

SUMMARY of the OBSERVATIONS made at the STATIONS included in the DAILY and WEEKLY WEATHER REPORTS, for the CALENDAR MONTH,

MARCH 1891.

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General Summary.—The weather of March was cold and changeable, with frequent snow showers and occasional thunderstorms. Between the 9th and 11th strong Easterly gales were experienced over the south of England with heavy falls of snow, the storms, both of wind and snow, being of unusual violence over the south-west of England. Pressure was below the average on all but our south-west coasts; temperature was everywhere low; the winds were mostly from the North-westward; and rainfall, although slight over the central parts of the kingdom, was in excess of the normal over the northern and extreme southern districts. Bright sunshine was below the average over a considerable portion of England, but above it in Ireland and Scotland.

Pressure.—Mean for the month varied from a little below 29·55 ins. in the Shetlands to a little above 29·75 ins. in the east of England, and to rather above 29·90 ins. in the south of Ireland, the distribution being favourable for winds from the North-westward. In the south-west of our Islands the values did not differ materially from the average,* but in all other districts there was a somewhat decided deficit; and as the departure from the normal was greatest in the north, the mean gradient was considerably steeper than usual. *Highest* values were recorded over the southern portions of the kingdom between the 3rd and 5th, when the barometer rose to between 30·3 ins. and 30·6 ins. In the north, however, the maximum values were observed on the 18th, and were not much above 30·1 ins. *Lowest* values were registered in most cases on the 15th, when the barometer fell to a little below 28·9 ins. in Ireland and to below 29·4 ins. in most parts of Great Britain. *Range* was moderate.

Depressions were numerous and moved in all kinds of directions, but there were no cases in which the centres of disturbances passed immediately over the United Kingdom. The most important systems were those which travelled along the English Channel between the 9th and 11th, each of which occasioned heavy snowstorms over the west and south of England.

Anticyclones.—Two only were observed over our islands, and these were both of very moderate height. One of these extended over our western and northern coasts from the northward between the 17th and 20th, while the other spread over the United Kingdom from the westward at the close of the month.

Winds.—On our northern and eastern coasts the prevailing winds were mainly Westerly or North-westerly, but in the west and south there was a considerable admixture of breezes from the North-eastward. At Valencia Island the per-centage of winds from North-east was unusually high for the locality. Gales were very frequent, the numbers varying from 8 or 9 in the Channel to 14 at Spurn Head, 15 at Mullaghmore, and 17 at Aberdeen.

Temperature.—*Mean at Sea Level* varied from a little below 44° on our extreme south-west coasts to rather below 40° in some parts of central England, and the northern portion of central Ireland, and to a little below 35° in the north of Scotland. The general distribution was not widely different from that usually observed in March, but the actual values were everywhere below the average,* the deficit varying from rather less than 2° over the north of Ireland and the inland parts of England to about 3° in South Wales, and to between three and a half and five degrees in the north of Scotland. *Highest* readings were recorded mostly on the 1st, when the thermometer exceeded 60° in many parts of Great Britain; at Aberdeen it rose to 66° and at Loughboro to 67°. *Lowest* values were registered between the 9th and 12th when hard frost prevailed in most districts. At Glenlee the thermometer fell to 12°, at Cirencester and Strathfield Turgiss to 10°, and at Lairg to 1°. *Range* was in most cases very large, amounting as it did to 45° or more at several of the inland stations, to 47° at Durham and Cirencester, to 48° at Strathfield Turgiss and to 55° at Lairg. *Vapour Tension* varied from rather less than 0·18 in. in the Shetlands and east of Scotland to 0·23 in. at Valencia and to 0·24 in. at Scilly. *Relative Humidity* was above 85 per cent. in most places, but was little above 80 per cent. in London and the south of Scotland, and as low as 77 per cent. at Aberdeen.

Rainfall was less than an inch and a half over Wales, the central part of England, and the eastern and central parts of Ireland, but exceeded two inches and a half in the south of England. At Falmouth, where the heavy snowstorms of the 9th to 11th prevailed with exceptional severity, the total for the month was about four inches and a quarter. Over the western parts of Ireland and Scotland the amounts exceeded three inches, the largest of all being 8·1 ins. at Glencarron. Compared with the average* the values showed an excess in nearly all the more northern parts of the United Kingdom as well as in the extreme south of England, but a considerable deficiency elsewhere. The number of rainy days ranged between 15 and 20 in most districts, but in the north of Scotland there were from 25 to 27. At Blackpool the rainfall was locally very slight and infrequent, the total amount being only 0·47 in., which fell on 5 days.

Bright Sunshine was in excess of the average* over Ireland, Scotland, and the north of England, but was less than the normal in the south. At Douglas (Isle of Man) the per-centage of the possible duration was as high as 45, at Dublin 42, and at Valencia 40; over the eastern, central, and southern parts of England, however, the values were mostly below 30, and in London the per-centage was only 22.

* The averages employed are—*Pressure* and *Temperature* for 20 years, 1871–90; *Rainfall* for 20 years, 1866–85; *Bright Sunshine* for 10 years, 1881–90.