

WEATHER RECORDS : MAY, 1937.

Dominion Meteorological Office.

NOTES FOR MAY.

THOUGH not particularly severe, the first part of May was cold and rather stormy. After the first week there was rather more snow than usual on the mountains. From then onwards mild weather prevailed, the conditions in the last twelve days often being almost summer-like. Rainfall was above average in most districts, and especially so over most of the South Island and the Auckland Province. The sky was cloudy and the atmosphere humid, so that even where the rain was below average moist conditions prevailed. This state of affairs was accentuated by the absence of wind during the second half of the month. Grass has continued to grow, so that there is everywhere abundant feed for stock, which are reported generally to be in good condition. The state of the pastures has been very favourable to the dairying industry, but less so for fattening stock. In the North the somewhat stormy conditions and the lack of sunshine caused the growth of most vegetation to be checked, but in the rest of the country growth was unusually vigorous for the time of year. Numbers of trees and shrubs are flowering out of season. The ground is in most districts too soft for ploughing and the sowing of crops.

Rainfall.—In the North Island the total rainfall was considerably above average from Auckland northwards and in parts of the Bay of Plenty and central areas and the South Taranaki Bight. East of the main ranges, in western Taranaki, and in southern Wellington, it was below average. Over the South Island the month was a wet one, except about the Canterbury-Marlborough border and in the extreme South.

Temperatures were about normal in Nelson, Marlborough, and North Canterbury, but above it almost everywhere else. The departures, except at some inland stations, were generally less than a degree. There was some cold weather in the first week, but thereafter, and especially after the 19th, it was very mild. There were few frosts, and none very severe.

Sunshine was much below average in the North Island, especially the northern portion. Christchurch and Hanmer Springs reported slightly more than average, but elsewhere in the South Island also there was less than normal. Blenheim had 147.5 hours, Napier 143.3, and Wanganui 142.5.

Pressure Systems.—During the first four days the westerly type of weather prevailed, strong winds blowing from between north-west and south-west, with frequent rain in districts with a westerly aspect, and some snow and hail on the ranges. During the 4th, conditions became particularly boisterous, with widespread westerly gales. Severe thunderstorms occurred in many places west of the ranges, hailstorms were numerous, and heavy snow fell on the ranges.

After a brief spell of anticyclonic weather another westerly depression brought north-west to westerly gales to many places on the 8th to 9th. Some heavy rains were recorded, especially in the ranges.

On the 11th an anticyclone moved on to the Dominion, and fine weather prevailed. By the 13th the anticyclone was centered to the eastward, and had become rather intense. Strong north-easterly winds set in over the northern part of the North Island. A cyclone gradually formed near Norfolk Island, and travelled southward across New Zealand before dying out on the 17th. It was responsible for dull and misty conditions and widespread rain.

Depressions of minor intensity passing on the 19th and 23rd brought heavy rain to a few districts, and a shallow cyclone centred to the west caused rather stormy weather in North Auckland on the 27th. Generally speaking, however, quiet conditions prevailed from the 17th onwards.