

HV  
5816  
G7  
1922

UC-NRLF

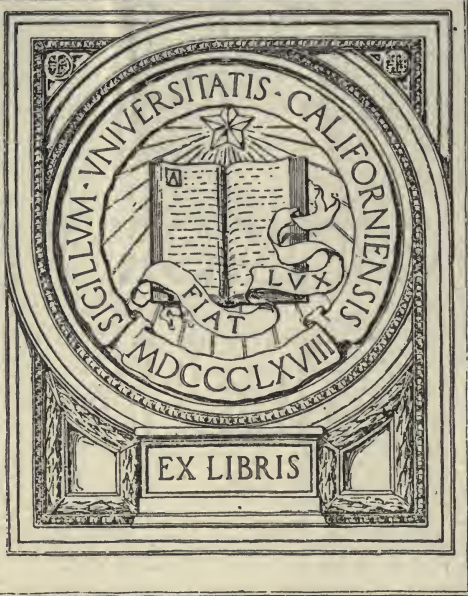


⌘B 47 182



35790

GIFT OF



EX LIBRIS

DOCUMENTS  
DEPT.

GIFT  
MAY 29 1922



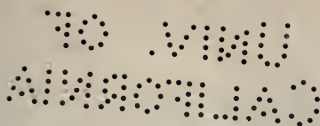
# THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIAN OPIUM

BY

G. GRAHAM DIXON.



Printed for and issued by  
THE INDUSTRIES AND OVERSEAS DEPARTMENT,  
INDIA OFFICE, WHITEHALL, S.W. 1.



HV5816

G7

1922

# THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIAN OPIUM.

DOCUMENTS

DEPT.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.—The Royal Commission on Opium in India	1
CHAPTER II.—The Production of Opium in India	4
CHAPTER III.—The Consumption of Opium in India	8
CHAPTER IV.—Opium Smoking in India proper and Burma	13
CHAPTER V.—The Export of Opium from India	16
CHAPTER VI.—The Hague Convention	29
CHAPTER VII.—The Position of India in relation to the World's Opium Problem	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY	42

## TABLES.

Acreage under poppy in British India and Indian States, with statistics of opium production	7-8
Consumption of opium in British India, Excise Revenue, issue price of excise opium, and quantities that individuals may possess	11-12
Quantities of prepared opium that individuals may possess	14
Number of chests and destinations of opium exported during the period 1870-1920	27-28
Revenue from sales of opium for export	28
Comparative table showing opium revenue in relation to gross revenues of British India	29

# THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIAN OPIUM.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON OPIUM IN INDIA.

In India, apart from Burma, which will be discussed separately, opium is generally eaten in the form of pills, and in some parts it is dissolved in water and drunk. It is the ordinary domestic medicine of the people, great numbers of whom are unaccustomed to, or beyond the reach of, skilled medical treatment, and it is a medicine of which they could not be deprived without very great suffering. It is largely used in the malarial tracts as a prophylactic against fever, and is a great aid to endurance; the fisherman swallows his opium pill before entering the water, just as his European brother carries his whisky flask, and the carrier eats opium when on the march. The drug has been commonly employed for hundreds of years, and abuse of its properties is rarer than the abuse of alcohol in Western countries.<sup>1</sup>

The danger of indulgence always exists, and for many years it has been the policy of the Government of India to guard against this in every possible way. It is the aim of this paper to explain the steps which they have taken and the results which have been achieved.

Opium smoking, which is the common form of consumption in other parts of the East, is on a different footing in India. It is a practice foreign to the country, and was introduced as a form of social indulgence among the disreputable classes. It is regarded as a vicious habit, much on a par with the consumption of alcohol, and has been hedged round by Government with restrictions which are little short of prohibition.

The consumption of opium in India dates probably from the 16th century, and a monopoly of the purchase of opium from the cultivators grew up in Bihar under the Mughal Empire. At that time cultivation in other parts of India was apparently unrestricted. The Empire lost hold of the monopoly during the anarchy of the 18th century, but it was carried on in

---

<sup>1</sup> There is an essential difference between the drug problem in India, and in Europe and America. These latter countries are principally concerned with the problems presented by the vicious consumption of cocaine and morphia, concentrated drugs far more potent than opium, and it is on the experience of the abuse of these drugs that much of the condemnation of Indian policy is based. It may be said that the effects of the consumption of opium in Europe and America are hardly less disastrous than those of morphia and cocaine. That is so, but the reason is that to Americans and Europeans opium is an unaccustomed stimulant. The habit being both new and strange, it is never used in moderation, but invariably abused, and the results cannot be compared with the results of moderate opium eating in India. Opium in the West is as dangerous as alcohol in the East, and for the same reason. It has not been suggested that the evil effects of alcohol in Africa afford a sound argument in favour of prohibition in England.

practice by a "ring" of Patna merchants. When the East India Company assumed responsibility for the collection of the Bengal and Bihar revenues in 1765, its servants appropriated the monopoly for their own private benefit, and the prevailing corruption continued. Disturbances ensued, and when Warren Hastings was appointed Governor-General in 1773 and given power to organise a proper system of government, he found himself compelled, in pursuance of his policy of depriving the Company's servants of the right of private trade, to assume control of the opium monopoly.

