

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

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

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AUGUST, 1929. Dry in England and Wales. Wet in Scotland and Ireland.

August, 1929 was mainly fair and dry over most of England and Wales, and unsettled and wet over Scotland and Ireland. In most parts of the British Isles the mean temperature was within a degree of the normal. Sunshine aggregates exceeded the normal in the south-east of England but elsewhere there was in general a deficiency, particularly in Ireland and Scotland.

Conditions were very unsettled during the first week, depressions moving eastwards or north-eastwards across the British Isles. Temperature was generally low and rain fell frequently, heavy falls occurring on the night of the 2nd to 3rd and on the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th. By the 7th an anticyclone to the south-west of the British Isles had begun to spread north-eastwards and the tracks of the depressions were displaced farther north; the weather became much more settled in England especially in the east and south-east, practically no rain falling in the latter districts from the 8th to the 15th. By the 10th, day temperature had risen above the normal, and from the 12th to the 15th abundant sunshine was recorded. Meanwhile, in the north, unsettled conditions persisted with intervening bright periods; Stornoway recorded 13.5 hours sunshine on the 6th and 9.3 hours on the 7th, and Tiree 10.0 hours on the 6th and 9.0 hours on the 7th. At Stornoway, the 6th and 7th were the only rainless days of the month.

On the 16th a break occurred in the fair weather in the south-east. Rain was widespread on this date, heavy falls with thunder occurring locally. In Scotland heavy falls with some thunder continued to be experienced on the 17th. Subsequently for some days depressions were centred over or near Iceland and mainly westerly winds prevailed. Small secondary disturbances in this westerly current caused intermittent rain or showers, chiefly in northern and western districts. An anticyclone to the south-west of the British Isles brought fine, warm and dry weather to most districts on the 25th, over 12 hours' sunshine being recorded in several places (13.1 hours at Cahirciveen, 12.6 hours at Clacton and Felixstowe, and 12.2 hours at Holyhead). On the 27th an anticyclone over the Continent extended to England and Wales and, apart from rain and thunder in a few places on the 31st, fine, warm and dry weather prevailed over most of England until the end of the month. Over Scotland and Ireland, however, the weather remained unsettled, with heavy rain on the 27th, the night of the 27th to 28th, and on the 30th and 31st, and bright intervals on the 28th and 29th.

Pressure and Winds.—Over Scotland and Northern Ireland and the northern districts of England the pressure distribution was of a cyclonic type during the greater part of the month and in these districts the mean pressure for the month was below the normal. In the southern districts, where anticyclonic conditions often prevailed, the mean pressure exceeded the normal. Winds were mostly south-westerly to westerly and light to moderate in force. Strong winds occurred on a few days generally during the first week and about the 13th, 17th and 23rd, but seldom attained gale force. The highest recorded wind velocity was 54 mi/hr. in a gust at South Shields and Spurn Head on the 1st and at Holyhead on the 3rd.

Temperature.—The mean temperature for the month differed little from the normal in most districts. The first 8 days were rather cool, and night temperatures were sometimes low, 34° F. being reported from Braemar and Balmoral on the morning of the 6th and 35° F. at West Linton on the 2nd and 8th and at Castleton (Yorks) on the 8th. Subsequently day temperatures approximated to the normal and during the last five or six days exceeded the normal. The highest day temperatures were recorded in most districts during the latter period, temperature rising above 70° F. in many parts of England; in the east and south-east maximum temperatures of 80° F. and over were recorded locally on the 27th and again on the 31st when 90° F. was recorded in London and at Margate. The extreme temperatures for the month were:—(England and Wales): 90° F. at Camden Square (London) and Margate on the 31st and 35° F. at Castleton (Yorks W.R.) on the 8th and at Mayfield (Staffs) on the 16th. (Scotland): 73° F. at Kelso (Broomlands) on the 27th, and 34° F. at Balmoral and Braemar on the 6th. (Ireland): 75° F. at New Castle (Wicklow) on the 10th and 40° F. at Markree Castle on the 2nd, Newtownbarry on the 8th and at Kilkenny Castle on the 25th.

