

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

MAY 1896.

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**General Summary.**—With the exception of a showery spell between the 18th and 21st the weather of May was fair, warm, and exceedingly dry, an almost entire absence of rain being reported over the south-western parts of the United Kingdom. Thunder and lightning occurred at some of our southern stations on the 6th and 7th, and in many of the northern and eastern districts on the 12th. Brilliant aurora was seen in the north of Scotland on the 2nd and 3rd, the first display being observed less clearly in several other parts of the kingdom. Pressure and temperature were above the average; the winds were mainly from the Northward; rainfall was very deficient, especially in the south-west; bright sunshine was, as a rule, considerably in excess of the normal.

**Pressure.**—*Mean at 8 a.m.* ranged from 30·3 ins. and upwards over Ireland and the neighbouring channels to about 30·2 ins. on our extreme south-east coasts, and to a little below 30·2 ins. in the Shetlands. The mean distribution of pressure was, therefore, distinctly anticyclonic, and the actual values were considerably above the average,\* the excess being greatest (0·35 in. or more) in Ireland. *Highest* readings were recorded on the 25th and 26th, when the barometer exceeded 30·5 ins. in all but the extreme southern parts of the kingdom. *Lowest* readings occurred in the north on the 19th, but over the country generally on the 22nd; in the extreme north the barometer fell below 29·7 ins., and on our north and east coasts generally below 29·9 ins., but in the south-west of Ireland the minimum readings for the month were above 30·1 ins. *Range* was everywhere small.

**Depressions.**—The only depressions of any importance observed in the immediate neighbourhood of our Islands were those of the 18th and 20th. The former, a "V-shaped" system, skirted our extreme northern coasts, and moved away to the north-eastward; the latter travelled quickly in an east south-easterly direction across the north of Scotland and the North Sea, and afterwards passed on to the Baltic, where it filled up.

**Anticyclones.**—During nearly the whole month the weather over Western Europe was influenced by a large anticyclone which spread in from the Atlantic. Between the 12th and 14th, and again from the 18th to the 22nd, when depressions appeared over Scandinavia or our own northern coasts, the system receded to the south-westward, but in each case the change was merely temporary.

**Winds** were mainly from some northerly point, the direction inclining to North-west in the north but to North-east in the south; at some of our western and central stations calms were very prevalent. Very few gales were experienced, but on our north-west coasts the North-westerly gale of the 19th blew with considerable force, strong squalls from the same quarter being experienced in most other parts of the kingdom.

**Temperature.**—*Mean at Sea Level* ranged from between 56° and 57° over central Scotland, the south of Ireland, and a considerable portion of the south of England, to about 50° along the east coasts of England, and to very little above 48° in the Shetlands. Over the southern parts of the kingdom the mean distribution agreed fairly with the normal, but in the north the summer type was more pronounced than is usual in May. Compared with the average,\* the values showed a slight deficiency at some of our eastern and south-eastern stations, but a considerable excess in most other places; in many parts of Scotland the excess amounted to more than four degrees, and at Ochtertyre to very nearly six degrees. *Highest* readings were observed, as a rule, on the 11th or 12th, when the thermometer rose to 75° and upwards over the inland parts of the country generally, to 80° or more in a few isolated places, and to 85° at Llandovery. *Lowest* readings were recorded on varying dates between the 1st and 4th, when frost occurred in most places; at Durham, Stamford, Loughborough, and Llandovery the sheltered thermometer fell to 28°. *Range* was large, especially over the inland parts of England and Ireland, where it amounted in many cases to over 45°; at Durham and Loughborough it reached 52°, and at Llandovery, 57°. *Vapour Tension* ranged from 0·35 in. and upwards on our south-western and several parts of our extreme northern and north-western coasts to 0·30 in. or less at most of our eastern and central stations, and to only 0·27 in. in London. *Relative Humidity* varied from 89 per cent. at Wick and Malin Head to 70 per cent. at Liverpool, and to 68 per cent. in London and at Jersey.

**Rainfall** was very deficient, especially over Wales, the eastern and central parts of Ireland, and the western, central, and southern parts of England, where the total amount was in all places less than half an inch. Over the south-west of England the only rain experienced during the month was a few hundredths of an inch on the 21st, less than five rainy days being recorded in many other parts of the country. The largest amounts measured were 2·1 ins. at Glencarron, 2·0 ins. at Wick, and 1·5 ins. at Stornoway, but at all stations, excepting Wick, the total was considerably below the average,\* the proportion over the western, central, and southern parts of the kingdom being, as a rule, less than one eighth of the normal.

**Bright Sunshine** was in excess of the average\* in nearly all places, the difference being large at many of the western and northern stations. The per-centage of the possible amount ranged from 71 at Falmouth and Scilly, and 60 or more on several parts of our west and south-west coasts, to 39 at Stornoway, Durham, Harrogate, and Worksop, and to 38 at York and Manchester (Oldham Road).

\* 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.