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October 18, 1934

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed October 11, 1934

WHEN ICE MELTS

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The melting of large masses of ice abstracts a great amount of heat from the atmosphere. At one time the period of frosty weather that, according to ill-founded popular tradition, recurs every year about the middle of May and is known as the "Ice Saints," was supposed by some authorities to be due to the melting of ice in the rivers of northern Europe.

A publication of the British Meteorological Office says:

"Owing to the large amount of heat absorbed in melting (80 calories for one gram melted), a mass of ice represents a powerful reservoir of cold. Masses of ice or snow can attain to such dimensions in nature that the heat absorbed during melting is of climatological importance. An excellent example is furnished by the icebergs observed by Antarctic explorers. The largest of these appear to be portions of the great Ice Barrier that have broken away during the summer months. They are generally several hundred feet thick and may exceed 20 miles in length. The amount of heat required to melt one 20 miles long, 5 miles broad and 600 feet thick would be sufficient to raise the temperature of the air over the whole British Isles from the ground up to a height of 1 kilometer (3,281 feet) by over 72 degrees Fahrenheit."

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