

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL STATIONS AND VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS

PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE. To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses: ADASTRAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2; 120 GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH 2; 26 YORK STREET, MANCHESTER 1; 1 ST. ANDREW'S CRESCENT, CARDIFF; 80 CHICHESTER STREET, BELFAST; or through any bookseller.

VOL. 54. No. 4.

ISSUED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE

Price 1s. 0d. net, Post-free 1s. 1d.

Annual Subscription, including Annual Summary and Introduction, 15s. 0d. post free.

APRIL, 1937.—A dull month.

The month was distinguished by an exceptional deficiency of sunshine. Rainfall exceeded the average on the whole over England and Wales and Ireland but a large deficiency was registered over the northern half of Scotland. Mean temperature exceeded the average generally.

Unsettled weather prevailed for the most part for the first three weeks. During the opening days a depression moved from the south-west of Ireland along the English Channel and eventually filled up; rain fell at times and thunderstorms were reported locally in the west on the 4th. On the 5th and 6th a large depression was situated on the Atlantic, while a secondary depression moved north-north-east along our western seaboard and caused some rain, chiefly in the west. Subsequently the main depression also moved north-north-east to Iceland and on the 9th and 10th an associated trough extending southward to the south-west of Ireland moved slowly east across the British Isles. Unsettled weather persisted, with occasional rain and thunderstorms locally on the 7th and 10th. A good deal of fog developed during the period 4th-7th. A new depression approached south-west Ireland on the 11th, moved south-east to the Bay of Biscay and then slowly eastward over France. There was some scattered rainfall but good records of bright sunshine were enjoyed in many places on the 11th and 12th. A new Atlantic disturbance passed directly over the country between the 15th and 17th and caused general rainfall, and thunderstorms at numerous places in England on the 16th. A secondary depression which developed off the south-west of Ireland moved rapidly north-east to Denmark on the 20th.

Subsequently the anticyclone off our south-west coasts moved north-east and, from the 23rd to the end of the month, mainly anticyclonic conditions prevailed. Records of bright sunshine were somewhat variable but very good at times locally. Some rain occurred, however, in many places on the 27th, the fall in south-eastern districts being due to a depression over north Germany which moved south-west.

Pressure and Wind.—Mean pressure was generally below the average, by amounts ranging up to about 4 mb., except in the Shetlands where the mean value was slightly above the average. Strong winds occurred chiefly in the south-west and north on the 1st, 2nd, 16th, 17th and in the English Channel on the 20th also, when gusts of 87 m.p.h. and 78 m.p.h. were recorded at Pendennis Castle and The Lizard respectively. These stations and Scilly were the only anemometer stations where the mean speed for an hour exceeded 38 m.p.h. at any time during the month.

Temperature.—Mean temperature exceeded the average in all districts, the excess ranging from 1.4°F. in England, N.E. to 3.1°F. in England, S.W. and South Wales. An unusual feature was the occurrence of the highest readings in Scotland, where on the 30th, the temperature reached 70°F. or 71°F. at several stations. The grass minimum fell to 12°F. at Dalwhinnie and 17°F. at Braemar on the 26th, but the lowest readings at most stations in England and Wales were credited to the 1st.

The extremes for the month were:—(England and Wales) 68°F. at Newport (Isle of Wight) on the 23rd, 22°F. at Luton on the 1st; (Scotland) 71°F. at Forres, Logie Coldstone and Kelso on the 30th, 21°F. at Dalwhinnie on the 26th; (Ireland) 69°F. at Mallaranny on the 24th, 28°F. at Markree Castle on the 18th.

Precipitation.—The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the average for the period 1881-1915 was 122, the values for the constituent countries being England and Wales 152, Scotland 71 and Ireland 113.

In England and Wales the excess was almost general, less than the average being registered only at some rather isolated stations chiefly in the north and west. Over fairly large areas in the eastern half of England and at one or two stations in the south more than twice the average occurred. In Scotland less than half the average was received over most of the northern half of the country and less than 20 per cent. locally in Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty and Inverness-shire, while more than the average occurred only in the extreme south-west and in a few small isolated areas elsewhere. In Ireland less than the average was registered in some places, particularly in the west and north and locally in County Meath and County Dublin.

Local thunderstorms occurred on several days; for example, the 4th, 7th, 10th, 13th, 14th, 16th, 20th. During a thunderstorm at Henley-on-Thames on the 7th unusually large hail-stones fell; one picked up and measured by Mr. E. M. Page of Norman Avenue was approximately 1½ inches in diameter. Heavy rain fell in a thunderstorm at Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, on the 10th; the measurement for the day was 2.22 in. Heavy falls occurred at numerous other stations on the same day, and in Wales on the 16th.

Sunshine.—There was a general and exceptional deficiency of sunshine. The percentage of the average for the districts ranged from 47 per cent. in Ireland, N. to 77 per cent. in England, S.E. and Scotland, N. At numerous stations it was the dullest April in records going back in some instances to 1881. That was the case, for example, at Birr Castle and Aberdeen; at Stornoway the total equalled the previous lowest in a record which also goes back to 1881. At Armagh the daily mean, 1.64 hours, was only 33 per cent. of the average and 12 per cent. of the possible. The daily mean exceeded 5 hours only at a few stations in the Isle of Wight and at Hastings. Among the brightest individual days were 11th, 12th, 21st, 24th, 25th, 26th and 30th.

Fog.—Fog occurred locally on numerous days, mainly during the first half of the month and particularly during the periods 1st-9th and 13th-15th.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—The aurora was observed in Scotland on 7 days, and was seen in Buckinghamshire on the night of the 24th-25th. Relative humidity was very low at Totland Bay (Isle of Wight) on 25th, the reading at 9h., 28 per cent. being the lowest observed at that hour in a record covering 52 years. Halos were observed at Oxford on 10 days.