

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WHERE CHRISTMAS IS HOTTEST

It is difficult for us to turn our thoughts to hot Christmases, but let us imagine the weather in the hottest parts of the southern hemisphere at this time. The southern hemisphere in general is cooler than the northern, because of the great expanse of ocean and the southern polar ice cap that is about the size of the United States or Canada. Nevertheless, away from the sea, the sun, shining fiercely, with an intensity up to 7 per cent. greater than that in our summer, is making southern lands extremely hot. The noonday sun now beats down from directly overhead at latitude 23 degrees south, close to the Tropic of Capricorn.

Take out your atlas and see where this line cuts the southern continents. It passes through the Chilean desert, northern Argentina, Paraguay, Southern Brazil. It traverses the Kalahari desert of South Africa, and it runs through almost the ^{center} of Australia. Chile is kept somewhat cool by the breeze off the cool Humboldt ^d current along the shore of this narrow country. The lowland of northern Argentina is hot, humid, and showery, but few Christians live there. Paraguay and especially southern Brazil have less heat because of their greater elevation and closer proximity to the sea. The Kalahari Desert is a plateau several thousand feet high, and therefore tempered by the ready cooling at night. The western plateau of central Australia is practically uninhabited under the Tropic, so also are the great interior plains farther east where the mean temperatures at this time of year are about 90, while the extreme sometimes reaches 130 degrees Fahrenheit. There and near the coast of Queensland are the hottest white Christian homes. We may pity the poor housewife of central Queensland preparing her Christmas dinner in a muggy kitchen abominably hot under a sheet iron roof.

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