

It is which gives to our west coasts, and to that of Ireland, their moist and rainy climate—double, and more than double, the amount of rain falling annually on the coasts exposed to its full influence, as compared with the eastern coast; which it does not reach until drained of its excess of humidity.

(26.) The characters of our North-east winds (for such as are in common parlance called Easterly winds are almost always such) are the reverse of these in every particular. They are cold, dry, and hence often spoken of as *cutting*, from their parching effect on the skin; and, as a natural consequence, for the most part accompanied with a clear sky. They are seldom of very long continuance, and may be regarded rather as casual winds, except in the spring; when the advance of the sun to the north of the equator begins to call into action a northern indraft—to push to the northward the limit of the north-east trades, *and to unsettle by its intrusion the line of demarcation between the wind-zones which its long continuance in extreme south latitude, near the winter solstice, had allowed to take up, and rest in, its extreme southernmost position.* To this opposition of characters we may add, that the South-west wind is generally accompanied with a lower, and that of the North-east with a higher than average barometric pressure; a connexion partially, but not entirely, accounted for by the lightness of warm and moist air as compared with cold and dry; and which is the origin of those indications of the weather (*fair, settled fair, rain, much rain, &c., &c.*) which we find inscribed opposite to the divisions of the scale of inches