At first the right to manufacture opium was farmed out on contract, but this led to oppression of the cultivators, and the system broke down, with the result that in 1797 Government assumed the monopoly of manufacture. This measure, which included restriction and prohibition of cultivation except under licence, and extended to nearly all Northern India as it came into British possession, resulted in smuggling and clandestine production for local use, and attention was thus directed for the first time to the demand for opium in India itself, which it was found impossible to suppress. Accordingly there was passed in 1813 the first Bengal Regulation regarding consumption in India, the Government enunciating their policy of restricting the habit of opium eating by obtaining the maximum revenue from the minimum consumption, and declaring that they were desirous of countenancing only to the narrowest extent possible a habit which they found themselves unable to eradicate. This policy has never been lost sight of.

As a result of the activities of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, a Royal Commission was appointed in 1893 to enquire into all the circumstances connected with the production and sale of Indian opium, and the Society itself recorded the opinion that the appointment constituted "the greatest and most solid forward step that the movement for the suppression of the opium trade has yet made," and considered that the Commission was "as fair-minded and impartial a tribunal as the Society could have desired to hear its case."

The results of the Commission's labours were published in 1895 in seven volumes, which can be procured by anyone who desires to acquaint himself with the real facts regarding opium in India. Since 1895 consumption has declined, but the findings of the Commission still stand as a complete justification of the Government's policy.

The Commission examined with very great care the question of the consumption of opium in India, and found that in all provinces a limit was placed on the amount of opium, or preparations of opium, which might be sold to any individual, or of which a person might be legally in possession, at any one time, and that the average annual consumption for the whole of British India amounted to 27 grains per head.

As regards the use of opium and its effects, the Commission stated that opium was universally believed in as a common domestic medicine, special value being attached to its use in cases of fever and as a protection against malaria. As a stimulant, it was held in esteem as a specific against old age, many men of failing health taking the drug for periods varying from 15 to 50 years, and apparently obtaining benefit from the habit. It was also habitually used in many parts of India during the extremes of the winter months, and for the purpose of resisting fatigue in the case of journeys and hard physical labour. In Rajputana the use of opium in connection with social and ceremonial functions had acquired a quasi-religious sanction.

With reference to the consumption of opium in the Indian army, the Commission concluded that the number of soldiers accustomed to take opium to a harmful extent was insignificant, that its use in the army was often beneficial, and that any attempt to limit consumption would be highly unpopular.

As regards the general physical and moral effects of the use of opium, the Commission found that hard work, energy and thrift existed side by side with the opium habit; that it was unheard of for workmen to be dismissed on account of opium excess, though alcoholic excess was a constant source of trouble; and that the largest Indian insurance company had not found it necessary to impose any extra premium on the lives of moderate opium consumers. They were of opinion that the opium habit did not lead to insanity, crime, or suicide, and they finally concluded that the use of opium among the people in British Provinces was, as a rule, a moderate use, and was not attended by injurious consequences. Excess was exceptional, and condemned by public opinion.

The Commission were emphatic when they came to deal with the suggestion that the use of opium in India could be limited to strictly medical needs. They remarked that it was generally admitted that the limitation of cultivation and the monopoly of manufacture and wholesale supply, constituted the most restrictive position, short of prohibition, which the Government could adopt towards internal consumption. No distinct line was drawn in popular opinion between the medical uses of the drug and those which cannot be strictly so-called, and it would be impracticable to issue opium only on the prescription of medical practitioners. Further, the Commission were convinced that the great mass of Indian opinion was opposed to the proposal as an unnecessary restriction on individual liberty and an interference with established customs and habits. Apart from the religious question, Indians generally considered the use of alcohol to be more open to objection in itself, more injurious, and more disgraceful.

The Report of the Commission remains unchallenged on points of fact, and evidence that the situation in India has not

undergone retrograde developments is afforded by the fact that in 1920 the *per capita* consumption of opium in the British provinces was 26 grains, slightly less than the figure at which it stood 30 years ago. Moreover, if it were possible to ascertain the amount of opium used for veterinary purposes, this figure would without doubt, be smaller still. There are 150 million cattle and horses in British India.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### THE PRODUCTION OF OPIUM IN INDIA.

