

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT.

APRIL 1887.

SECTION I.

GENERAL SUMMARY FOR THE MONTH.

THE weather of April may be considered under several well-defined periods, in some of which the conditions were quiet, cold, and dry, while in the others they were unsettled and showery. At no time however, were they very severe. Pressure was in excess of the average for April, and on one occasion was very high over England; temperature was low—sometimes very low, and over the southern half of England its range was large; the wind was variable—usually light to moderate in force, the gales were few in number and of little strength; the air was dry; rainfall was short of the average except on the north-western coasts; and the amount of bright sunshine was large.

March 31–April 1.—During this brief interval the weather over the United Kingdom was rough, cold, and squally, with gradients favourable for Northerly winds, which blew with considerable strength during nearly the whole day. Over England and France the wind attained the force of a fresh gale, but in Ireland it was less strong. These conditions were brought about by a well-marked depression (No. XIII.*), which showed itself between the Shetland Islands and the west of Norway at 6 p.m. on March 31st, and, travelling steadily to the southward, reached Holland by the following morning; it finally filled up over the east of France and south-west of Germany on the evening of the same day. For a time the anticyclone (No. VIII.) previously lying over England moved westward to the Atlantic, and cold showers fell in all parts of the country, but as the cyclonic system filled up, the anticyclone again spread eastward, the wind subsided, the weather improved, and temperature fell fast.

April 2–5.—During this period the distribution of pressure over our Islands and their neighbourhood was partly cyclonic and partly anticyclonic; the gradients were favourable for North-westerly to Westerly winds, but were slight, and while some well-formed disturbances moved eastwards from the Atlantic to northern Europe, some very shallow secondary systems passed south-eastwards over the North Sea. Very little rain fell over the British Islands till early on the 4th, when a shallow depression, secondary to a larger depression in the far north, began to be developed near the mouth of the Moray Firth, and, passing southwards, again drew the wind into North on our coasts and caused cold showers in all districts (see Charts in the Daily and Weekly Weather Reports for time referred to). The system was, however, of too slight intensity to be included in the Table of Cyclonic Systems given in Section II. or for the track to be drawn on Map 2, Plate VIII.

April 6–11.—The distribution of pressure now became anticyclonic, the gradients being favourable for North-easterly winds at first, but gradually giving way to those for North-westerly and Westerly winds, as the system (No. IX.) passed over us. The North-easterly winds in front of the anticyclone were strong to a gale in force, on account of the simultaneous development of some small depressions over central and southern Europe, but the weather was dry, fair, and very cold for the time of year over the United Kingdom, while it was unsettled and showery

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

on the Continent; heavy rains fell in the south of France and subsequently in many parts of Italy. As these disturbances moved south-eastwards the gradients in our Islands became slighter, and the wind lulled, but it was not until 8 a.m. on the 9th that the central part of the anticyclone began really to advance over us from the north-westward. At this hour the centre still lay off the west of Scotland, after which the anticyclone became less regular in form and moved south-eastwards to Germany, whence a ridge extended north-westwards across the North Sea and the northern parts of Great Britain.

April 12-20.—This period also was mainly anticyclonic, the new system (No. X.) appearing first off our north-western coasts early on the 12th and advancing very slowly in a south-easterly direction, until, on the 16th, it covered nearly the whole of the British Islands and their neighbourhood. The system then moved very slowly to the southward, and decreased in intensity; on the 9th it had moved westwards to our south-western coasts, and finally passed away over Spain on the 22nd, at which time the highest readings recorded had decreased to 29·8 inches. The weather over our Islands was fine and dry within the limits of the system, but in its neighbourhood showery unsettled conditions prevailed at times, owing to low-pressure systems which appeared over the Continent. This was especially so over France on the 13th and 14th, over Scotland and the North Sea on the 14th, and over Germany on the 15th. On the 19th pressure began to give way over northern Europe, and showery weather again began in Scotland, and spread to all parts of the kingdom as the anticyclone dispersed.

April 21-28.—The distribution of pressure over the British Isles and north-western Europe now became cyclonic, and the gradients favourable for Southerly to Westerly winds, which accordingly became general, and at times blew strongly, with squally showery weather. Three distinct, but not deep, depressions (Nos. XIV. to XVI.*) advanced to our north-western and northern coasts during the interval, causing changeable, unsettled, showery weather, and at times strong South-westerly winds, while other shallow subordinate systems were developed further to the southward on the 26th and 27th, too insignificant to be included in Section II. or Map 2, Plate VIII. Temperature, however, was a little below the average, especially when in the rear of the depression Nos. XV. and XVI.; the wind veered to the North-westward for a time. The interval was consequently a very unsettled one, and terminated on the advance of a new anticyclonic area which advanced from the north-westward on the 30th. See the Report for May.

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