

## Meteorological Averages.

The principal observations consist of the *average or mean state* of the atmosphere, in the different months, in regard to pressure and temperature, and of the extremes to which it is liable in these respects. The barometrical observations are recorded in inches and hundredths parts of an inch of mercury. The temperature registered is that of the air in the shade ending 1839. The averages for Newfoundland are calculated for *St. John's* upon observations made in the six years ending 1839. Those for *England* were calculated for London, and are copied from the "British Almanac."

The mean state of the atmosphere, calculated for definite periods from numerous observations, being that state in which all disturbing causes are equally balanced, may be considered when it occurs as least liable to sudden alteration—and whenever, on the contrary, the different instruments indicate an approach to extremes, reason as well as experience teaches us, to expect a change. Rapid alterations also are indicative of violent disturbances, and a sudden approach to one extreme is generally speedily followed by a change to the opposite.

It would appear scarcely necessary to impress upon any mind acquainted with the commonest principles of science that the computations before referred to are *averages* deduced from long observation, and that as such they are not to be mistaken for prophecies, but are simply to be regarded as the basis of useful anticipations, upon the safe principle that *like causes produce like effects*. Their value is not to be proved by comparing them with the Barometer or Thermometer during a single year, nor at one particular place;—they are *AVERAGES* of long periods, and do not apply to all places without certain modifications. When people have been accustomed to believe in the absurdities of weather prophecies it is difficult to satisfy them with common sense.

To persons possessing Barometers, but who do not correctly understand the principle on which they are influenced by the atmosphere, it is proper to remark that the terms "set fair," "fair," "change," &c., marked on the plates of those instruments, do sometimes, and under certain circumstances, indicate truly the state of the weather, yet as they are calculated much more frequently to mislead the observer, it would be found more satisfactory to observe the state of the surface of the mercury in the tube (whether it be convex or concave) and to note its height by the number of inches and decimal parts shown on the scale, rather than by the words abovementioned, which, in the present state of science, it is somewhat surprising that the makers of these instruments should continue to use.

On the right hand page of each month of the Almanac is given a copy of the *Meteorological Register* kept by the compiler during the past year (1840), with the exception of the month of *December*, which for obvious reasons could not be given.

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