

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 22, 1931

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THE WORLD'S WINDIEST REGION

Chicago is called the Windy City, but its breezes do not hold a candle to those that prevail at Commonwealth Bay in Adelie Land, on the coast of Antarctica, which is, so far as anybody knows, the windiest spot on earth. At the top of Chicago's Auditorium Tower, 274 feet above the ground, the wind blows at an average speed of 17 miles an hour. Observations for 22 months by the Mawson expedition at Commonwealth Bay showed an average wind velocity, from corrected anemometer readings, of 44 miles an hour; a velocity classified by meteorologists as a "gale". The greatest run of the wind for an hour was 96 miles. Brief gusts were measured with a special device known as the "puffometer," and though this was not very accurate Madigan, the meteorologist of the expedition, concluded from its indications that many gusts were well over 150 miles an hour.

The members of the party eventually acquired the art of marching against the terrific blasts while "leaning on the wind." Madigan states that in a 90-mile wind he could, while keeping his body straight, lean forward and touch the ground with his hands.

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