

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT.

OCTOBER 1885.

SECTION I.

GENERAL SUMMARY FOR THE MONTH.

THE weather during the month of October was exceedingly dull, wet, and unsettled over nearly the whole of the kingdom. Pressure has been low, and very unsteady; depressions have been numerous and complex, and they have appeared in all parts of our area; their movements have been unusually variable both in direction and rate, and while some systems have dispersed soon after reaching us, others have been formed within our area and become deep before leaving it. Temperature has been about 4° or 5° below the average; and rainfall has been in excess, except over the north-east of Great Britain and the south-west of Ireland. There were as many as 28 rainy days on our east coasts and in the Scilly Islands. Bright sunshine has been deficient, especially over the north-west of England.

October 1-6.—The dominant pressure systems during this portion of the month were cyclonic, and the types of distribution south-westerly to westerly—a continuation, in fact, of the conditions which set in towards the close of September. The gradients were often steep, and favourable for winds from between South-west and North-west. The weather was showery, and, as a rule, rather cold, and thunderstorms occurred in several localities. Two important depressions (Nos. LVII. and LVIII.*) passed by our northern coasts during this interval, the first bringing gales and strong winds from the Southward and South-westward, while in the other the range of direction was larger. In the rear of this second system (which was accompanied by a well-marked subsidiary) the barometer rose rapidly, and the wind veered almost to North, while the temperature fell fast, and the rainfall was very heavy.

October 7-14.—Cyclonic systems continued to traverse our area, but they now moved from a more westerly or north-westerly direction than those hitherto experienced, and their winds, though occasionally South-westerly, were on the whole from points much more Northerly than those experienced between the 1st and 6th. Temperature consequently decreased still further, and, after one fair day, cold rains again fell very generally, and lightning was seen over the south-west of England. The principal depression (No. LIX.*), which appeared over our northern districts during this time was followed closely by another well-marked disturbance (No. LIXA.*), the centre of which passed over the southern parts of the kingdom (see the charts in the Daily and Weekly Weather Reports for the 10th). The main disturbance then filled up, while the subsidiary moved on to Germany, and, uniting with some other systems, formed over Central Europe a vast and complex low-pressure area, having three distinct minima, which lay, at 8 a.m. on the 11th, one over Posen, another near Cassel, and a third (and deeper one) over the northern parts of the Adriatic. Over the United Kingdom, the North Sea, and France the gradients were northerly, and winds from that quarter were consequently prevalent. With the information at present available it is impossible to say precisely what were the movements of these three minima, but at 8 a.m. on

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

the 12th (the gradients over our Islands and their neighbourhood being still northerly), a well-formed minimum (No. LX.*), appeared over the north of Denmark, and instead of moving eastwards, as its predecessors had done, it commenced travelling slowly to the south-westward, and after producing Northerly gales and cold showers on our north-eastern coasts dispersed suddenly off the north-eastern coast of Norfolk on the night of the 14th. The barometer then rose everywhere, and easterly gradients were established over the whole of our Islands and the North Sea.

October 15-16.—During this interval pressure was highest over the northern and lowest over the southern parts of our area. At 8 a.m. on the 15th, readings varied from a little above 30·4 ins. off our north-western coasts, and also over the southern parts of Scandinavia and the Baltic to 29·6 ins. over the extreme south of France, and over the whole of north-western Europe the barometer was rising briskly. The weather in our Islands was fine, but not very cold, and the winds were South-easterly to North-easterly. Over the Mediterranean, however, a large and somewhat deep depression had appeared (see the Paris and Italian bulletins for this time), the centre of which had advanced rapidly in a northerly direction from the central parts of Northern Africa. The eastern parts of this depression lay over Corsica and Sardinia, and, as its centre advanced northwards the system spread eastwards over Switzerland, Austria, and Germany (where it appears to have developed some serious subsidiary disturbances), and finally broke up into two parts. The first and shallower of these advanced northward over the eastern parts of France and western parts of Germany, but on reaching the neighbourhood of Metz dispersed, after causing a definite increase of Easterly wind, and several hours of rain not only over the north-east of France, but also over our south-eastern counties, where the appearance of the sky was, for a time, very threatening. The more southern and deeper portion took a north-westerly course, and travelling along the foot of the Pyrenees reached the Bay of Biscay, about 100 miles to the westward of Lorient, at 8 a.m. on the 16th, whence it passed away to sea, outside our area, during the day. One effect of these disturbances was the production of North-easterly to South-easterly gales and rains at the mouth of the Channel and over Brittany, which subsequently moderated, with a clearing sky, falling temperature, and increasing pressure.

