

A Measuring of Our Ice

CANADA is bound by three oceans, but one, the Arctic, is its peculiar concern. The Arctic is an ocean of ice, surrounded to a great degree by shores of ice. In the dead of winter its basin is almost covered by ice — part of the Northern Hemisphere's huge Arctic ice pack.

In the summer much of the ice melts, but there remains a great mass, 10 to 20 feet thick, covering 1,800,000 square miles, which never melts.

The future of mankind will be affected by the care given this northern ice, and it is not exactly the same as the ice in our refrigerators.

It is formed from salt water and salt water

freezes at 28.6 degrees F., 3.4 degrees below the point at which fresh water freezes.

It is less brittle than fresh water ice. Little pockets of unfrozen brine within it make it surprisingly elastic — you can bend a thin sheet of sea ice.

Sea ice changes in a year or two, as the brine leaches out, and becomes fresher, harder and more formidable. When it is one year old — having survived a summer's thaw — it is called polar ice and by then it is almost fresh. When polar ice melts in surface pools it is drinkable.

Most of this great mass of ice is in constant

