MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT.

AUGUST 1885.

SECTION I.

General Summary for the Month.

The weather of August was fine—dry over all but the most northern counties of England, where the rainfall was slightly in excess of the mean,—and quiet. Pressure was remarkably uniform, and somewhat in excess of its normal value for the time of year. Temperature was low, except in the south-west of Ireland, and a conspicuous feature was the absence of any individual reading that could be termed high; frost occurred on the grass over England about the middle of the month. The air was dry; the wind very variable, chiefly Northerly or North-easterly, and, as a rule, light; gales were rare and never severe; and a good deal of bright sunshine was recorded in the west and south, but very little in the north-east.

August 1–3.—During this period the dominant system of pressure distribution over the United Kingdom was anticyclonic, and the gradients northerly to north-easterly, being almost *nil* over the northern parts of the kingdom, and slight elsewhere. Temperature was low, and though the weather at first was dry, it subsequently became rainy over the northern and western parts of the kingdom, as some small local depressions were formed in those regions on the 3rd.

August 4–13.—Cyclonic conditions now became general, but the gradients continued northerly. The systems first appeared as very small and shallow disturbances over the southern parts of our area, causing freshening North-easterly winds over the northern and western regions, but Westerly and South-westerly in France. Large quantities of rain at once began to fall in nearly all places, thunderstorms were prevalent, and the thermometer was very low for the time of year. The first depression worthy of particular mention was No. XXXIX.* which appeared at the mouth of St. George's Channel early on the 5th, and, after some very slight and irregular movements, mainly in a southerly direction, took a north-easterly course, reaching the Yorkshire coast early on the 8th, and then passing across the North Sea to the Baltic. In its rear the thermometer fell decidedly over England, but scarcely had it disappeared before a new and much more important system (No. XL.*) approached our western coasts from the Atlantic—on the 9th. The wind now backed to South and South-west, and became strong generally; in the west a strong gale was felt. Temperature rose a little, more particularly over England, so that the daily maxima on the 10th were as high as 77° at Cambridge and 73° at Loughborough and Yarmouth; the rise was, however, very temporary, for on the following day the thermometer fell quickly to its old level. The centre of the system now passed off to the northward, and the barometer rose, but early on the 12th a new and shallower depression, apparently subsidiary to that just named, reached the north of Ireland, and travelling eastwards and north-eastwards, grew deeper, and did not pass out of our area until late on the 13th. With this subsidiary system the wind again backed to South

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

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and South-west, and increased in force, with rain, but as it passed north-eastwards the barometer rose rapidly in its rear, the wind veered to North-west, and blew hard, thunderstorms occurred in some places, and the thermometer fell fast. Early on the 14th the temperature in the shade was reduced to 35° over central Ireland, and to between 38° and 41° over England, while frost occurred on the grass at some of the inland stations. This depression proved to be the last of the series, the distribution of pressure afterwards becoming anticyclonic and of a more favourable type, while temperatures rose somewhat—especially during the daytime.

August 13–19.—During this period anticyclonic conditions prevailed over our Islands generally, the system first advancing over us from the south-westward, but afterwards receding westwards and north-westwards. As it advanced the North-westerly winds just mentioned gave way to light anticyclonic breezes, and, with dry, fine weather, the thermometer rose considerably during the daytime, but was low during the night. It was with this system that the highest temperatures of the month were recorded over the greater part of both Ireland and England, but it is worthy of remark that it was only at a few of our southern stations that the thermometer rose above 80°. On the 15th and 16th the system attained its most eastern position; it then began moving westwards, and as about this time a depression (No. XLII.*) appeared over the eastern shores of the North Sea, the wind again became Northerly on all our coasts, and the thermometer fell decidedly. In London the maximum temperature recorded on the 18th was 16° lower than that of the previous day.

August 19–22.—The distribution of pressure now became less simple,—anticyclonic in the west and north, while cyclonic systems of slight intensity appeared in the east and south. In the former regions the weather remained fine and dry, and the daytime was somewhat warm, but in the latter clouds prevailed, the winds were cold, and rain fell,—heavily in some localities. The depression in the east then disappeared, and anticyclonic conditions, with gradients chiefly of a northerly type, spread once more over the kingdom.

August 23–25.—During this time pressure-distribution over the United Kingdom was very uniform and somewhat anticyclonic, the winds were light and variable, and the air cool and hazy. On the 24th and 25th pressure gave way a little in the south-west, and still more decidedly over the Bay of Biscay, and while a very irregularly-formed anticyclone (No. XXVIII.) was developed over the United Kingdom, there was apparently a large depression advancing northwards from the Portuguese coast towards the west of Ireland, in the direction shown by the arrow XLIII. on Map 2 Plate XVI. The subsidiary depressions to this disturbance spread eastwards over France, and gave us a spell of rather fresh Easterly winds, with cold weather, and some rain at our western and south-western stations. As they advanced the anticyclone in the east broke up, but a new one (No. XXIX.) appeared over our northern coasts.

August 26–29.—The systems of pressure distribution during this period were anticyclonic over all the northern parts of our area, cyclonic in the south; the type of gradient was chiefly easterly, but not steep; the winds were consequently mainly Easterly or North-easterly, blowing strongly at the southern and eastern stations, with more or less of showery weather, while in the north they were light and the weather was fine. Temperature was low throughout, and, in addition to the low-pressure area over the Bay of Biscay, one new disturbance (No. XLIV.*) advanced eastwards over the southern parts of France. As this disappeared the anticyclonic area in the north moved southwards.

August 30–31.—The distribution of pressure now began to change quickly. At 8 a.m. on the 30th the anticyclonic area referred to above lay completely over the United Kingdom, while a shallow depression (No. XLV.) was developed over the south of Norway. The Easterly winds at our southern stations lulled gradually, and the weather over Great

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

Britain improved, but temperature remained low, and there soon appeared signs of a fresh anticyclone in the north, united to that just mentioned by a col, which at 8 a.m. on the 31st lay over Great Britain and the western portions of the North Sea. A new but shallow depression (No. XLVI.*) then appeared off our south-west coasts, the wind drew into South-east at our western stations, and afterwards backed to East, the sky began to assume an unsettled appearance, and rain again fell in the south-west and south. At the close of the month the weather was evidently breaking up into a very changeable, unsettled condition over Ireland.

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