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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,  
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,  
discusses:

ALTITUDE AND THE BOILING POINT

The higher you go the lower is the temperature at which water boils. To use an approximate figure the boiling point is lowered 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit for each 1,000 feet of altitude. To use the familiar Mt. Washington as an example, while water is boiling at 212 degrees in Boston it is boiling at 201 degrees on the mountain top, a difference sufficient to affect cooking, for temperature being less, a longer time is required in cooking food or making tea. To take a more extreme case, on the Bolivian Plateau in South America, 12,500 feet above sea level, it is impossible to cook potatoes by boiling, for no greater temperature than 190 degrees can be obtained in a kettle and this is insufficient. On Mt. Blanc, over 15,000 feet high, water boils at 185 degrees, and it is practically impossible to make tea. It is said of people who have lived on the Bolivian Plateau that on going down to the coast they must guard against hot soups, lest they burn their mouths, so accustomed have they become to lower temperatures.

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(Tomorrow: Sweating Cellars)

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Science Service,  
1115 Conn. Ave.,  
Washington, D.C.