

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

JANUARY 1897.

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General Summary.—For the first week or so the weather was fairly mild, with heavy rain in many of the southern and south-western districts. Later on, however, the conditions became essentially wintry, with sharp frost in most places, and with frequent snow, especially in the northern and eastern parts of the kingdom. Thunder and lightning occurred at Scilly on the night of the 7th, in several parts of England and Ireland on the 22nd, and over our south-eastern counties on the 25th. Pressure was low over England, but high in Ireland and Scotland; temperature was considerably below the average; the winds were rather variable, but mainly from the Eastward or North-eastward in the west; rainfall was slight, especially in the west of Scotland; bright sunshine was rather deficient excepting in the west.

Pressure.—*Mean at 8 a.m.* was singularly uniform, the values ranging between 29·90 ins. and 29·92 ins. in all districts, excepting the south and east of England and the extreme north of Scotland, where they decreased to about 29·87 ins. Over England the readings were below the average,* the deficit amounting at the Channel stations to about 0·12 in. In Ireland and Scotland, however, the mean was exceeded;—by about 0·1 in. in the north of Ireland, and by over 0·2 in. in the Shetlands and Hebrides. *Highest* readings were observed either on the 1st, the 14th, or the 20th, when the barometer rose to 30·3 ins. and upwards in nearly all parts of the United Kingdom. In the west of Ireland the readings on the 14th were above 30·4 ins., while in the extreme north of Scotland the barometer on the 20th exceeded 30·5 ins. *Lowest* readings were observed over the kingdom generally on the 30th or 31st, when the barometer fell to between 29·2 ins. and 29·4 ins. in most places. In the extreme south-west of Ireland, however, on the 6th, and in the north and east of Scotland, on the 24th or 25th, the barometer fell slightly below 29·0 ins. *Range* was moderate.

Depressions.—Early in the month several depressions arrived off our extreme south-west coasts, their movements being, however, too irregular to be shown on Map 2, Plate I. During the latter part of the time the disturbances appeared mostly to the northward and eastward of our Islands, and moved southwards over the neighbouring part of the Continent.

Anticyclones.—On the 1st a large anticyclone extended over the United Kingdom from the southward, the system soon moving away, however, to the northern and eastern parts of the Continent, where it was located for some time. After the 13th a new one spread in from the Atlantic, and gradually became united with the former system, the combined area remaining in existence until about the 20th.

Winds varied greatly in direction, the Easterly and North-easterly currents being, however, unusually prevalent on our western coasts. Gales were somewhat rare in the south, but were very numerous on our more northern coasts, the number of days being as large as 13 at Aberdeen and 12 at Donaghadee.

Temperature.—*Mean at Sea Level* ranged from 43°·6 in the Scilly Islands, and from 40° and upwards on our extreme south-west coasts generally, to 36° and less over central Ireland, and to 34° and less in some parts of central England and the north of Scotland. The general distribution was, therefore, in very close agreement with the normal, but the actual values were below the average,* the deficit amounting to 3° or more in many places, and to 4° or more in some parts of the south of Ireland and the extreme north of Scotland. *Highest* readings were observed, as a rule, between the 1st and 3rd, but at some of the central and southern stations in England, they occurred on the 7th or 10th. Over a considerable portion of the kingdom the thermometer failed to reach 50°, and at several places in the north of England ~~and the south of Ireland~~ it did not touch 45°. *Lowest* readings occurred at various times in the different districts, but mostly between the 17th and 19th, or between the 24th and 26th; at many of the western and northern stations the thermometer fell below 20°, the lowest readings of all being 13° at Braemar, and 15° at Stowell, Glenlee, and Llandovery. *Vapour Tension* ranged from between 0·22 in. and 0·24 in., on our extreme south-west coasts, to 0·18 in. or less over the central parts of England and the east of Scotland. *Relative Humidity* varied from 96 per cent. at York and Cambridge, and 95 per cent. at Wick, Shields, and Dungeness, to 83 per cent. at Valencia (Ireland) and 82 per cent. at Scilly.

Rainfall was less than the average* at all but a few scattered stations in our northern and eastern districts, the deficit being in most places very considerable. In the west of Scotland the weather was exceptionally dry, the total rainfall at Laudale and Glencarron being only about one-fifth, and at Fort William little more than one-sixth, of the average. The largest aggregates reported were 4·0 ins. at Roche's Point and 3·7 ins. at Killarney and Falmouth; the smallest being 0·9 in. at Leith, 1·0 in. at Ardrossan, and 1·1 ins. at Fort Augustus and Malin Head. Owing to frequent snow showers, the number of days with a measurable quantity of precipitation was in many places very large, the highest numbers being 25 at Aberdeen and 24 at Sumburgh Head, Alnwick Castle, and Hillington.

Bright Sunshine.—The duration was in excess of the average* at most of the western stations, as well as in the north of Scotland, and in some parts of the north of England; elsewhere, however, there was a slight deficiency. The per-centage of the possible amount ranged from 37 at Parsonstown, and 33 at Pembroke, to 9 at Edinburgh, 8 at Manchester (Prestwich), and 7 in London.

* The averages employed are—*Pressure* and *Temperature* for the 25 years, 1871–95; *Rainfall* for the 30 years, 1866–95; *Bright Sunshine* for the 15 years 1881–95.