

Alleghabad. June 10th 177.

My dear Mamma

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The rains I wrote

of last week have turned out to be only preliminary ones, and we are now worse off than ever, until the real drenching comes, which I hope will be in a fortnight. The interval between the little and big rains is the most trying time of the year, though I do not think it is so unhealthy as the fine drying up in September. I spent the day yesterday with Mrs. Plowden, going quite early in the morning. She showed me how to make an omelette after the French fashion with chopped onions, parsley, pepper and salt, so that my visit was not all in vain. Did I tell you that a piece of bread tied up in a linen bag and boiled with pees, absorbs the pees which are otherwise so disagreeable. It is a pleasant change to go to Mrs. Plowden for a day, though I see very little of her, as she is so busy with her house affairs. The rooms are delightfully cool and there are such quantities of books about, all the newspapers too, and weeklies. Just now, to moderate the heat, they have had two windmills, like large canons placed in the dressing and dining rooms. They are tubes about two feet wide and eighteen feet long, carried from the outer door to the middle of the room or to the part where the people prefer to sit. The tables and chairs are arranged in front of them and there is always a

current of cool air coming in. Rich
people can make themselves comfortable
enough here, but the lot matter is trying
enough for the rest of us. I am thankful
to say we have both managed pretty well
through it so far. On Friday I went with
Mrs Dally to the city again, hoping to get some
more of those little soapstone jars, but the
people who bring them were not there. I
devised, when the religious fairs come on
I shall be able to get some. I find they are
used for butter dishes. However I bought
a lot of variegated paper fans for one piece
that is a farthing each. some strings of native
beads made from seed and pith, and some
of the pretty embroidered caps which the
little children wear. The colours and
patterns of these are very attractive, and the
most expensive are only 5- each. It would
be a good investment to lay in a quantity
of these things for Christmas trees, children's
treasures at home. Mrs Dally is putting
forth all her efforts to make me some very
superior mango preserve to bring to England.
She is anxious to turn it out as near
perfection as possible, because I tell her
everyone at home will set great store
of it. She is to make me quince and pine
apple jelly too, when the time comes. She
has been very fond of my staying lately, and
I have taken her out sometimes for
drives, which have been a great treat

to her. Though she has lived in the station
more than twelve years she has scarcely
been more than a mile away from her
own house, except when she goes once a month
into the city, to buy her stores at one of the
native shops. John got a wonderful bargain
the other day, a Chinese junk, carved in
ivory, for five rupees. It is about eighteen
inches long, covered with the most delicate
little open work patterns and is, I suppose
a correct representation of the real thing.
Mrs Dixon has been getting me some silver
sleeve buttons made in the bazaar, from
a pattern of one of John's. They can copy any-
thing perfectly, though they cannot design
for themselves. I am going to have some
salt spoons made by the same people.
Both silver and labour are so cheap here
that it is a good opportunity of laying in a
stock. I don't think the things cost half what
they would in England, and the silver is quite
pure. I have been collecting all the old things
too and having them re-electroplated by one
of the men in the native Christian village.
He has done the work, so far as I can tell, very
well indeed. I must have them all tinned
and leathared up now, as things spoil so in
this country. I think they have settled
now, about the alterations which are to
be made in our house, but I have al-
most lost interest in the matter, as they
will scarcely be finished before we leave

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the station. He shall ^{come} in for the trouble
of it and that will be all. John has already
improved the garden very much at his
own expense, so that it will be a different
place altogether for the next chaplain who
comes. We are having some bamboo
trees planted now. They grow very rapidly
and are the most beautiful thing of their
kind here. I should not have called them
trees however, for I believe they are a kind
of cane, and grow in clumps. A stem
has been known to grow six feet in 24
hours. The flowers are not doing much
now, but when the rains come, we shall
have our beautiful reapers again. Some
of the shrubs here get a fresh supply of leaves
and flowers two or three times in the year.
One yasmine bush with a peculiarly rich
heavy scent, was covered with blossoms about
two months ago, after which it dried up
and seemed to have done its work for the
year. It has within the last week, in con-
sequence of the rains, I suppose, come out
again, and is now one mass of flowers.
The pomegranate is nearly always in
blossom, but it never brings any fruit
to perfection here. We are having such
quantities of melons now. I shall get Mrs
Dally to teach me how to make vegetable curries.
They can be made of almost any solid veget-
able and are very good. Indeed I mean to have
fruit a cooking course from her before I go away.
I will love from us both E. D. and M. C. I am ever affectionately etc.