

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
January 14, 1930.

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed January 7, 1930.

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

DESERT CLIMATE

In a recent account of the Mohave Desert of southern California, David G. Thompson tells us that the high temperature, in itself, does not seem to cause any noticeable discomfort. Oscar Loew found that after marching 20 miles over this region on a day when the temperature was from 110 to 116, his body temperature rose at the most only a degree or two above the normal, 98.5. His pulse was much increased but his respiration showed little or no increase.

The extreme dryness of the air and consequent rapid evaporation make the heat bearable, but on the other hand may cause discomfort in other ways. "One is seldom affected," says Mr. Thompson, "so long as he can drink sufficient water to make up for the rapid loss through the skin. It is usually only when a person cannot get water that there is any harmful effect. One should never go far from a source of water even in winter, and much less in summer, without enough water to last until another supply can be reached. From a series of observations on days when the temperature was as high as 108 to 114, Loew concluded that the evaporation from a human body in half a day amounted to about 2 quarts, and if the person did heavy work, as climbing mountains, it was nearly double this quantity. To provide for emergencies travelers should carry at least 2 to 4 gallons of water per 24 hours for each person."

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

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