

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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TEMPERATURE AND MORALS

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Hot weather, as Prof. E. G. Dexter once proved from police records, tends to make people quarrelsome; provided it is not too hot. Beyond a certain temperature the belligerent spirit wilts.

Various other effects of high temperature on human conduct are more or less familiar. Less has been heard about the moral effects of cold. One of the few published statements on the subject is the whimsical one of Sydney Smith --- whose account of a hot day when he was obliged to take off his flesh and sit in his bones has become classic. He once wrote:

"Very high and low temperature extinguishes all human sympathy and relations. It is impossible to feel affection beyond 78 degrees or below 20 degrees of Fahrenheit; human nature is too solid or too liquid beyond these limits. Man only lives to shiver and perspire.*

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