

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT.

OCTOBER 1887.

SECTION I.

GENERAL SUMMARY FOR THE MONTH.

THE month of October was characterised by a fairly regular alternation of fine and dry with showery and unsettled weather. Barometrical pressure was above the average in all parts of the kingdom, more especially in the south-western districts; temperature was considerably below the normal in England and Ireland, and slightly below it in Scotland; frost occurred frequently, and was at times very sharp at the inland stations. The prevailing winds were North-westerly in the northern and eastern districts, but variable in the west; rainfall was everywhere deficient. Bright sunshine was, upon the whole, fairly prevalent for the time of year, excepting at one or two of our northern and north-western stations, where the amount was decidedly small. Falls of sleet or hail and thunderstorms were experienced in many parts of our Islands about the middle of the month.

October 1-6.—The large anticyclone which was appearing off our western coasts at the close of September extended eastwards at the beginning of the period, and finally embraced nearly the whole of western Europe. Light or moderate breezes from the Northward and North-westward were at first experienced generally, but as the central portion of the high-pressure system drifted over us these gave way to calms or variable airs. At the close of the period, when the anticyclone began to move southwards and disperse, the wind became Westerly at the northern stations and blew hard on the Norwegian coast, while in other regions it varied greatly, owing to local disturbances. The weather was mostly dry, but a large amount of cloud prevailed in many districts, and temperature was therefore lower than is usually the case with anticyclonic conditions in early autumn. Between the 4th and 6th the daily maxima were below 60° in all districts, excepting the east of Scotland.

October 7-9.—The distribution of pressure during this interval was very variable, readings being highest in the north and north-west on the 8th and 9th, while a low-pressure system (No. XXXI.*) showed itself over the Iberian peninsula and the south-west of France. The wind consequently became Northerly to Easterly, and at our northern stations temperature fell.

October 10-15.—During this period barometrical pressure was mostly highest to the westward or south-westward, and lowest to the eastward of our Islands, so that the prevailing winds were from some Northerly point. Three depressions appeared over western Europe, and although one of these was shallow and of no great size, the other two were of considerable importance. The first (No. XXXI.*), which was observed between the 9th and 13th, advanced as a somewhat shallow system from Spain to France, and occasioned heavy falls of rain at several of our southern and eastern stations. On reaching Denmark the depression increased rapidly in depth, and on the 10th and 11th moderate to fresh gales were experienced over the North Sea and on many of the more exposed parts of our own coasts. Later on the disturbance began to fill up, but it was not until the 13th that its final dispersal took place over the Kattegat. The second depression of importance (No. XXXIII.*)

* See Section II. and Map 2 Plate XX., for the history and tracks of depressions.

travelled in a due southerly direction across Scandinavia and Denmark between the 13th and 15th, and occasioned a renewal of strong Northerly winds and gales in many parts of western Europe. The weather of the entire period was squally, unsettled, and showery, with falls of snow and sleet in nearly all parts of the United Kingdom, and occasional thunderstorms. Temperature everywhere was low for the time of year, especially on the 12th, 13th, and 14th, when sharp frosts were experienced in many places.

October 16-21.—The high-pressure system which had previously existed to the westward of our Islands now moved slowly south-eastwards, and a considerable improvement in the weather was reported. The strong Northerly winds hitherto noticed gradually subsided—they first backed to the south-westward and then veered to the north-westward again. On the 19th and 20th, when a large depression travelled eastwards across the north of Scandinavia, strong breezes or moderate gales from the latter quarters were experienced in all the more western and northern parts of the United Kingdom. The weather of the period was mostly fine and dry, but a good deal of fog prevailed at times over England, while showers were occasionally reported in the extreme north and north-west of the kingdom. The day temperatures at this time were considerably higher than those observed during the spell of cool Northerly winds, but the nights were exceedingly cold, sharp frosts being experienced in most places during the nights of the 21st-22nd.

October 22-23.—As the anticyclone travelled away to the south-eastward, the depressions in the far north spread further southwards, and varying Westerly winds were experienced in all parts of the United Kingdom. In force, however, they were light or moderate, and although cold showers were general over the northern districts, the weather in other localities remained fair and dry. On the 23rd, however, solar and lunar halos were seen at many of the English stations.

October 24-25.—A new high-pressure system now appeared off our extreme western coasts, and on the 24th a strong Northerly current of wind was again general over our Islands and their neighbourhood, with squalls of snow or hail at several of our more northern and eastern stations. On the following day, however, the anticyclone moved steadily across our Islands in an east-south-easterly direction, and the wind consequently subsided and backed to the westward and south-westward.

October 26-31.—During this period barometrical pressure was highest over central or southern Europe, and lowest in large cyclonic disturbances which moved along, to the northward of our Islands, in the direction shown by the arrow marked "A" in Map 2, Plate XX. The prevailing winds were therefore South-westerly, and the weather changeable and showery. The most important feature at this time, and indeed of the entire month, was the passage across our southern districts of the well-marked secondary depression No. XXXIV.* On the evening of the 29th, when the centre of this disturbance lay near the mouth of the Channel, the system was of no great depth, but in the course of the ensuing night, when it travelled in an east-north-easterly direction across the south of England, a considerable increase took place in its intensity, and severe gales with heavy rain were experienced at some of the Channel stations. The disturbance ultimately travelled away to Sweden, where it quickly dispersed. The weather of this period was rather cold for the time of year, the extreme minima for the month being observed in many localities on the morning of the 26th, when sharp frost prevailed over all the inland districts.

* See Section II. and Map 2 Plate XX., for the history and tracks of depressions.