the highest readings occurred about the 23rd or 24th, the maximum being 29.5a at Bennington, Geldeston and Shrewsbury on the 23rd, and at Worksop on the 24th, the latter being the highest value recorded during March since 1876. The minimum was 25.7a at Braemar on the 2nd. At Redruth the maximum was 29.0a on the 24th, the highest March reading recorded for eighteen years. From the 24th to the 25th, at several stations there was a sharp fall in temperature, the maxima at Edgbaston, Little Massingham, and Skegness, for instance, on these two days being 29.2a and 28.1a respectively.

Precipitation.—In all districts the rainfall was below the normal, the deficiency in Scotland North being 59 mm. and in Ireland South, 15 mm. At some of the usually wet stations the deficiency was very large, being as much as 119 mm. at Glencarron and 107 mm. at Fort William and Princetown, Dartmoor. Falls of over 25 mm. in twenty-four hours were rare, the largest being 45 mm. at Beddgelert on the 27th, 38 mm. at Ballinacurra, Cork Harbour, on the 6th, 29 mm. at Penrhyn Quarries on the 27th, and 28 mm. at Hurdlestown, Co. Clare, on the 29th. **Absolute Droughts** were experienced at some of the Eastern and Southern stations of England, among them being Aylesbury, 4th to 26th; Claypole, Lincolnshire, 14th to 27th; Denton, Norfolk, 6th to 24th; Cambridge, Kenninghall (Norfolk), and Sevenoaks, 5th to 18th; and Canterbury, 3rd to 18th. **Partial Droughts** were still more numerous, in some cases extending from Feb. 25th to March 27th, among the stations experiencing them being Berkhamstead, Great Billing, Hastings, Hitchin, Margate, Raunds, Reading, Southampton and Woburn.

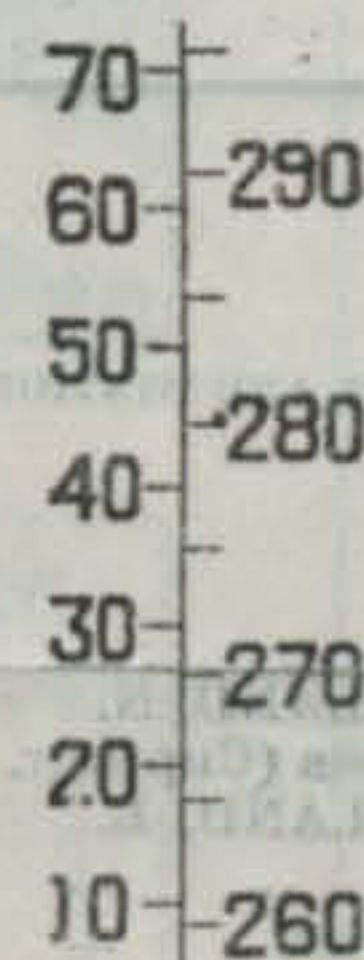
Sunshine.—Sunshine was very variable in amount, the differences from normal being equally varied. The sunniest districts were the English Channel, with a daily mean of 5.21 hr., and Ireland South, 4.56 hr., the least sunny being Scotland East, with only 2.51 hr. In England South-East there was an excess of 0.91 hr., and in Scotland East a deficiency of 1.00 hr. Very generally the sunniest days occurred on the 22nd, 23rd, or 24th, Penzance recording 11.5 hr. on the latter day and Falmouth and Haverfordwest, 11.4 hr.

Thunderstorms.—Thunderstorms occurred in London on the 29th, at Cahirciveen on the 30th, and at Nottingham and Spurn Head on the 31st. Thunder was heard at Acton and Wallington on the 29th and at Rauceby and Cullompton on the 31st.

Optical Phenomena.—Solar and lunar haloes were seen on several dates, mostly during the second half of the month. A parhelion was seen at Richmond, Surrey, on the 20th, and a sun-pillar at Totland Bay on the 12th. The **Zodiacal Light** was seen at Aberdeen on the 2nd; at Oxford on the 2nd, 8th, and 30th; at Eskdalemuir on the 12th and 13th; and at Cahirciveen on the 3rd.

Aurora.—On the 7th and 8th, aurora, in some cases described as brilliant, was seen from many parts of Scotland and northern and southern England. It was also seen in many parts of Scotland on the 1st and 2nd, faintly at Aberdeen on the 12th, and at Eskdalemuir on the 8th.

There was a slight **Earthquake** at Penrhyn Quarries on the 13th.



Temperature Scales.