

occasionally experienced at all seasons. North and northwest gales are not felt much at the settlement, as the wind is then blowing directly against the face of the cliffs at the back, but with these winds there is a heavy surf in Falmouth Bay; the southwest wind sweeping fairly across the level strip is most destructive, and has been known to unroof the houses, solidly built as they are. The climate is mild, the temperature averaging 68° in summer, and 55° in winter, occasionally falling to 40° . Rain is frequent; in fact, situated as these islands are, and rising as they do to a height of over 7000 feet, it would be extraordinary if rain were not frequent, as clouds almost continuously cover the higher parts of the land. Hail and snow fall occasionally, but rarely, and the sky is usually cloudy, but the air is not excessively humid. Little is known about the movements of the barometer in the locality; the islanders possess an instrument, but do not record its readings. Captain Wauchope states that during his stay in H.M.S. "Eurydice" in the vicinity of the group, the pressure varied from 29.75 to 30.35 in the months of October and November 1817; but he could form no opinion as to the future condition of the weather from the height of the barometric column. During the four days' visit of the Challenger in 1873, the pressure was unusually great, the mercurial column varying from 30.605 to 30.233 inches, and the weather, though cloudy, was on the whole fine, the wind being light. That the climate is very healthy is beyond a doubt, for the inhabitants do not appear to suffer much from sickness; Lieutenant Rich says that they all suffered from inordinate appetites.

The time of high water, at full and change, is given by Lieutenant Rich as at 2 hours with a rise and fall of 8 feet. Captain Nolloth, in his visit in 1856, made it, high water, full and change, at 12 hours, rise and fall 4 feet, and the islanders state that it never exceeds that amount. No register has, however, been kept; and it would be exceedingly difficult to erect a tide pole in a sufficiently sheltered position, although, could it be done, a record here would be of decided scientific value.

There appear to be some discrepancies in the various accounts given as to the tidal stream or current. Some of the old navigators say that they observed a regular east and west going stream when at anchor in Falmouth Bay. Others say the current always sets to the northeast; whilst the islanders assert that inshore the stream changes, but that outside the current is always northeasterly. Against this assertion, however, must be placed the fact, that Captain John Patten found a great deal of driftwood on the east coast of the island and none on the west side in 1790. Captain Nolloth was, however, told that a sofa was made on the island from a log of wood (mahogany) that grounded on the west coast of Tristan Island, and says, that at the time of his visit, there was a tree thickly covered with barnacles on "the sea side." This latter observation is, however, rather obscure, as it is difficult to tell which is not a sea side at Tristan. The current experienced by the Challenger whilst in the vicinity had certainly a northeasterly tendency, but it is of greater force westward than eastward of the group.