A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LAUNDRY

As winter approaches, the difficulties of the laundress increase; not only is it harder to get the wash dry, but the clothes bleach less readily from hanging in the open. Evaporation usually takes place more slowly at low temperatures than at high; indeed, in the Arctic, frozen garments often require a week to dry out. In winter, drying is also hindered by the humidity, which averages higher than in summer. High winds characteristic of winter aid the drying process, but are decidedly rough on stiffly frozen clothes.

Of course, clothes may be dried indoors in winter, but even at this season the bleaching effect of outdoor light is of some value. When wet clothes are exposed to sunlight, the ultra-violet light seems to be responsible for the bleaching. In winter the ultra violet rays are very much reduced and the hours of sunlight short. The common belief that freezing whitens clothes does not seem well founded. When the wash fails to dry we are sometimes told that leaving it out over-night will bleach it wonderfully, but obviously this is a vain consolation, as bleaching is confined to daylight hours.

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