

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

MAY 1892.

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General Summary.—The weather during the early part of May was fair and dry, with a progressive rise of temperature in the daytime, but with cold nights. About the middle of the month, however, a decided change took place, and for the remainder of the time changeable showery conditions prevailed generally, with thunderstorms in many parts of England. Pressure differed little from the normal; temperature was mostly above the average; the winds were very variable; and rainfall, though greatly in excess in the northern districts and in Ireland, was very deficient in the south of England. Bright sunshine varied greatly in different localities, but was, as a rule, less prevalent than usual.

Pressure.—*Mean for the Month at 8 a.m.* ranged from a little above 30·0 ins. over the Channel and south of England to 29·85 ins. in the Hebrides. The general distribution showed a very fair agreement in type with the normal, but as the actual readings were a trifle above the average* over England and a trifle below it in Scotland and the north of Ireland, the mean gradient (for South-westerly winds) was rather more decided than usual. *Highest* readings occurred on the 11th and 12th, when the barometer rose to between 30·3 ins. and 30·5 ins. in all parts of the kingdom, the latter value being reached in the north-east of Scotland. *Lowest* readings were registered in most places on the 16th, when the barometer fell below 29·5 ins. on our north and north-east coasts generally, and below 29·3 ins. in the north of Scotland. In the south-western parts of the kingdom the lowest values (29·6 ins. to 29·7 ins.) were recorded on the 28th. *Range* was moderate.

Depressions were rather numerous in the latter part of the month, and travelled in various directions (see Map 2, Pl. V.). The deepest systems were those which traversed our northern coasts respectively on the 16th and the 19th–20th, but the disturbance of the 1st–5th was interesting on account of its rapid advance south-eastwards past our extreme south-west coasts, and its subsequent slower movement over the Bay of Biscay, where it finally dispersed.

Anticyclones.—Two large systems were observed during the earlier half of the month. The first of these advanced over our islands from the northward between the 5th and 7th, while the second spread over from the Continent a day or two later, and remained with us until the 13th. During the latter part of the month the highest pressures were observed over the Bay of Biscay, France, and Southern Europe.

Winds were very variable. On our eastern coasts the Easterly current was rarely observed, while in the west there were very few breezes from the Northward, but with these exceptions there was a fair representation of winds from nearly all points of the compass. Gales were rather frequent on the Irish coasts and in the English Channel; at Mullaghmore there were as many as 8, and at the North Foreland; on the west coasts of Great Britain scarcely any were reported.

Temperature.—*Mean at sea level* ranged from 55° and upwards over Middlesex, Surrey, and Hampshire, and the Channel Islands, and from about 54° at one or two stations in the south of Ireland to 47° and less in the Shetlands, and to 45° or less in the Hebrides. Over Ireland and England the general distribution was of a more pronounced summer type than is usual in May, but in Scotland it did not differ much from the normal. The mean values were, however, above the average* at all but our extreme northern stations, the excess being greatest (about 2°) over the inland parts of England. *Highest* readings were observed in Ireland and the north of Scotland on the 10th and 11th, but over Great Britain generally on the 28th or 31st, when the thermometer exceeded 80° at several of the English inland stations. *Lowest* readings were recorded mostly on the 6th and 7th over Great Britain, but a day or two later in Ireland, and at various times in the north of Scotland. Sharp frost occurred in most of the inland districts, and also on many parts of our northern coasts, the lowest shade readings being 24° at Cirencester, and 25° at Loughborough and Strathfield Turgiss. *Range* was large, especially over our midland and eastern counties where it amounted to considerably over 50°; at Cambridge the value was as high as 58°, and at Loughborough 56°. *Vapour Tension* ranged from between 0·32 in. and 0·34 in. on our southern coasts to 0·26 in. in the Shetlands and to 0·25 in. at Aberdeen. *Relative Humidity* was above 90 per cent. in the Hebrides and at Pembroke, but below 80 per cent. over the greater part of England, and as low as 68 per cent. in London.

Rainfall was in excess of the average* in Ireland, Scotland, and the north of England, the amounts at several of the Irish stations being more than twice as much as the normal. Over the central and southern parts of England, however, there was a considerable deficiency, and in the extreme south the aggregate fall was less than half the average. The largest amounts reported were 5·9 ins. at Fort Augustus and Glenlee, 5·8 ins. at Laudale, and 5·7 ins. at Glencarron, Brookeborough, and Stoneyhurst; the smallest were 0·2 in. at Dungeness, 0·3 in. at Hastings and North Foreland, and 0·5 in. at Stowell. At Hastings and Southampton there were only 4, and at Dungeness only 5 days with rain.

Bright Sunshine was below the average* at all but a few of the British stations, where there was a slight excess. The per-centage of the possible amount ranged from 66 at Guernsey, 58 at Jersey, and 52 at Hastings to less than 40 in most of the western and northern districts, and to only 27 at Fort Augustus.

* The averages employed are—*Pressure and Temperature*, the 20 years 1871–90; *Rainfall*, the 25 years 1866–91; *Bright Sunshine*, the 10 years 1881–90.