

punkha or electric fan. Authorities say that it is only when the body is at two different temperatures that a person can catch cold. There is certainly no good reason for lying during a hot night upon a thick non-conductor that would serve to protect ice from melting while there are so many convenient forms of bed upon which a blanket and sheet or a piece of matting and a sheet are sufficient bedding. As the temperature falls during the night the air becomes more moist, retarding evaporation from the skin. This is the reason for much of the discomfort experienced during the night and it emphasizes the claim of light bedding which allows animal heat to escape downwards as well as upwards. When the bedding is so adjusted that the sleeper cools equally above and below he may sleep in the current of a doorway with comfort and safety. Prickly heat is more frequently contracted by night than by day. The writer during a period in hospital suffered from it and applied to have his mattress removed so as to lie on the tapes with a blanket and sheet. The tapes are broad 2 inch webbing, close woven, that form the floor of the bed. He argued that if he could lie all night without a sheet to cover him a mattress was unnecessary below him. After some demur the physician consented and in twenty-four hours the irritation had ceased. At 60 degrees in England a ventilating current of more than six inches per second constitutes a draught while in Bombay in May or October a current of 3 feet per second or 2 miles per hour is barely enough to ensure comfort owing to the moisture the air contains in these months.

Much care should be exercised in the choice of clothing and coverings both by night and day, for the climate that really counts is not the one that is recorded at the observatories, but that which lies between the skin and the garments that cover it. This air is very often saturated because the clothing is not porous enough to allow the water vapour to escape as fast as it is produced. These are truths that are not taught in schools and colleges.

(To be Continued.)

HUMOURS OF LIFE IN INDIA.

THE UBIQUITOUS CHIT.

By MISS SHOESMITH.

"MISS SAHIB!" says a voice in a pleading respectful tone outside my room door. "Kaun Hai?"—"Who is there?" I reply, slightly exasperated, for am I not trying to get an afternoon nap—those forty winks so necessary in India, and I was just dropping off into a beautiful slumber.

"Chitti", comes the answer. Oh, those everlasting chits, which descend upon one the moment she arrives in India! I arise, put on a wrapper, and hasten to open the door to receive the note. I glance at the address, and find it is meant for one of the visitors in the house and not for the poor over-taxed worker.

I send the man to the right room, and subduing my indignation compose myself to sleep once more. Another knock! "Chitti Hai" says the servant. By this time I am thoroughly awake and open the door with a flourish, and with a look more eloquent far than words I receive the note held out to me by

a lean brown hand. This time it is addressed to me, sure enough, and I tear it open and read, to find it a bill from the Gas Company which could easily have been left on my table downstairs to await my descent.

Sleep having fled I proceed to have a bath and to dress, preparatory to tea and office work afterwards. I am fortunate enough to secure my tea in peace, but on going down to the office, I find a peon (a bearer of chits) hovering in the hall, seeking an unwilling prey. I am instantly drawn into the net, and find on tearing open the envelope he has given me, that Mrs. So-and-So would like an umbrella that was left when she called last time returned by the bearer. Exit the peon armed with the umbrella and with a note explaining why the aforesaid umbrella was not returned before.

The next morning I am hastily dressing, being in a hurry to get to an early service, it being the Day of Intercession for Victory (Aug. 4th). I return from my bath to fall into the hands of a peon bearing a written message from a memsahib. My rage is turned into joy as I read that I may reply in pencil on the same paper, saying whether the memsahib may call for me in her motor to take me to church. A hastily scribbled "Yes, please do" contents the peon who goes off with his jawab (answer).

During the course of the morning, Mrs. A sends a note to know whether she can borrow our nice ice plates, and will we send them along by the bearer. After a time, he is despatched carrying off the plates in triumph. Mrs. B. would very much like the recipe of the nice cake that was made at the last cookery class, and the peon will wait for it. This means that I have to fly round to find somebody who took down the recipe in legible writing, and sitting down at my typewriter, type it out. Again I feel the peon has got the better of me. One can avoid answering by return of post, but never by return of peon.

I hastily don my hat, thinking to get some business done outside. I am even on the doorstep putting up my "Not At Home" box. Why, oh why, did I not look the other way. A lynx-eyed peon has thrust an envelope into my hand, and sure enough, he has happened on the right person. The name on the envelope is mine. Hastily I open it to find Rs. 2 enclosed, a membership subscription.

I groan in spirit though outwardly calm, fling down my parasol, peel off my gloves (it is not often I wear them) and taking up my pen write out a receipt—not in my best handwriting I fear. This done I literally fly out of the door, and vouchsafe no glances to peons. It is true one may thrust a missive upon me, even in the street, but I have only to translate the name and address for him, and he is satisfied; there is no jawab needed. "India is the land of sunshine and of Chits." I shall teach when I get home.

The best sentence to learn on coming to India is "Salaam do" (give salaams). This will satisfy a peon unless he has been told to wait for a written answer. It is simply an acknowledgment of the receipt of a chit. Unhappily most peons have been too well trained to be put off with this, and they will wait for hours on the doorstep rather than return to their mistress empty-handed.