The chief difficulty with which the Government of India have had to cope in carrying out their policy of controlling opium production and confining the use of the drug within the narrowest possible limits, has been the fact that from the point of view of administration India consists of two parts—British India, under the direct control of the Government of India, comprising an area of a million square miles and a population of 247 millions, and the more or less autonomous Indian States, with a total area of 675,000 square miles and a population of 71,000,000. For over a century the Government of India have been gradually acquiring control over the production, transport and sale of opium throughout this vast area. So far as British India is concerned, they have concentrated cultivation within restricted areas, and have included all the provinces in the same general system in respect of transport and sale. As regards the Indian States, the problem of production and internal consumption could only be dealt with by negotiation, and several States have agreed to prohibit poppy cultivation within their territories. The opium produced by the others can only pass through British India on behalf of the Government of India, or of some other State which has received permission from the Government of India to obtain a specified quantity for its internal consumption.

Throughout the whole of British India (apart from certain inaccessible tracts on the Burmese frontier) the cultivation of opium is regulated by Act No. XIII. of 1857 (as amended by Act No. I. of 1911), and Act No. I. of 1878. Under those Acts the cultivation of the poppy within British India is permissible only under a licence; the total area to be sown is fixed by the Government from year to year; and the licence specifies the exact area which the licensee may cultivate. With the exception of the Punjab, where the people are allowed to plant a small area with poppy and to sell the opium direct to licensed vendors, the cultivator is bound to sell the whole of his produce to the Government at a fixed rate.



Advances of money are made to the cultivator in accordance with the established practice at the time the production of opium became a Government monopoly, but these amount at the present day to about 11s. a year in the case of each cultivator. No cultivator grows poppy unless he wishes. If he desires to raise some other crop he can obtain an advance of money to assist him to do so.

The crude opium is sent to the Government factory at Ghazipur, and is there made up into raw opium in two forms: opium intended for export to foreign countries, known as "provision" opium, owing to the fact that the proceeds of sale were originally intended to provide funds for Indian transactions with China, and opium intended for consumption in India, known as "excise" opium. Provision opium is made up in the form of balls or cakes, each weighing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., and is packed in chests, each chest containing 40 cakes and weighing  $140\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. Excise opium is made up in cubical packets, each weighing  $2\frac{2}{3}$  lbs., 60 of which are packed in a case. A notification is published annually, generally before the month of October, stating the number of chests of export opium which will be auctioned at Calcutta in each month of the next calendar year, and sales are conducted month by month by the Government of Bengal.

Apart from the production of opium, the poppy is valuable in other ways. The seed is exported in large quantities to Belgium, France and the United Kingdom for the expression of oil, and is also used as an article of food. The crop is sown in the autumn and gathered in the spring, usually succeeding an autumn crop of Indian corn; and in addition to opium each acre yields about 260 lbs. of seed and 80 lbs. to 100 lbs. of oil. The total area to be cultivated in any one year is decided by a calculation of the amount required for internal consumption and the amount to be exported to foreign countries. Production of the opium is controlled by the opium department, which had formerly two agencies, one stationed at Patna in the province of Bihar and Orissa, and the other at Ghazipur, in the United Provinces. Consequent, however, on the large reductions made in the export trade, it was found possible to combine the two agencies into one, and in 1911 the Patna agency was abolished.

The area cultivated under the Bengal monopoly system has been reduced from 642,831 acres in 1903-04 to 163,125 acres in 1919-20, and the amount of opium produced has fallen from 10,227,867 lbs. in 1902-03 to 1,876,114 lbs. in 1919-20. Since opium may only be grown for the Government, and the operations from start to finish are rigidly supervised by Government officers, the control exercised under this monopoly system is the most restrictive, short of total prohibition, that it is possible to devise.

An increase in the area under cultivation does not necessarily indicate an increased production of opium, and a decrease in area usually represents a more than proportionate decrease in production. The reason for this is that poppy cultivation tends to desert the more fertile lands, with the result that the quantity of juice obtained from each acre falls. In former days an acre of poppy usually produced 16 lbs. of opium, but at the present time the figure is only 12 lbs. The diminution and final cessation of the trade to China led the Government of India to decrease the area very rapidly, and eventually it was found that the supply was beginning to fall short of the demand. The seriousness of the position was increased by the British Government's requirements of opium for medical purposes in connection with the war. This immediate demand was met partly by a diversion of the allotment reserved for the ordinary trade and partly by depleting the reserve stocks kept in view of possible bad seasons; while the main shortage was partly met by the purchase of some of the 60,000 chests of manufactured opium left on the hands of the Feudatory States after the China markets were finally closed, and by taking a certain supply of the raw article from those States in accordance with arrangements entered into with them, in order to compensate them in part for their loss of the China trade. But this did not fill the gap, and the Government therefore decided to enlarge the area under cultivation. — This phase came to an end in 1918, and since that year the area cultivated under Government control has considerably diminished, the deficiency being made up by purchases from the States.