October 17-20.—During this period the dominant pressure distribution was anticyclonic. Two systems prevailed, one having its centre to the north-westward of our Islands, while the other lay over the south-eastern parts of France and Italy and the Mediterranean. These were joined by a "col." which lay over Great Britain, Belgium, and the northern parts of France. (See Daily and Weekly Reports for this date.) Thus, while light North-easterly winds prevailed at our northern and eastern stations, Easterly and variable breezes prevailed in the west of our Islands, and South-easterly in the west of France. Temperature fell, and though a good deal of bright sunshine was reported, there were at first occasional showers, except in the south-west. The Northern anticyclone now moved along our western coasts, and spread south-eastwards over the United Kingdom to Belgium, while in the south of France pressure gave way, and thus it came about that at 8 a.m. on the 20th the readings varied from a little above 30·1 inches over the south-westerly parts of Ireland to 29·4 inches in the south-east of Sweden, and to 29·6 inches at Toulon. The wind was then light from North, except in the west of Ireland; temperature was low, the weather gloomy, and slight showers still fell in the east. The anticyclone in the west then gave way, and depressions once more advanced over us from the Atlantic.

October 21-29.—The distribution of pressure now became cyclonic again, and the type complex,—gradients for Easterly winds being prevalent over our Islands, while those over France were favorable for winds from the West. Two depressions appeared over the Channel; the first arrived off the south of Ireland from the westward early on the 21st, and moving slowly to a position between Havre and the Isle of Wight, dispersed there during the night of the 22nd. The second was formed between Penzance and the coast of Brittany

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

early on the 23rd. Thence it moved north-eastwards somewhat slowly, and after growing deeper for a time, finally broke up in the neighbourhood of Stockholm on the 26th. Cold rains, with some sleet or snow, and strong cyclonic winds (chiefly North-easterly and Northerly on our coasts), were felt with these disturbances. On the night of the 25th, however, a change occurred, the barometer rising steadily over the southern districts, and falling in the north, while a new depression (No. LXIV.*) advanced over Scotland. The wind, therefore, backed round to South-west, and increased considerably in force, with rising temperature, and rain again fell in all parts of the kingdom. After the centre had reached the Skager Rack, a new system approached Scotland from the north-westward. An extensive trough was then formed, covering the whole of Scotland, the northern parts of the North Sea, and the south of Scandinavia; in this the two minima lay, and the whole system moved south-eastwards to the Baltic and North Germany. The wind veered round from West to North over our Islands as this change took place, and blew hard for a time, with low temperature, and on the whole drier weather, the gale lulling as the centre passed away, until on the night of the 29th calms prevailed almost all over England.

October 30–31.—The quiet weather did not last for more than a few hours, for at 8 a.m. on the 30th (pressure being then highest, and very uniform, in the east) a new and complex disturbance reached the west of Ireland. (See the charts in the Daily and Weekly Reports.) It apparently consisted of two parts, one of which moved northwards in about the direction indicated by the broken arrow marked LXV. on Map 2, Plate XX., causing Southerly and South-easterly breezes in Scotland, while the other (and deeper) part (No. LXVA.) took an easterly course, reaching the mouth of the Bristol Channel at 6 p.m. of the 30th, and the south-east of England next morning. Here it began to fill up, and turning suddenly to the southward dispersed entirely over the north-east of France on November 1. The weather which it brought to England and the Channel was again rough, cold, and very wet, strong North-east to North-west winds being felt everywhere, and gales in the West, with heavy rains. A strong Easterly gale blew for some hours on the coast of Norfolk during the afternoon of the 31st.

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