

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

## OCTOBER 1896.

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**General Summary.**—The weather of October was cold and changeable, with frequent rains in most districts, and with occasional falls of snow or sleet in the north. Thunder and lightning were unusually frequent for the time of year, especially over England. Pressure and temperature were low; the winds were chiefly from points lying between West and North; rainfall was rather deficient in the west, but exceeded the average elsewhere; bright sunshine was less than the normal at all but a few of the western and southern stations.

**Pressure.**—*Mean at 8 a.m.* ranged from 29·80 ins. and upwards in the south of Ireland to 29·65 ins. and less in the north-east of Scotland, and to about 29·60 ins. in the Shetlands. The general distribution was therefore of a somewhat abnormal character, the gradient being in favour of North-westerly, instead of Westerly and South-westerly winds, as is usual in October. The mean values were everywhere below the average,\* the deficit being small in the south of Ireland, but rather large in the east and south-east of England. *Highest* readings were observed in the southern districts on the 1st, but in the north on the 14th, the barometer rising to 30·5 ins. and upwards in most places, and to a little above 30·6 ins. in the Shetlands. *Lowest* readings were observed in the west and north on the 7th or 8th, when the barometer fell below 28·5 ins. in the west of Ireland, and below 29·0 ins. over Ireland and Scotland generally. Over the greater part of England, however, the lowest readings (29·2 ins. or less) were registered either on the 19th, the 20th, or the 25th. *Range* was moderate.

**Depressions** were exceedingly numerous and moved in all kinds of directions, as will be seen by a glance at map 2 on the accompanying plate. The only disturbance of any real importance was that which passed north-eastwards along the Irish and Scotch coasts on the 7th–9th. On reaching the north of Scotland, however, this system quickly dispersed.

**Anticyclones.**—Two such systems were observed. The first of these was formed over Europe at the close of September, but soon moved away to the southward and partially broke up. The second appeared off our western coasts on the 12th, and afterwards became temporarily united with an anticyclone of great height (maximum readings 31·0 ins. and upwards) which had been gradually formed over Russia. After the 15th, however, the two systems again divided, each passing away steadily to the southward.

**Winds** were chiefly from the Northward in the western and northern, but from the Westward in the eastern, central, and southern parts of the kingdom. Gales were frequent on our western and some of the more exposed parts of our northern coasts, the number being as large as 13 at Scilly, 12 at Aberdeen, and 10 at Holyhead, Belmullet, and Jersey.

**Temperature.**—*Mean at sea level* ranged from 51° at Jersey and from 49° and upwards over the English Channel generally to 45° or less over Central Wales, to 43° or less over Central Ireland, and to 42° or less over the north-western parts of Scotland. The general distribution was, therefore, of a more wintry type than is usual in October, and the mean values were considerably below the average,\* the deficit amounting to 5° or more at some of the Irish and Scotch stations. *Highest* readings were recorded mainly between the 1st and 3rd. There were, however, very few places in which the thermometer exceeded 65°, and at some of our northern and north-western stations it did not reach 60°. *Lowest* readings occurred at various times between the 21st and 29th, when frost was experienced in most places; over the more central parts of Scotland the frost of the 24th and 25th was very sharp for the time of year, the sheltered thermometer falling to 17° at Braemar, 18° at Ochertyre, and 19° at Nairn. *Range* was rather large in the regions just mentioned, but moderate elsewhere. *Vapour Tension* ranged from 0·30 in. at Scilly and Jersey to 0·24 in. and less over Central Ireland, the north of England, and the eastern and central parts of Scotland. *Relative Humidity* was as high as 99 per cent. at Stornoway, 94 per cent. at Ardrossan, and 93 per cent. at Spurn Head, Cambridge, and Parsonstown, the lowest values being 80 per cent. at Belmullet and Liverpool, and 81 per cent. at Holyhead and Scilly.

**Rainfall.**—Over the western parts of the kingdom the amount was, as a rule, less than the normal, the only exceptions being certain portions of Wales and the extreme north and north-west of Ireland, where an excess was shown. In other districts there was a general excess, the fall being greatest, relatively speaking, in the north-east of England, where the amount was in some cases more than twice as much as the average.\* The largest aggregates reported were 8·3 ins. at Alnwick Castle, 7·3 ins. at Stornoway and Glencarron, and 7·2 ins. at Sumburgh Head; the smallest being 1·9 ins. at Hurst Castle, 2·0 ins. at Donaghadee, and 2·2 ins. at Armagh. Falls exceeding an inch in 24 hours were reported on several occasions, the heaviest and most general being those which occurred in the west on the 6th and 7th, and in the north and north-east between the 10th and 11th. Snow or sleet occurred in many parts of the kingdom on the 10th and 11th, and in the northern districts on several occasions during the closing week.

**Bright Sunshine** was slightly in excess of the average\* at many of our western and southern stations. In the south of Ireland, however, as well as in the northern, eastern, and central parts of the kingdom generally, the amount was rather deficient. The per-centage of the possible duration ranged from 41 at Brighton and 35 or more on several parts of our south and south-west coasts to 13 at Fort Augustus, and 12 at Manchester (Oldham Road).

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