The principal States which produce opium (known in this connection as the Malwa States) are the States of the Central India and the Rajputana Agencies, and Baroda. These States, in addition to producing opium for their own internal consumption, exported large quantities to China until the Government of India prohibited export to that country in 1913. It has been stated that the highest area ever cultivated was 562,000 acres, and in the latter years of the 19th century the yearly average was about 400,000 acres, producing some 54,000 chests of opium. From that time the area steadily decreased, owing to the competition in China of enormous quantities of Chinese grown opium, and this made it possible to stop the trade with China with less dislocation and hardship than would otherwise have been the case. But the States have never been completely reconciled to a policy which has meant serious financial loss to them, although the Government of India have assisted by purchasing from them certain quantities of opium upon their agreeing to bring into fresh cultivation only the area required for that purpose.

The following table shows the area cultivated under Government control since 1905-06, and the quantities of provision

opium manufactured at the Ghazipur factory. It will be remembered that a chest of provision or export opium contains  $140\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., and a chest of excise opium, for consumption in British India,  $123\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. :—

Year.	Acreage.	Chests of Provision Opium made.
1905-06	613,996	48,750
1906-07	564,585	38,126
1907-08	488,548	40,001
1908-09	361,832	28,125
1909-10	354,577	29,000
1910-11	362,868	15,000
1911-12	200,672	14,000
1912-13	178,263	7,000
1913-14	144,561	12,000
1914-15	164,911	10,000
1915-16	167,155	12,000
1916-17	204,186	12,000
1917-18	207,010	14,499
1918-19	177,124	12,500
1919-20	163,125	—
1920-21 (estimated)	143,750	—

Opium purchased from the Malwa States is used only for the manufacture of excise opium, and is not exported. 60,000 chests of opium were left on the hands of the States when the China trade came to an end, and in order to ease the position the Government of India have bought the following quantities :—

Year.	Excise Chests of $123\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	Year.	Excise Chests of $123\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
1912-13	4,163	1916-17	5,257
1913-14	7,001	1917-18	4,916
1914-15	9,034	1918-19	5,314
1915-16	13,990		

There also has to be taken into account the produce of the area specially cultivated in order to supply the deficiency in the United Provinces output. The acreage cultivated under these arrangements has been as follows :—

Year.	Acres.	Production in Excise Chests of $123\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
1916-17	14,695	2,223
1917-18	26,479	2,315
1918-19	10,350	1,200
1919-20	30,813	1,803
1920-21	84,000 (about)	2,835

All these sources have contributed to maintain the supply of excise opium at the necessary level during recent years.

The number of chests manufactured to supply the demands of British India since 1905-06 are shown below :—

Year.	Excise Chests of 123 $\frac{3}{7}$ lbs.	Year.	Excise Chests of 123 $\frac{3}{7}$ lbs.
1905-06	- 5,635	1912-13	- 9,947
1906-07	- 6,263	1913-14	- 8,307
1907-08	- 11,229	1914-15	- 8,943
1908-09	- 5,770	1915-16	- 8,391
1909-10	- 7,172	1916-17	- 8,732
1910-11	- 8,611	1917-18	- 8,567
1911-12	- 9,126	1918-19	- 8,512

The Indian States of course continue to produce opium for their internal requirements, but the effect of the cessation of export to China can be seen from the following figures, which represent the total area under cultivation, inclusive in the later years of the acreage cultivated on account of the Government of India :—

Year.	Acres under cultivation in Indian States.	Year.	Acres under cultivation in Indian States.
1905-06	- 146,677	1913-14	- 12,277
1906-07	- 246,911	1914-15	- 15,320
1907-08	- 191,714	1915-16	- 10,568
1908-09	- 134,629	1916-17	- 46,441
1909-10	- 108,973	1917-18	- 54,341
1910-11	- 147,262	1918-19	- 24,871
1911-12	- 71,983	1919-20	- 56,934
1912-13	- 47,143		

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CONSUMPTION OF OPIUM IN INDIA.

