

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

DECEMBER 1895.

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General Summary.—The weather of December was extremely unsettled, with frequent gales from the Westward during the first half of the month, and with a prolonged gale from the South-eastward between the 21st and 25th. Snow or sleet was experienced on various occasions, principally in the north. Thunder and lightning occurred in many places during the early part of the month. Pressure was low; temperature was above the average; the winds were chiefly from the Westward; rainfall varied in amount in different places, but was, as a rule, in excess of the normal; bright sunshine was deficient.

Pressure.—*Mean at 8 a.m.* ranged from 29·85 ins. at Jersey and 29·80 ins. and upwards over the Channel and south of England generally to 29·6 ins. and less in the north and north-west of Scotland. The general distribution was in fair agreement with the normal, but the actual values were everywhere low, the difference from the average* being greatest on our western coasts, where it ranged between 0·16 in. and 0·20 in. *Highest* readings occurred on the 27th, when the barometer ranged from 30·4 ins. and upwards over the eastern and central parts of Great Britain to 30·1 ins. in the extreme south-west of Ireland. *Lowest* readings were observed, as a rule, on the 15th or 16th, when the mercury fell below 28·8 ins. at several of our northern stations, and below 29·1 ins. in all but the south-eastern parts of the kingdom. In the extreme north, however, lower readings (28·5 ins. to 28·7 ins.) were recorded on the 5th or 6th. *Range* was moderate in the south, but rather large in the north.

Depressions.—During the early part of the month several large depressions travelled eastwards or south-eastwards across Scandinavia, their secondaries advancing in some cases directly over our Islands. Later on, pressure became high over northern Europe, and on the 21st a deep depression appeared off the south-west of Ireland, the system remaining almost stationary in that position for four or five days. On the 25th, however, the depression began to fill up, and between that date and the 27th it moved away in a south-easterly direction across the Bay of Biscay and France to the Mediterranean.

Anticyclones.—The only occasions on which an anticyclone was observed over any portion of our Islands were: (1) between the 1st and 2nd, and again on the 8th, when a high-pressure system spread temporarily over our southern coasts from the southward; and (2) between the 18th and 20th and the 26th and 27th, when a similar movement took place from the northward.

Winds.—During the earlier half of the month the winds were chiefly from the Westward, but in the latter part of the time they were mostly Easterly or South-easterly. Gales were unusually prevalent in the west and north, the number of days with a wind force of 7 or more being as large as 18 at Pembroke, 16 at Donaghadee, and 15 at Aberdeen. The South-easterly gale of the 22nd–26th was rather severe in the west and north, and occasioned a very high sea along the north and east coasts of Ireland and Scotland.

Temperature.—*Mean at Sea Level* ranged from 49° at Scilly, 47° at Jersey, and 45° or more on our extreme south-west coasts generally, to 40° and less over central Ireland, 39° and less over the northern and central parts of England, and to between 37° and 38° over central Scotland. The general distribution was fairly normal, but the actual values were above the average* in all localities excepting Wales and the central and southern parts of Scotland, the excess being rather large in the south-west of England. *Highest* readings were recorded on the 4th or 5th, excepting at the south-western stations, where they occurred on the 29th or 30th; in many parts of England and the south of Ireland the thermometer exceeded 55°, the highest reading of all being 58° at Cambridge and Killarney. *Lowest* readings were observed, as a rule, between the 20th and 22nd, but at many places in the south of England they occurred on the 11th; at some of the northern and central stations the thermometer fell slightly below 20°, while at Braemar it went as low as 12°. *Vapour Tension* ranged from 0·31 in. at Scilly, and 0·28 in. on our extreme south-west coasts generally, to 0·20 in. or less in the east of Scotland, and in some isolated parts of England. *Relative Humidity* varied from 96 per cent. at Cambridge and 93 per cent. at Wick, Ardrossan, and Donaghadee, to 85 per cent. at Sumburgh Head, Nairn, Valencia, Jersey, and Yarmouth.

Rainfall was rather deficient in Wales and the west of Scotland, as well as at many stations in the eastern and central parts of England. Elsewhere the amount was more than the average,* the excess being considerable in the south of Ireland and the south-west of England, where repeated heavy falls occurred between the 21st and 26th. The largest aggregates recorded during the month were 9·9 ins. at Falmouth, 9·4 ins. at Killarney, and 9·0 ins. at Roche's Point; the smallest being 1·4 ins. at Yarmouth, 1·5 ins. at Cambridge, and 1·6 ins. at Spurn Head, Stamford, and Geldeston. The heaviest falls in 24 hours were: (1) in Scotland on the 4th, when 1·9 ins. fell at Glenlee, and 1·8 ins. at Fort Augustus and Glencarron; and (2) in the south-west of our Islands on the 23rd, when 2·3 ins. fell at Falmouth, 1·9 ins. at Killarney, and 1·8 ins. at Roche's Point. At the last-mentioned station the aggregate for the five days, 21st–25th, was as much as 6·5 ins., or an inch and a half more than the average for the whole month.

Bright Sunshine was deficient, especially in the extreme south-west of England and the Channel Islands. The per-centage of the possible duration varied from 20 at Westbourne, and Valencia to 3 at Blackpool, and to only 1 at Fort Augustus and Manchester (Oldham Road), less than 10 per cent. being recorded at several stations in the northern and central parts of Great Britain, and also at Guernsey.

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