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July 4, 1927

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed June 27, 1927

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CLOTHING FOR HOT WEATHER

Describing a midsummer journey from India into Afghanistan by way of the Khyber Pass, Lowell Thomas, the well-known globe-trotter and lecturer, tells us how he and his companions dressed for the trip. Their clothing was strikingly different from what is commonly supposed to be appropriate for a hot climate.

Draped over the backs of unusually thick sunhelmets they wore enormous sun-protectors. These were khaki-colored pads which hung down to protect the base of the brain and the top of the spine, particularly sensitive areas of the human anatomy. Under their coats was worn another long pad to protect the rest of the spinal column. This is known as a "spine-pad", and is a regulation part of the hot-weather equipment of the British Army. In addition to all this they wore heavy clothing, to keep out the heat! "In doing so", says Mr. Thomas, "we were merely following the well-known example of those poor mortals who stoke furnaces on liners in the Red Sea or the Indian Ocean, and who must endure temperatures almost beyond the limit of human imagination."

Lastly, they wore special amber glasses to protect their eyes from the glare of the sun.

Every few miles on their way across the plain from Peshawar to Fort Jamrud, at the eastern end of the Khyber, they passed stone structures marked "Heat Stroke Hot". These are for travelers who break down while trekking along the caravan route.

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