

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
November 22, 1930

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed November 15, 1930

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

POGONIP

From time to time for many years accounts have been published in newspapers and elsewhere of the "pogonip," a form of ice fog said to be rather common in winter in some districts of the Rocky Mountains. A description that appeared as far back as 1887 in the American Meteorological Journal says that this fog appears even on the clearest and brightest of days. "In an instant," we are told, "the air is filled with floating needles of ice. To breathe the pogonip is death to the lungs. When it comes people rush to cover. The Indians dread it as much as the whites."

A magazine article published in 1900 records the alleged experience of a party of men and women who were crossing North Park, Colorado, in a wagon in January. The sun was shining brightly, when suddenly the air began to fill with frozen mist. They were passing a cabin, when a man rushed out, with his head wrapped in mufflers, and handed the driver a written warning to come indoors and not to talk in the open air. The advice was followed, but, the story runs, all the members of the party were soon ill with violent coughs and fever and one of the women died. Their host is quoted as saying: "That stuff you saw in the air was small particles of ice, frozen so cold that it goes clear down into the lungs without melting. One winter a whole Indian tribe across the Wyoming line died from its effects."

Is it not time these pogonip yarns were checked up? The present writer has sought in vain for any medical literature on the subject,

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE,
21st and B Sts.,
Washington, D.C.