

A Science Service Feature

Released on receipt
but intended for use
February 23, 1928.

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed February 16, 1928.

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

SNOW AS A BUILDING MATERIAL

Prof. W. Elmer Ekblaw, of Clark University, has recently published an interesting account of the northernmost tribe of Eskimo -- those of the Thule region of Greenland -- in which he tells, among other things, all about the construction of an "iglooyak," or snow house (distinguished from the "igloo," or stone house). He says in part:

"The snow of which the iglooyak is built must be carefully selected. The Arctic snow generally crystallizes as attenuate steel-like spicules that bind together in drifting like fibres of cloth, instead of "fluffing" together loosely as do the flakes of more southerly snows. The wind-packed snow selected for the iglooyak must not be too soft, for if it be, then the iglooyak will quickly settle together and fall in. It must not be too hard, for if it be, then it will conduct the interior heat outward too fast.

"The snow for the iglooyak is cut with a snow knife into blocks about $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet long and from 15 inches to 2 feet wide, and then pried up with the toe, at a depth of from 6 to 8 inches, the thickness of the blocks. A group of three men can work most satisfactorily in building an iglooyak. One cuts the blocks and pries them out; a second carries them from the block maker to the builder; and a third builds the house. Three energetic skilled Eskimo can erect a substantial iglooyak in less than an hour.*

(All rights-reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE,
21st and B Sts...
Washington, D.C.