

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

MAY 1890.

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General Summary.—The weather of May was very changeable and unsettled, especially during the earlier half of the period. Thunderstorms occurred on several occasions at the English stations, and snow showers were experienced in the extreme north of Scotland on the 30th. Pressure was below the average; temperature was in excess excepting in the south; and the winds, although somewhat variable, were as a rule from some Northerly or Easterly point. Rainfall was less than the average in the south-east of England and in isolated parts of Ireland and Scotland, but more elsewhere; bright sunshine was, upon the whole, fairly abundant.

Pressure.—*Mean for the Month at 8 a.m.* varied from a little above 29·86 ins. in the north-east of Scotland, 29·85 ins. over the Midland counties of England, and from about 29·84 ins. on the east coasts of England to 29·75 ins. in the Scilly Islands and to a little below 29·74 ins. in the south-west of Ireland. The distribution was therefore of an abnormal character, the mean gradient being favourable for winds from the Southward and South-eastward instead of those from a Westerly point. The values were below the average* in all places, the deficit varying from less than one tenth of an inch in the north and east of Scotland and from about 0·15 inch in the north and east of England and the north of Ireland, to about 0·23 inch in the extreme south-west of our Islands. *Highest* values were recorded very generally on the 22nd, when the barometer rose to 30·3 ins. and more in the south-east of England and to 30·1 ins. and more in all other parts of the kingdom. *Lowest* values were observed as a rule on the 11th, when the mercury fell to between 29·4 ins. and 29·6 ins. in all parts of the kingdom.

Depressions were fairly numerous, but of no great depth. Their centres travelled as a rule in a northerly and north-westerly direction, but on the 9th and 10th a small disturbance moved westwards from Belgium across the south of England to our south-west coasts, while on the 4th and 5th a shallow system, after advancing eastwards to the Channel Islands, re-curved and travelled away again in a westerly direction to the Atlantic.

Anticyclones.—Two only were observed, and these did not appear until the concluding part of the month. The first spread northwards from France on the 21st and ultimately passed away to the northward of our Islands. The second extended over us from the north-westward on the 27th, and finally moved in a southerly direction to France and the Bay of Biscay.

Wind varied greatly in direction, but at the majority of our stations there was a slight preponderance of breezes from the Eastward and Northward. At Scilly, however, winds from between South and West were fairly numerous, while at Sumburgh Head, Shields, Holyhead, and Valencia there was a large proportion of calm. Scarcely any gales were reported in the northern, eastern, and southern parts of the kingdom, but at Pembroke there were five and at Mullaghmore eight.

Temperature.—*Mean at Sea Level* varied from between 55° and 57° in some parts of our southern counties, and from 54° and more over the inland parts of England generally, to 51° or less over central Scotland and the north-west of Ireland, and to 49° and less in the Shetlands. The general distribution did not differ greatly from the normal, but the values were above the average,* excepting in isolated parts of our southern districts, where they were either equal to or a little below the normal. *Highest* values were recorded as a rule between the 22nd and 24th, when the thermometer rose to 70°, or more, very generally, and to 75°, or more, at several of the inland stations. *Lowest* values were observed either at the very commencement or at the extreme end of the month, when slight frost was experienced in many parts of the country. *Range* was somewhat large, especially in the more central districts; at Cambridge it amounted to 44°, at Braemar to 45°, and at Llandoverly to 48°. *Vapour Tension* ranged from 0·36 inch at Hurst Castle and 0·35 inch at Stornoway, Scilly, and Jersey to 0·29 inch at Aberdeen and 0·28 inch at Hawes Junction. *Relative Humidity* was as high as 95 per cent. at Stornoway and 90 per cent. at Pembroke. At Belmullet, however, the per-centage was only 78, at Cambridge 75, and in London 74, while at Liverpool it was as low as 72.

Rainfall varied greatly in different localities. In the south-east of England, and in some parts of Ireland and Scotland the total fall was less than an inch and a half, the smallest amounts of all being 0·58 in. at Stornoway, 0·95 in. at Mullaghmore, and 1·0 in. at Dungeness. In the extreme south-west of the kingdom, however, the aggregate fall was much larger, Falmouth reporting 4·8 ins., Roches Point 5·1 ins., and Valencia 5·2 ins. In the localities first named the amounts were considerably less than the average,* but in nearly all other places there was a marked excess, the fall at Scilly being more than twice the normal.

Bright Sunshine was fairly abundant, excepting in Scotland, where the values were a little below the average. The per-centage of the possible amount of duration at Dungeness and Jersey was as high as 53, and at Geldeston 54, while at Hastings it reached 56. At Durham, however, the per-centage value was only 31, while at Fort Augustus it was as low as 20.

* The averages employed are—*Pressure* and *Temperature* for 20 years, 1861–80; *Rainfall* for 20 years, 1866–85.