The attitude of the Government of India towards the general question of opium consumption was well expressed by the following passage in a Despatch addressed to the Secretary of State by Lord Hardinge's Government in 1911 :—<sup>1</sup>

“The prohibition of opium-eating in India we regard as impossible, and any attempt at it as fraught with the most serious consequences to the people and the Government. We take our stand unhesitatingly on the conclusion of the Royal Commission which reported in 1895, viz., that the opium habit as a vice scarcely exists in India, that opium is extensively used for non-medical and quasi-medical purposes, in some cases with benefit, and for the most part without injurious consequences ; that the non-medical uses are so interwoven with the medical

<sup>1</sup> This passage was quoted in the Despatch from the Government of India, dated the 24th March 1921, which was published in the supplement to the Gazette of India, dated the 17th September 1921.

uses that it would not be practicable to draw a distinction between them in the distribution and sale of the drug: and that it is not necessary that the growth of the poppy and the manufacture and sale of opium in British India should be prohibited except for medical purposes. Whatever may be the case in other countries, centuries of inherited experience have taught the people of India discretion in the use of the drug, and its misuse is a negligible feature in Indian life. Even if it were possible to suppress the cultivation of opium in India, geographical and political limitations would place it beyond our power to prevent illicit import and consumption on a serious scale"; and again: "The great majority of Indian opium-eaters are not slaves to the habit. They take small doses as required and can and do give up the allowance when the need of it is past. Opium is in virtually universal use throughout India as the commonest and most treasured of the household remedies accessible to the people. It is taken to avert or lessen fatigue, as a specific in bowel complaints, as a prophylactic against malaria (for which its relatively high anarcotine content makes it specially valuable), to lessen the quantity of sugar in diabetes, and generally to allay pain in sufferers of all ages. The vast bulk of the Indian population, it must be remembered, are strangers to the ministrations of qualified doctors or druggists. They are dependent almost entirely on the herbal simples of the country; distance and the patient acceptance of hardships standing in the way of prompt access to skilled medical relief. In these circumstances the use of opium in small quantities is one of the most important aids in the treatment of children's sufferings. It is also a frequent help to the aged and infirm, and an alleviation in diseases and accidents which are accepted as incurable. To prevent the sale of opium except under regular medical prescription would be a mockery; to many millions it would be sheer inhumanity."

Ever since the logic of events compelled the Government of India over a hundred years ago to recognise that opium-eating could not be entirely suppressed, and that it was a necessary element in the lives of the population, they have steadily pursued a policy of restricting the habit within the narrowest possible limits. The system they have built up is primarily based upon the principle of restricting the consumption to legitimate needs. The abuse of opium is prevented by limiting the amount of opium which an individual may possess at any one time, and by a continuous process of raising the price at which opium is sold to the consumer, only stopping short of the point at which the object in view would be defeated by the attraction of smuggling.

The Opium Act, 1878, prohibits the manufacture, possession, transport, import, export and sale of opium, except as permitted by rules framed under the Act, and provides for the confiscation of any opium in regard to which an offence is committed. Officers of the Excise, Police, Customs, Salt, Opium

and Revenue Departments of the proper rank are given powers of search, seizure and detention. There is also a special rule prescribing that in prosecutions for breaches of the Act it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that all opium for which an accused person is unable to account satisfactorily is opium in respect to which he has committed an offence under the Act. The main provisions of the rules made by the different provinces are uniform. The produce of the poppy cultivated on Government account must all be delivered to the Government Opium Department, and such opium can, therefore, only be obtained from Government. The produce of the poppy cultivated by licensed cultivators in the Punjab can only be sold to licensed vendors and cannot be obtained direct by the ordinary consumer. Government, or "excise," opium, is issued only to licensed wholesale or retail vendors. The wholesale vendor may sell such opium, or opium obtained from a licensed cultivator, only to other licensed vendors or to licensed druggists; the retail vendor and the licensed druggist may sell to individuals. Thus the individual can obtain opium produced in India only from a licensed retail vendor or a licensed druggist. Each stage of the distribution down to the retail vendor is safeguarded by an elaborate system of transport passes, while the conditions governing the licence of a retail vendor are most stringent. He may not sell to any one person at one time more than the quantity of opium which an individual may lawfully possess; he may sell only for cash and only on premises for which he is licensed; he must not allow consumption on such premises, and he must keep correct daily accounts of his sales, which shall be open at all times to inspection by Excise officers. The number of licensed shops in an area is fixed so as not to exceed what is necessary to satisfy the moderate needs of legitimate consumers, and is constantly being reduced as improvements in communications or other changes in local circumstances render centralisation of supply more easy. In the year 1892-93 there were 9,531 opium shops in British India. By 1907-08 these had been reduced to 8,136; and the figure now stands at 6,394. The amount of opium of which an individual may be in possession varies according to circumstances in the different provinces, but in most places is either 360 or 540 grains.

