

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT.

AUGUST 1886.

SECTION I.

GENERAL SUMMARY FOR THE MONTH.

THE weather of August was not at all settled. The mean pressure at 8 a.m. differed little from the average, but several depressions passed more or less directly over the Kingdom, and the anticyclones which came within our area, were of irregular and variable form. Temperature, on the whole, differed but little from its normal value, but frost occurred on the ground once at the western stations, and in the shade at Wick, while some of the maxima in the east were high. The winds were moderate; they were chiefly Southerly to Westerly in direction, and gales were rare; the weather was cloudy, but in most places not rainy. Bright sunshine was deficient. Towards the end of the month a brief period of warm bright weather prevailed in most parts of England and the east of Ireland.

August 1-2.—The weather during this time remained in a changeable unsettled condition, as it had been during the latter part of July, but showed some signs of improvement after the 1st, when the barometer rose in the west, anticyclonic airs and light breezes beginning to prevail in the west and south-west with dry weather.

At the western and central continental stations also the weather remained changeable, with rain at times, but in Finland and Russia it was generally fine and warm.

August 3-6.—The barometer now rose in the south-west and west, and an anticyclone of irregular form advanced over western Europe from the Atlantic. At 8 a.m. on the 4th the system lay completely over us, and had two large and well-defined maxima, one of which covered the British Islands, while the other lay over Spain. The weather at once improved, light and variable breezes were reported on our own and the French coasts, and North-westerly breezes in Scandinavia. The sky, however, was less clear, and had a less settled appearance than is usual with anticyclones during the summer time, while rain fell locally on our extreme northern, south-western, and south-eastern coasts. Temperature, however, rose during the daytime, and the maxima recorded over England increased to between 70° and 77° on the 6th.

Over the Continent the weather was less favourable, showers being of almost daily occurrence (except in the extreme south); temperature was low in France, but high over Finland and the Baltic, where until after the 5th the readings were much higher than anywhere but in southern Europe.

August 7-11.—The anticyclone now moved eastwards and southwards to France, Germany, and Austria, and slight gradients for Westerly winds set in over the British Islands. Shallow depressions were then formed in various places; one appeared off our northern coasts on the 7th, whence it passed away to the northward next day (see the charts in the Daily and Weekly Reports), and another was formed near the mouth of the Loire during the night of the 9th, whence it travelled north-eastwards and grew much deeper; its centre reached the north of Denmark on the 11th, after which it passed away north-westwards to the Atlantic on the 12th.

Over southern Europe the weather improved during this interval; elsewhere it was very cloudy and at times showery, and in northern Europe temperature gave way decidedly. On the 10th the eastern portion of the anticyclone dispersed over Austria and Germany, while the western portion advanced eastwards over France from the Atlantic.

August 12-17.—The distribution of pressure over north-western Europe now became more markedly cyclonic, and the depressions which appeared were deeper than those previously existing. One cyclonic system (No. LIII.*) reached the west of Ireland on the night of the 12th, and at 8 a.m. on the 13th its centre lay near Limerick. This broke up the weather in all parts of the kingdom, and in the south of Ireland the rainfall was heavy. The wind also was strong and squally, temperature fell decidedly, and, at first, it appeared as though a stiff gale was likely to set in. As the centre advanced, however, the system filled up gradually, so that on reaching the North Sea it was difficult to trace the form of the central area at all, but the wind shifted to North-west for a time with cold weather, after which it lulled to a calm. Another disturbance (No. LIV.*) moved north-eastwards outside our extreme north-western coasts on the 16th, and caused a renewal of the showery weather—the rainfall in this instance being heaviest on the shores of the Irish Sea. A “hollow” was developed over the North Sea next day, which again caused the wind to veer to North-west over the United Kingdom, and the weather was very cold again for the time of year.

On the Continent the weather, though finer than in the British Islands, was nevertheless somewhat changeable, except in the extreme south.

August 18-23.—A new anticyclonic system now advanced over western Europe from the westward, but exhibited the same want of irregularity both in outline and pressure as had been noticed in its predecessor. On the evening of the 17th its centre was advancing towards our south-western districts from the south-westward, and by the morning of the 20th the system covered nearly the whole of France, Germany, the North Sea, England, and Ireland; two maxima were shown—one off the south-west of Ireland, and the other over the eastern counties of England. On the whole the weather improved, but the amount of cloud was large for anticyclonic conditions, and there were local showers frequently—some of them heavy, especially those at Pembroke and over Ireland on the 21st. Thunderstorms occurred over France on the 21st and 22nd, and on the latter date they extended to some of our southern stations also. Temperature remained rather low till the 21st, when it increased to between 74° and 76° over the warmer parts of England, and it reached 78° or 79° in several places on the 23rd and 24th.

Over France the weather at first improved as this system advanced, but after the 20th thunderstorms were of frequent occurrence, and in some places the rain was heavy.

August 24-25.—The weather of this period was transitional. At 8 a.m. on the 24th the anticyclone mentioned above was passing away to the eastward, and the barometer was falling over the United Kingdom with light Southerly and South-easterly winds, unsettled weather and some rain in several places. A new anticyclone, however, began to advance towards us from the westward, and the two systems were united by a “col” which at 8 a.m. on the 24th lay across England and the North Sea, while a large but not deep depression swept by our north-western coasts to the north-eastward at too great a distance to be noted in detail in Section II. The weather improved a little with us, but in France and some parts of Germany heavy rain and some thunder occurred in a very shallow depression which subsequently moved on to north Germany.

August 26-31.—In this period the distribution of pressure was anticyclonic, and the weather much finer than any that had been experienced since the first week in July. The new anticyclone (No. XXI.), after moving slowly in an easterly direction towards France at 6 p.m. on the 25th, began at the same time to spread northwards. At 8 a.m. on the 28th its

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

centre had reached the Tyrol, and the system then spread northwards across Germany to the eastern shores of the North Sea. The weather improved rapidly, and temperature over England and at the Continental stations increased steadily, so that the daily maxima recorded varied from 75° to 79° over the inland parts of England. On the 30th and 31st they rose to between 80° and 87° , and the nights also were warm. Ireland and Scotland, however, were at times largely influenced by depressions which were passing north-eastwards outside our west and north-west coasts, so that the weather there was less fair than that over England, and the temperatures, as a rule, were lower.

To western and central Europe also the new system brought very fine quiet warm weather, but in Scandinavia, Lapland, and Finland, the conditions were unsettled, changeable, and colder.