

For release
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Travel of heat in air! Long ago it was commonly thought that air was a good conductor of heat; that is, heat passed readily from one portion of a body of air to another as in silver or brass. It was an American, Benjamin Rumford, who made the first experiment proving that heat was communicated by the travel of portions of a liquid or gas from one part to another; this process is called convection. Heat may thus be transferred very rapidly from the bottom of an air mass to an upper portion, but not vice versa. That is why the lower atmosphere is so quickly heated. The surface of the ground is heated first by the sun. The layer of air next the earth becomes heated by conduction, then rises, and soon a considerable mass is warmed.