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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
of Clark University,
suggests:

A COLD MORNING THOUGHT

On a morning when the mercury has dropped low and everyone is shivering, take comfort in the thought that the air about you is warm enough when compared with some places where people live the year round. The coldest inhabited spot on earth, so far as recorded, is Verkhoyansk in northeastern Siberia, where the thermometer has registered 90.4 below zero Fahrenheit. The natives in this region live in double, practically airtight, tents. It is so cold that snow is too limited for making igloos.

But 90.4 below Fahrenheit is the lowest record only at the ground. High aloft much colder readings have been made by means of sounding balloons which carry recording instruments far up into the atmosphere. The very coldest place of all was 10 miles up in the air above the Island of Java whence a record of 133 degrees below zero Fahrenheit was brought down. This suggests what the airplane pilot must endure during ascents for altitude, though it is not so cold in very high altitudes in middle latitudes as it is in the tropics. The polar flier if he should go very high would be warmest of all.

(Tomorrow: Characteristics of the "Low".)

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