Equally strict control is maintained over the supply of Indian grown opium obtainable from a licensed druggist and the supply of imported opium. A notification under the Sea Customs Act, 1878, No. 720-79, dated the 4th February 1911, prohibits absolutely the import of opium by sea or by land by means of the post, and restricts its import by other means to cases in which it is imported by persons permitted to import it by a Local Government or Administration. The rules as to import made by Local Governments vary considerably in detail, but generally speaking it may be said that only licensed druggists and medical practitioners are permitted to import opium, in quantities of which they may lawfully be in possession by

means of a special permit or licence. Exceptions are made in the case of visitors of distinction from countries outside India and foreign horse-dealers, who are allowed to import small quantities for the personal use of themselves and their attendants or for their horses. In the Punjab licensed vendors are also permitted to import on passes opium produced in the Simla Hill States and the Hill States of Chamba, Mandi, Suket and Sirmur. Similarly, in Ajmer-Merwara licensed wholesale and retail vendors may import Malwa opium on pass. The further distribution of opium thus obtained from Indian States is regulated in exactly the same manner as the distribution of excise opium described above. Imports by licensed druggists and supplies obtained by them from licensed vendors can only be sold for medicinal purposes, in quantities not in excess of the amount which the purchaser may legally possess, and correct accounts must be maintained showing the amount of opium in the possession of the licensee from day to day.

The following statistics form a striking commentary on the success of the Government's policy :—

Year.	Consumption, Excise Chests of 123 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	Excise Revenue (Licence Fees and Duty) converted into sterling at Rs. 15 to the £.
		£
1911-12	8,334	1,010,133
1912-13	8,496	1,150,466
1913-14	8,610	1,356,066
1914-15	8,311	1,372,666
1915-16	8,066	1,424,600
1916-17	8,099	1,373,066
1917-18	8,262	1,457,200
1918-19	7,893	1,587,733
1919-20	7,480	1,676,333

During the same period the issue price of excise opium has been raised as shown below :—

Province.	1911-12.	1921.
Madras	28	60
Bombay	24 and 27	45
Bengal	29 to 35	50
Burma	35 to 72 $\frac{1}{2}$	70 to 106 $\frac{1}{4}$
Bihar and Orissa	17 to 35	55
United Provinces	18 to 20	55
Punjab	13 to 37	50
North-West Frontier Province	18 to 26	50
Delhi	13 to 37	50
Central Provinces	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	45
Assam	37 and 40	50
Coorg	30	50
Baluchistan	16	35

and in nearly all provinces the amounts of raw opium which may be in the possession of an individual at any one time have been considerably reduced, as will be seen from the following table :—

		Limit of private Possession of Raw Opium.	
		1911-12.	1920-21.
		Tolas (180 grains).	Tolas (180 grains).
Madras -	-	6 (a) and 1 (b)	3 (a) and 1 (b)
Bombay	-	10 (c) and 4 (d)	3 (c) and 1 (d)
Bengal -	-	5	3
Burma -	-	3	3
Bihar and Orissa	-	5	3
United Provinces	-	3	3
Punjab -	-	3	2
North-West Frontier Province	-	3	2
Delhi -	-	—	2
Central Provinces	-	3	2
Assam -	-	5	3 and 2
Ajmer-Merwara	-	5	3
Coorg -	-	3	1
Baluchistan	-	3	2

The population has risen from 244,267,542 in 1911 to 247,111,563 in 1921, yet it will be noticed that the total consumption over a 10 years' period shows a slight decrease. In view of the fact that the price has been raised 50 per cent. in the same period, the failure of consumption to decline materially is proof that the Government have succeeded in their policy of confining it to a practical minimum. It may be remarked that the annual per capita consumption is at present 26 grains, slightly less than the figure arrived at by the Royal Commission in 1893, and little more than half the *per capita* consumption of the United States of America, as estimated by responsible American authority. Indian opium is not exported to the United States. So far as other Eastern countries are concerned, the comparison is more favourable still to India. As regards many of the Far Eastern countries for which statistical information exists, the Indian figure is only a third, a tenth, a thirtieth or a fortieth part of the *per capita* consumption in one of these countries. These ratios do not pretend to be strictly accurate, but for purposes of comparison they may be taken as approximately correct. It should also be noted that they take into account only the amounts of opium imported into such countries from India. Many of these countries also obtain opium from Persia and Turkey, and if their imports

(a) Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavari.

(b) Rest of the Province.

(c) Portion of the Thar and Parkar District, east of the Eastern Nara Canal.

