

Great Heat Wave.

A great heat wave has been passing over the principal portion of the Commonwealth during the week. Very high temperatures have been the rule in many places, and Singleton has maintained its summer reputation for high figures in this respect. Tuesday last was what the Americans now, in referring to the heat, term a regular "stood-me-up." In Singleton the temperature on that particular day was 104 in the shade in the day time, and a few persons felt at night time as if it was 150 not out. In fact, the heat at night indoors was almost unbearable, and many people either slept outside, or in the river with one eye open. Hot winds, breathing bush fire in every blast, prevailed all through the night, and towards Jerry's Plains and Bulga the bush could be seen on fire. This fact, coupled with the circumstance that bush fires have been raging all over the country, accounted no doubt for the blazing character of the heat wave. Some of the townspeople were actually prostrated, and for a time became so ill that the services of a nurse had to be requisitioned. One gentleman asserted that all the official and other records were at fault—that the temperature was more like 117 than 104, and he followed this up by the somewhat crude opinion that the heat of the atmosphere was greater than it ever was in India. Now the most up-to-date text books on the subject state that roughly the extreme of heat varies from about 150 degrees Fahrenheit in Bengal (India) to 34 degrees Fahrenheit in Nova Zembla. In Britain it is about 85 degrees in summer. To follow the subject further, it may also be mentioned that many of the gentlemen who bathed in the river on Tuesday night asserted that "it would not have taken much more heat to boil the waters of the Hunter." Wrong again. The text book calmly and methodically sets out in cold type that "Water boils at 212 degrees, while ice melts at 32. Blood heat is 98 degrees, alcohol boils at 174, while lead melts at 594, brass at 2253, and iron at 2479." So that even with the heat wave at its best, the gentlemen who care to indulge in a whisky and soda occasionally—although they might be better without it—can rest assured that it will not boil over on them. However, to proceed with the wave. Yesterday morning the temperature in Singleton at 4.30 a.m. was 52 degrees, and during the whole of the day the weather conditions were extremely sultry, the glass showing 102 at midday. Mr Hunt, the Commonwealth Meteorologist, states the rise in temperature is due to an Antarctic depression, which has attracted the hot winds of the Northern Territory through the southern portion of Queensland into Victoria. Shortly before 6 o'clock last evening heavy dark clouds gathered over the Singleton district, and a dust storm, accompanied by occasional thunder, raged for nearly half an hour, making the streets almost impassable for a time. Light rain followed, and there was a welcome change in the temperature.