

**ABSTRACT**

A receiver (4) is provided in a main line (9a) and a bypass passage (4a) having an open/shut-off valve (SV) is provided for introducing gas refrigerant in the receiver (4) into a low-pressure liquid line. A motor-operated expansion valve (5) is fully closed, the open/shut-off valve (SV) is opened, and then defrosting operation is executed. At the initial stage of the defrosting operation, the open/shut-off valve (SV) is closed. When a discharge-pipe temperature T_d drops to or below a specified temperature, the open/shut-off valve (SV) is closed. When the discharge-pipe temperature T_d rises to or above a specified temperature, the motor-operated expansion valve (5) is once opened to a specified opening. When defrosting operation is completed, the open/shut-off valve (SV) is opened in a heating cycle and the motor-operated expansion valve (5) is gradually opened.