Precipitation.—Apart from a well-defined excess of rainfall in the north-west and extreme north of England, rainfall totals in England and Wales were almost everywhere below the normal. Over a broad area, including Norfolk and the greater part of Lincolnshire, and extending south-westwards to include parts of Berkshire and Hampshire, less than half the normal rainfall was recorded; Cambridge (Botanic Gardens) with 9 mm. had only 15 per cent. of the normal and Woburn with 11 mm. only 19 per cent. of the normal. In the south-east and east, apart from heavy falls associated with thunderstorms on the 16th, little rain fell after the first week. In a few places in the extreme south-east of England, rainfall totals exceeded the normal, largely due to the heavy falls on the 16th. At Tunbridge Wells where the month's total, 73 mm., amounted to 130 per cent. of the normal, as much as 38 mm., or rather more than half the total, fell on the 16th. Very heavy rain occurred over most of the south-west of England on the 3rd and during the night of the 3rd to 4th, amongst the largest measurements in 24 hours being 107 mm. at Princetown, 89 mm. at Winscombe (Somerset), 68 mm. at Arlington, 60 mm. at Dean Prior, 58 mm. at Newport and 57 mm. at Cardiff. In parts of the south-west of England totals exceeded the normal, mainly in consequence of the heavy falls on the 3rd and on the 5th. Heavy falls occurred in the north-west on the 23rd, e.g., 60 mm. at Stonyhurst.

The rainfall throughout Scotland was mainly above the average, the excess being greatest in northern, western and southern districts. Between the eastern slopes of the Grampians and the east coast from the Moray Firth to the Firth of Tay the rainfall was generally deficient, particularly in the valleys of the Dee and Don where the totals locally failed to reach 80 per cent. of the normal August figure. The heaviest individual daily falls were mostly confined to the second half of the month. At Crieff 50 mm. fell on the 17th, most of this within 1½ hours. Other heavy daily falls were 71 mm. at Roseneath on 4th, 54 mm. at Glasdrum on 28th, 53 mm. at Forsinard on 18th, 51 mm. at Corrie on 16th and 51 mm. at Ardgour on the 28th. At Portree it was the wettest August for at least 19 years, the month's total being 193 mm.

In Ireland, rainfall totals were below the normal in the south-east, but over the greater part of the country there was an excess, and over most northern and western districts totals reached or exceeded one and a half times the normal. Heavy falls were recorded on the 3rd, 5th, 6th, 16th, 23rd and 30th; in Dublin almost two-thirds of the month's total was accounted for by falls of 25 mm. on the 3rd, 14 mm. on the 5th and 21 mm. on the 6th.

The general precipitation of the British Isles expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881–1915 was 104; the values for the constituent countries were: England and Wales 79, Scotland 139 and Ireland 119.

Thunderstorms occurred on several days in some parts of the country, notably on the 6th, 16th and 31st. There were remarkably few occurrences of hail.

Sunshine.—Sunshine aggregates exceeded the normal in coastal districts in the south-east of England, but in most places there was a deficiency. Representative totals for districts expressed as a percentage of the normal for the period 1881–1915 ranged from 105 per cent. in England S.E. to 74 per cent. in Ireland N. Excellent sunshine records, however, were obtained on many days, notably in the north and west on the 2nd, in several districts on the 7th, 8th and from the 12th to the 15th, in the south on the 17th, widely on the 18th and 25th and in many parts of England, particularly in the east and south-east, during the last five days of the month.

Fog.—Fog occurred locally in several districts during the last week of the month.

Miscellaneous Phenomena.—Aurora was observed at Kirkwall (Orkneys) on the 2nd, and at Lerwick, Aberdeen, Braemar, Edinburgh and Inchkeith on the 14th. At Oxford, observations were made of a sun pillar and moon pillar on the 15th and of a solar halo with parhelia on the 31st.