(d) Rest of the Presidency.



from India were cut off, would have no difficulty in supplying the deficiency from these sources. At the same time, as will be explained in Chapter V., it is the policy of the Government of India to regulate the quantities exported from India to these countries according to the demands made by their Governments for legitimate requirements.

In the face of comparison it is impossible to understand why the finger of criticism should be pointed at opium consumption in India. No estimate can be given as regards China. That country has never ceased to produce opium, though the Indian product was excluded from her shores on account of her alleged determination entirely to extirpate native cultivation, and she has now returned to the position she occupied in the early years of the present century, that of the greatest opium producer and consumer in the world.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### OPIMUM SMOKING IN INDIA PROPER AND BURMA.

It has already been stated that opium smoking is not a custom indigenous to India. It came to India as a foreign habit, took the form of social indulgence among the lower and dissipated classes, and has accordingly been the object of severe repression.

There is no difficulty in prohibiting opium smoking in a country where the consumption of opium in any form is prohibited except for medical purposes, but the fact that opium-eating is allowed in India rendered it very difficult to prohibit the actual act of smoking, as any attempt to enforce such a prohibition would obviously have involved domiciliary visits and interference with the private lives of the people. Short of this, however, the Government of India have done everything possible to stamp out the practice, encircling it with restrictions that fall very little short of complete prohibition. By provincial rules made under the Opium Act, the manufacture of smoking preparations is forbidden, except by an individual for his own use from opium lawfully in his possession, and the sale of prepared opium is absolutely prohibited. In addition, limits were prescribed for the private possession of preparations of opium considerably less than those fixed in the case of raw opium, and as smoking is extremely wasteful and consumes a far greater quantity of the drug than eating, this made excessive indulgence out of the question. Since 1912 the issue price at which opium is sold to the consumer has been raised to a considerable extent in every province in India, and the maximum limit of private possession of both raw and prepared opium has been reduced.

The extent to which the price of opium has been raised and the limit of private possession of raw opium reduced was shown in Chapter III. The following table shows the narrow limits and the drastic reductions imposed in each province of India in the case of prepared opium.

Province.	LIMIT OF PRIVATE POSSESSION OF OPIUM-SMOKING PREPARATIONS.			
	In the case of individuals.		In the case of persons† assembled for purpose of smoking.	
	1911-12.	1920-21.	1911-12.	1920-21
	Tolas (180 grains).			
Madras - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	*
Bombay - - -	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	*	$\frac{1}{2}$
Bengal - - -	1	1	5	2
Burma - - -	3	3	5	5
Bihar and Orissa - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	5	$2\frac{1}{2}$
United Provinces - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	*
Punjab - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1
North-West Frontier Province.	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1
Delhi - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1
Central Provinces - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1
Assam - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	5	1
Ajmer-Merwara - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1
Coorg - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1
Baluchistan - - -	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	*	1

\* Not specially provided for.

† The figures in the 3rd and 4th columns represent the maximum amount of opium for smoking allowed to an assembly of persons, however large. The total of the individual allowances of the persons assembled is the governing maximum until the figures shown in these columns are reached.

The Government of India have always before them the ideal of unqualified and direct prohibition, and have carried out a progressive campaign in this direction. As a result of the recent change in the Government of India Act, the matter has become one for the discretion of Provincial Governments in the first instance, who are showing a keen interest in the question. This has strengthened the hands of the Government of India, and Provincial Governments, who already had before them a proposal, cutting at the heart of what is essentially a social practice, to declare illegal any assembly of three or more persons for the purpose of smoking opium, even if that assembly consists of members of the same family, have been asked to consider the practicability of entirely prohibiting opium smoking. Replies have already been received from two Governments, those of Madras and the Punjab. The Government of Madras has

decided against any measure of prohibition, stating that the amount of local smoking is negligible, but the Government of the Punjab state that they have under consideration legislation to prohibit the practice of smoking in municipal and cantonment areas.

This account of the regulations on the subject of opium smoking in India needs to be qualified with reference to the case of Burma, which has for many years presented a special and difficult problem.

In Burma, as in China and the Malay Peninsula, opium is more commonly smoked than eaten. Consumption is permitted only to non-Burmans, and to a limited number of Burmese specially registered as opium consumers in Lower Burma. In Upper Burma the sale to, or possession of, opium by Burmese, except for medical purposes, was absolutely prohibited on the annexation of the country in 1886.

