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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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COLD WEATHER EFFECTS

Some curious effects of intensely cold weather are described by Admiral Byrd in a recently published narrative account of his antarctic expedition. One day he undertook to examine a crevasse that had formed in the Barrier ice. The temperature was "only" 50 below zero, but it was impossible to use an ordinary flashlight as the cold prevented the chemical action of the dry cells. Light was obtained by linking a portable gasoline engine generator to a locomotive-type searchlight.

"The automatic cameras," he says, "quit at 20 below because the cold contracted the springs, which bind. Motion picture film began to snap at 25 below. At home kerosene is used to keep automobile radiators from freezing. Down there cans left too near the entrance of the snow tunnels froze solid."

When a man stood inside the entrance to one of the house tunnels the fog formed by the condensation of moisture in his breath was so heavy that the house appeared to be on fire. At 64 below, "it was so cold that when a man stood outside the tunnel he could hear his breath freeze. The condensation caused a faint swishing sound like snow blown across the ice surface by a strong wind."

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