

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

DECEMBER 1888.

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ISSUED BY THE METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE, 63, VICTORIA STREET, LONDON; R. H. SCOTT, F.R.S., SECRETARY.
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General Summary.—Weather of December was mild, and quiet except in the extreme west and north-west. There were few gales except on the west coast, and none of them severe. Pressure was not far from its average value. Temperature was high in England and Scotland, and about at its normal height in Ireland. At the very close of the month cold weather set in.

Pressure.—*Mean for the Month at 8 a.m.* varied from 30·029 ins. in London to 29·636 ins. at Stornoway. It nowhere differed much from the average.* In the south-east of England it was about 0·05 in. in excess; all along the east coast, from the Humber to Aberdeen, it was nearly normal; while it was in defect on the west coast, to the amount of about 0·05 in. in the Hebrides, and double that amount in the west of Ireland. The general gradient was slightly steeper than usual, and the course of the isobars was from south-west to north-east, instead of from west to east. *Highest* readings were noted on the 16th, when 30·57 ins. was reported from Valencia, and 30·56 ins. from Parsonstown. On the 10th, also, the mercury stood high, 30·37 ins. being registered at Loughborough. *Lowest* occurred on the 21st, when 28·40 ins. was recorded at Scilly and 28·47 ins. at Roche's Point, during the passage of the only depression whose path really crossed any part of the British Isles. *Range* was large in the south-west, as both the extremes were noted in that district. It exceeded 2 ins. both at Roche's Point, ^{and Scilly} elsewhere it was moderate for the time of the year.

Depressions were singularly rare for the season. The system above mentioned had a very erratic course, passing from Cork to central Ireland, and then, turning south-eastwards, it finally filled up near Bristol. The other systems, however, passed outside the Hebrides, but did not seriously affect our weather, except in causing much raw and South-westerly wind on our western and northern coasts; Stornoway reported 30 days of rain and 23 of gales.

Anticyclones.—Of these there were three. The first, with readings of 30·3 ins., passed over us between the 8th and 11th, and finally disappeared over Germany. This was succeeded by another, following nearly the same track between the 14th and 17th, in which the readings approached nearly to 30·60 ins. It was the influence of these two systems which caused the mean barometer in London to rise above the average. The third anticyclone appeared at the end of the month, but was of minor importance.

Wind was chiefly from the South-east or South at our south-western stations, South-westerly and Southerly elsewhere; at several stations no Easterly winds were reported. The only places where gales were frequent were on the west coast, from Scilly to Stornoway. Several of the inland stations reported none at all. The only strong gale was that accompanying the depression of the 21st above mentioned.

Temperature.—*Mean at Sea Level* varied from 49°·3 at Scilly to 40°·2 at Cambridge and 40°·6 at Aberdeen. It was about at its average* value over Ireland, but in Great Britain the month was somewhat warm, the difference being about 2° in England and nearly 4° in the north-east of Scotland. *Highest* readings occurred in the first week, generally on the 5th. The thermometer reached 60° at Dublin and Llandudno, and 59°·0 at Cambridge, Loughborough, and York. *Lowest* readings were registered at various dates, but principally on the 30th and 31st, when 16° was recorded at Lairg and Braemar, 18° at Glenlee and Churchstoke, and 19° at Llandoverly and Glencarron. *Range* was considerable, as both extremes were rather excessive. It was 39° at Lairg and Glencarron, 28° at several other stations. The only place where it was less than 20° was Scilly. *Vapour Tension* varied from 0·304 in. at Scilly to 0·213 in. at Aberdeen and Nairn, and 0·214 in. at York and Cambridge. It was generally below 0·25 in. at all the inland stations of the three kingdoms. *Relative Humidity* varied from 96 per cent. at Ardrossan, 95 at Stornoway and Hawes Junction, and upwards of 90 at several other coast stations, to 84 at Nairn.

Rainfall varied from 11·68 ins. at Laudale, and 10·95 ins. at Killarney, to 0·60 inch at Nairn, 0·68 inch at Shields, 0·72 inch at Durham, 0·78 inch at Leith, and 0·94 inch at Cambridge and Yarmouth. At the last-named station rain was only recorded on 7 days, while 30 such days were reported from Stornoway. It was generally much less than the average,* except in Ireland. Falls exceeding an inch were reported from seven stations in the west and north-west of England on the 27th. The wettest day in west Scotland was the 3rd, and in the south of Ireland the 21st.

Bright Sunshine was deficient; at Glencarron only 2 per cent. of possible duration was recorded, and in London and Glasgow only 8 per cent. The sunniest stations were Hastings with 35, and Jersey with 30 per cent.

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