

No. 177

A Science Service Feature

Dec. 6

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,  
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,  
tells of:

ARCTIC EXPLORER'S SUN-HEATED BAG

The heat-absorbing power of dark colors, especially of black as compared with white, as applied in clothing both summer and winter, was happily made use of by DeQuervain who crossed the ice-cap of Greenland in the summer of 1912. The problem of drinking water is always a serious one in polar regions where the temperature seldom rises above freezing, especially in the 7000 to 10,000 foot altitudes of central Greenland, where thawing never occurs. But DeQuervain cleverly overcame the difficulty.

He attached a V-shaped pocket of waterproof black cloth to the sunny side of his sledge, where it would receive the direct rays of the sun, which was shining most of the 24 hours. When the air temperature was well below freezing, that of the bag was found to be 88 degrees Fahrenheit. Thus, he readily melted all the snow needed. This device demonstrates most strikingly the heat advantage of dark clothing.

-----  
(Tomorrow: How to Measure Snow)

All rights reserved by Science Service

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