

WEATHER RECORDS : DECEMBER, 1936.

Dominion Meteorological Office.

NOTES FOR DECEMBER.

DURING the first half of December the weather was, for the most part, fair to fine over the Dominion, with little rain, and in most of the North Island these conditions continued throughout the third week. Over the North Island during this period dry westerly or south-westerly winds predominated. Southland and parts of Otago also experienced, on the whole, dry and sunny weather. In the remainder of the South Island, however, it was more cloudy and humid. The last week to ten days was everywhere very wet. In the first part of the month much hay was gathered, particularly in the North Island, and shearing was well advanced. Towards the latter end both shearing and work on the land were held up, and in the North some cut hay was lost. There is abundance of pasture everywhere, in many places, indeed, a superfluity. Stock are reported to be in very good condition, but the feed is rather soft, and in some places lambs are not fattening well. The milk-yield has been well maintained. Wheat crops, till the end of the month, were in good condition, but fruit crops generally only fair.

Rainfall.—In spite of the fact that the weather was fine during the greater part of the month, the total rainfall was much above normal over the North Island. Many places in eastern and northern districts had more than double the average. In the South Island conditions were variable, and departures from normal not usually very large. The West Coast and the high country generally had less, while most of the areas with low average falls had slightly more than normal.

Temperatures.—Temperatures were almost everywhere below normal, though the departures were not, in general, large.

Sunshine.—Sunshine was above normal in North Auckland, Tauranga having 253.9 hours, and also in Southland, where Invercargill had 202.8 hours. From North Canterbury to South Auckland it was much below.

Pressure Systems.—At the beginning of the month a depression was passing away eastwards, and the weather became fine as an anticyclone moved on to the Dominion. From the 5th to the 7th several rather shallow westerly depressions crossed the South Island, causing a certain amount of rain, but eastern districts and the North Island were very little affected. From the 8th to the 15th there was little storm activity, anticyclonic conditions prevailing for most of the time over New Zealand. On the 16th a deeper depression appeared west of the South Island, and after it had passed eastward was followed on the 17th and 18th by cold southerly gales. Fairly general rain was produced by this storm, but over most of the North Island it was only light.

The first very general rain occurred on the 22nd, when the centre of a depression crossed the southern portion of the South Island. Following it, a trough of low pressure moved northwards over the Dominion, strong westerly winds prevailing to the north of it and south-easterlies to the south. The weather remained unsettled until the 24th. There were heavy falls on the 22nd from the Wellington Province southwards, while in the far South the 21st was also very wet.

Unsettled conditions developed again on the 27th, and continued until the end of the month. North-easterly gales were experienced from the Bay of Plenty northward. Except in the western and southern areas of the South Island, heavy rain was general. This was especially the case in the Auckland Province, where considerable flooding occurred, particularly in North Auckland. Much of the North Island received more than the average month's rainfall in the last three days. Warm and sultry weather prevailed in most places throughout this period.