

ICE-MAKING IN INDIA.—Let me now allude to an industry peculiar to the cold weather, which, except in small stations distant from the rail, is fast dying out, and that is the manufacture of ice. When I came out in 1853, Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were wholly dependent on American ice, supplied by the Tudor Ice Company, and retailed at two annas the *ser*; that is, two pounds of ice brought from America were sold in India for 3d. The *mofussil* (up country) was entirely dependent on artificial ice, which could only be made where the cold weather was really felt; in all other parts we were obliged to cool our drinks with saltpetre and sal-ammoniac, or, during the hot winds, by placing the bottles before the khus-khus tatties, or swinging them in a basket covered with wet straw. By these appliances we could cool our drinks down to 65° Fahrenheit; or by carrying on the cooling with fresh supplies of salts, we could even freeze water. But the process was tedious and expensive. Science came to our aid; and sulphuric ether and ammoniac machines came gradually into vogue, and latterly Carré's wonderful pneumatic machine, which I have seen produce ice in two minutes in a temperature of 95°. With these great appliances, block-ice is now available in districts where it could not formerly be had at from 1½ to 2 annas per *ser*. To return to the old process—it depended entirely on the production of cold by evaporation, as also on sufficient cold weather and the presence of the dry west wind; the east wind being absolutely fatal to the production of ice. The essentials for the process are: 1. Exposed and treeless ice fields, which are partitioned off into four to five feet squares, in which two to three inches of straw are laid down. 2. Myriads of flat, porous earthen saucers six to eight inches in diameter. 3. An unlimited supply of water. 4. An army of coolies and water-carriers. 5. The ice pit. This, the most important adjunct in the process, is very carefully constructed; a great pit is dug, and in it rests a huge timber cone, the space between it and the sides of the pit being rammed with charcoal, chaff, or straw as non-conductors of heat; the cone itself is lined thickly with coarse felt or blankets, and then a layer of matting; over all a straw hut, with very thick roof and walls and a very small entrance, is constructed. Now for the process. Whenever the outside thermometer reads 42°, then ice can be manufactured by evaporation. Half an inch of water is poured, over night, into the saucers by bheesties, (water-carriers;) then, at 2 A. M., a great drum is beaten at the pit to summon the coolies, who assemble in hundreds, each armed with a scoop, with which the ice is skillfully turned out of the saucer into an attendant vessel, and well rammed into it. When full it is taken to the pit, emptied there, and again rammed down. Thus all the ice has a chance of consolidating by regelation; and in a good season thousands of pounds' weight of ice may be stored, according to pit-room available.—*Chambers's Journal*.