

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

MAY 1889.

(Issued as a Supplement to the Weekly Weather Report, 1889.)

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General Summary.—The weather of May was mild and changeable. Pressure was below the average, and except in Scotland, was very uniform. Depressions were few in number and shallow. Temperature was in excess of the average, especially over Scotland, where the difference was as great as 6° ; the winds were light in force and variable in direction. Rainfall was large except over the extreme northern and north-eastern parts of Great Britain and Ireland; but the amount of bright sunshine was also large, especially at the Scotch stations.

Pressure.—*Mean for the Month, at 8 a.m.*, varied from 29·89 ins. at Sumburgh Head, 29·85 ins. at Aberdeen, and 29·83 ins. over the south-eastern counties of England, to about 29·73 ins. over the north-western parts of Ireland; the gradients were therefore slight, and favourable for Southerly to South-easterly winds over the western and northern parts of the Kingdom, but for very variable breezes in the south. It was rather higher than that for April in most places, but was below the average for May in the 20 years 1861–80, by about 0·2 in. over Ireland, 0·15 in. over the south-east of England, and rather more than 0·1 in. over Scotland. *Highest* values were recorded very generally on the 20th or 21st, when a high-pressure system of little intensity and irregular form stretched from Russia across the Baltic and North Sea to England and the Bay of Biscay. *Lowest* occurred between the 1st and 3rd, when a well-marked depression lay off our south-west coasts, and a “V”-shaped secondary system stretched eastwards over England. *Range* was very small, less than 0·7 in. in most places.

Depressions were very shallow, few in number, and their movements as a rule were ill-defined. The only well-marked systems were those observed during the earlier part of the month, the movements of which are shown on Map 2, plate v.

Anticyclones.—The only well-defined anticyclonic system which came within the area of our Islands during the month was that of May 20th–21st, and this was of little height (or intensity). As a rule pressure was highest over northern and south-western Europe, while shallow low-pressure systems, of little depth, prevailed over the British Islands, and central Europe.

Wind was mainly South-easterly and Easterly at our northern stations, South-westerly and Westerly in the west and south-west, and alternately South-westerly and North-easterly in the south-east. (See Map 1.) Its force was slight, gales being almost entirely absent except in the south-west and west, and even there they were of little force. Calms were numerous, especially at Nairn, Parsonstown, Sumburgh Head, and Shields.

Temperature.—*Mean, at Sea Level*, ranged from between 56° and 57° over the midland and the southern counties of England, from 55° and more over central Scotland, and from 54° and more over the inland and eastern parts of Ireland, to less than 49° in the Shetlands, to about 50° off our north-east coasts and at the mouths of St. George's and English Channels, and to between 51° and 52° off the extreme western coast of Ireland and the east of England. The summer type of distribution was unusually strongly developed for May, and the crowding in of the isotherms, shown in Map 3, plate v., was due to the cold but light Easterly winds which prevailed so generally at the coast stations, while that in the south-west was due to the winds from the south-westward. Temperature was much higher than that for April in all regions, and exceeded the normal for May by about 2° over central Ireland, 3° over the greater part of England, and by nearly 6° over the inland parts of Scotland. *Highest* values were recorded over Great Britain very generally between the 21st and 23rd, but at some of the extreme eastern and south-eastern coast stations they were recorded on the 24th and 25th. In the west and south of Ireland however, the greatest heat was recorded on the 27th. *Lowest* values were registered very generally between the 1st and 3rd, or (e.g., over the south of England) on the 10th or 11th. *Range* was considerable, the largest being 44° at Loughborough, 45° at Cambridge, 42° at Hillington and Bawtry, and 41° in London. *Vapour Tension* was as high as 0·35 to 0·39 in. on the southern and eastern coasts of England, 0·36 in. at Stornoway, and exceeded 0·34 in. over the Irish Sea and on the north and north-west coasts of Ireland; it was lowest, 0·31 in., at Leith, and 0·32 in. at Shields, Hawes Junction, and Parsonstown. *Relative Humidity* was high—90 per cent. or more at many of the coast stations, and below 80 per cent. at Liverpool Observatory only.

Rainfall was heavy except in the extreme north and north-east of Great Britain and the extreme north-east of Ireland. The largest aggregates were 6·6 ins. at Valencia, 5·0 ins. at Killarney, 4·9 ins. at Rothamsted, 4·8 ins. at Markree, 4·6 ins. at Mullaghmore, and 4·4 ins. at Stornoway, Laudale, and Glenlee; in several other places it exceeded 4 ins. The smallest amounts were 0·8 ins. at Sumburgh Head, Wick, Lairg, and Nairn.

Bright Sunshine.—Assuming that the total possible duration of sunshine during the month at each station be represented by 100, then the actual values recorded were 43 at Douglas, 42 at Jersey and Hastings, 41 at Geldeston, 39 at Falmouth, Newton Reigny, and Aberdeen, 37 at Pembroke and Hillington, 36 at Braemar and Plymouth, 35 at Blackpool and Valencia, and 33 at Dublin; in Scotland the values were much above the average for May.