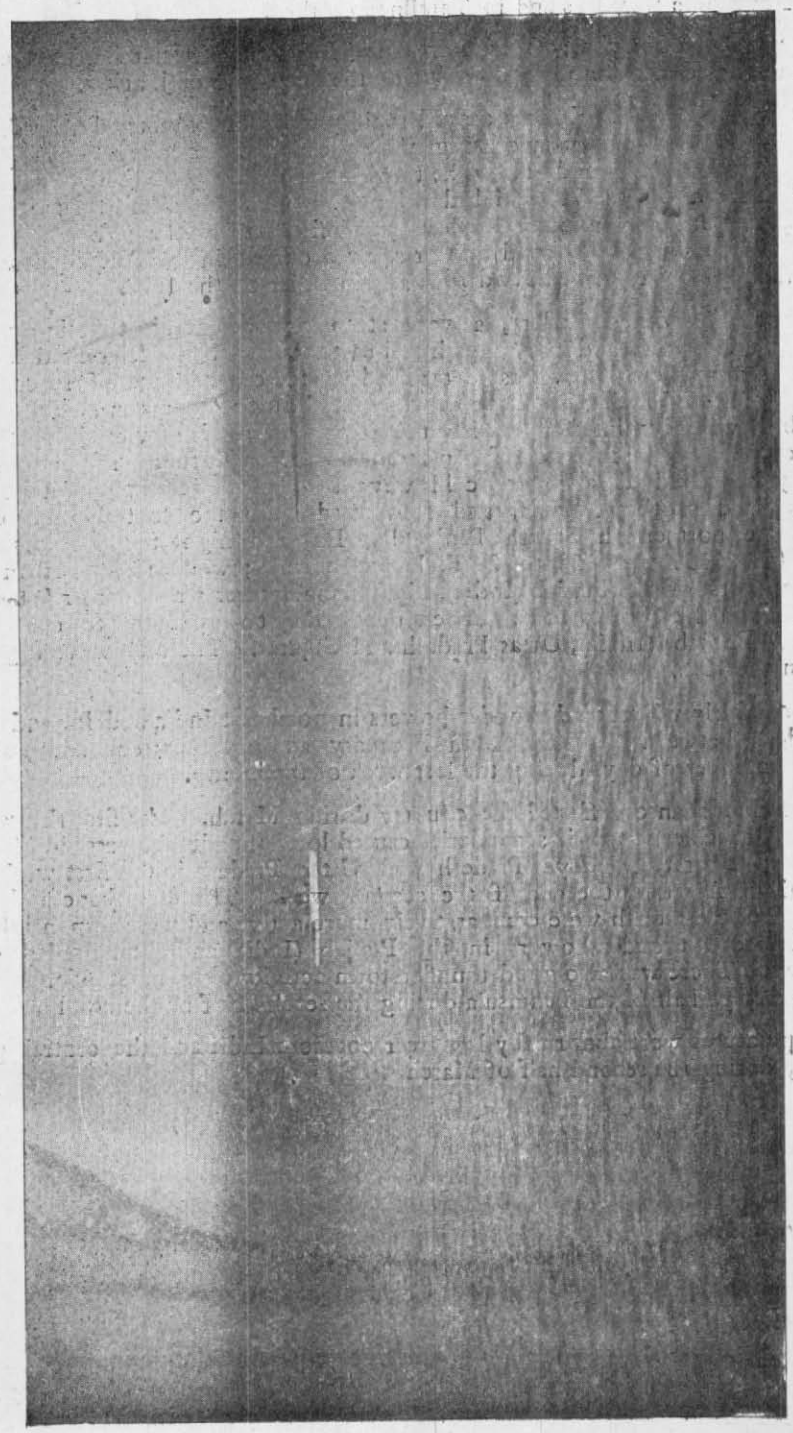
WEATHER, JANUARY—MARCH, 1950.

The chief feature of the weather during the first quarter of this year was a severe cold wave extending over most of the country in the second week of February, the characteristics of which have been described in detail in a previous note. Other features were (*i*) good rainfall in the Punjab (India) and Uttar Pradesh in the second half of January and (*ii*) marked thunderstorm activity in northeast India and eastern half of the Peninsula towards the end of March.

January.

Seven western disturbances affected the country during January. The first four of these were generally feeble and caused only scattered showers in the hills of the Punjab (India) and in Kashmir. The remaining three, however, which followed in quick succession during the second fortnight, were active and gave good rain or snow in the Punjab (India) and Uttar Pradesh; the falls were very heavy locally in the hills of the Punjab (India) on the 20th. In association with the sixth disturbance, there were also fairly widespread thundershowers in Vindhya Pradesh and Bihar on the 26th and 27th.



Photograph by V. V. Sohoni.

Smoke haze at Bombay, on December 3, 1949. 1000 hrs. I. S. T.

Weather was dry elsewhere over the country during the month except for local showers in Assam on a few days and in Tamilnad on the 10th.

Nights were unusually warm in northwest India, west Uttar Pradesh and the central parts of the country on most days during the latter half of January.

February. Three active western disturbances moved rapidly across the country during the first week of February causing widespread showers in the Punjab (India) on the 2nd and 8th. The third disturbance induced an active secondary over Rajasthan on the 7th which developed into a depression over the Punjab (Pakistan) on the 8th and moving northeastwards filled up by the 10th. Under the influence of the secondary, widespread rain or snow occurred in the Punjab(India) and west Uttar Pradesh between the 8th and 10th and in Bihar on the 10th.

In the wake of the secondary, a very steep pressure gradient set in over the western half of the country and in the north and east Arabian Sea. It caused strong gusty winds in northwest India, west Uttar Pradesh, the central parts of the country, Deccan (Desh) and the Konkan resulting in widespread dust-fog or haze. The gusty winds and bad visibility interfered with the operation of air services in northwest India. The cold dry air which swept down from northern latitudes in the rear of the secondary advanced as a severe cold wave from northwest India eastwards to Uttar Pradesh and northeast India, and southwards into the central parts of the country and the northern half of the Peninsula. Day and night temperatures over these regions fell to as low as 15° to 20°F. below normal ; while in Rajasthan and the adjoining parts of the Punjab (India), night temperatures were near or below the freezing point from the 10th to 13th. A few deaths due to exposure to cold were reported from Punjab (India), Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. The cold wave began to dissipate from the 13th.

There were fairly widespread thundershowers in northeast India and in and near Madhya Pradesh between 21st and 24th February and in the extreme south of the Peninsula on a number of days during the last week of the month.

March. Six western disturbances affected the country during March. The first three were feeble, but their secondaries caused local thundershowers in Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in the first week and widespread rain in Assam at the end of the second week. The disturbances during the second half of the month were comparatively more active and were responsible for local or widespread thundershowers in the Punjab (India) and Uttar Pradesh on a number of days. There was also good thunderstorm activity over most of northeast India and the eastern half of the Peninsula during the second half of the month.

Day temperatures were abnormally low over northern India and the central parts of the country during the second half of March.