It was accepted in 1893 that the consumption of opium was harmful to people of the Burman race; and in January 1894 the Government entered upon a campaign for the progressive suppression of smoking in Lower Burma, which can only be paralleled, and that on a far smaller scale, by the achievement of the United States of America in the Philippines. It was made penal for Burmans who had not registered themselves as habitual consumers to possess or consume opium, and the issue price of opium was placed at a figure nearly double that fixed in any other province. These restrictions, however, resulted in a large increase in smuggling and illicit consumption in Burma, and it was decided in 1900 to revise the arrangements. The steps taken were (1) to increase the number of licensed opium shops in Lower Burma; (2) to grant licences for the sale of opium to selected candidates instead of putting them up to auction; (3) to re-open temporarily the lists of registered Burman consumers for the addition of actual consumers who were over 25 years of age in 1893; (4) to organise further efforts against opium smuggling through the agency of the preventive staff and the police.

These measures were brought into effect in April 1902. The result of their working was not found entirely satisfactory. Under the 1894 arrangement 14,600 smokers were registered; to these 20,000 were now added. In the last year of the old system 51,428 lbs. of Government opium were consumed in Lower Burma, and the opium receipts were about Rs. 20,00,000. In 1904-05 the receipts were Rs. 46,00,000, and the consumption 144,000 lbs. The Government of Burma considered that this merely indicated the supplanting of contraband opium by Government opium, and that the total consumption had not materially increased.

The rules were recast and made more stringent in 1910, while amendments of the law, made in the preceding year,

gave increased powers in the matter of dealing with persons suspected of unlawfully trafficking in opium and as regards arresting and searching for the drug. Finally, with effect from the 1st April 1921, the Government of Burma have prohibited the sale of prepared opium. By the end of 1911-12 the numbers of Burmans registered as smokers had fallen to 14,049, and is now 5,405. With the extinction of these there will be absolute prohibition of opium to Burmans, except for medical purposes, in the whole of Burma.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE EXPORT OF OPIUM FROM INDIA.

India now exports no opium to China, but the old trade to China cannot be passed over in silence. Great interest attaches to its origin and growth, to the agreement for the progressive reduction of Indian exports side by side with the suppression of cultivation in China, and to the dramatic stoppage of exports by the Government of India in 1913, an action that involved Indian revenues in an annual loss of 4,000,000*l.* sterling, and that has unfortunately entirely failed to benefit China.

The first reference to the manufacture of opium in China occurs in the 15th century, the knowledge of the drug having no doubt been introduced to the Chinese, as to the Indians, by the Arabs. When, at the beginning of the 16th century, the Portuguese first entered the China Seas, they found opium an important article of the trade carried on by Indian and Arab merchants.

During the 17th century, Dutch, French, English and Danish merchants purchased Bengal opium from the Mughal Government for export, and when in the early part of the 18th century the Mughal monopoly fell into disuse, the Europeans drew their supplies from the ring of native merchants at Patna.

The establishment of a monopoly in Bengal opium by the East India Company has already been referred to. In 1775 it was decided that the monopoly should be a revenue measure for the benefit of India, and that all opium delivered at Calcutta, apart from a fixed number of chests disposed of to the Dutch, French and Danish companies, should be sold at auction for export only.

Import duties on opium are entered in the Chinese trade books of the years 1589, 1615 and 1687, and in the Hoppo book of 1753.<sup>1</sup> According to the historical note compiled by Dr. Edkins, of the Chinese Customs Service, in 1889, a Chinese author

<sup>1</sup> A compilation of tariffs, of which an interesting account is given by Dr. Edkins in his Historical Note (*see Bibliography*).

writes that "In the Ming dynasty, 1360-1644, the pill called "golden elixir came into use, and was found to be very "deleterious if much was taken." But it was not until the practice of smoking opium began to spread throughout China that Indian opium began to be imported in large quantities. Tobacco was imported into China from the Philippines in 1620, and early in the 18th century the Chinese had progressed from the Javan and Formosan habit of smoking opium impregnated tobacco to smoking opium itself. The habit spread from China to the Shan States of Burma, and cultivation in China itself began to increase rapidly in the West.

In 1729 a severe Imperial edict was issued against opium smoking, and from that time onwards raw opium from India was often seized as contraband, though it was free to be imported as foreign medicine. More usually it was passed by the Canton mandarins on payment of a bribe, and as the same procedure continued when the Emperor in 1796 began to prohibit import, it is not surprising that the foreign merchants failed to be impressed by the reforming intentions of the Chinese Government, and indulged in smuggling on such a scale as to precipitate the conflict that was bound to occur sooner or later in view of the intense dislike of the Chinese for foreigners.

By 1790 opium smoking had reached Peking, and the demand had become so great that foreign merchants had hit on the device of paying for their purchases in opium, a ready substitute for coinage. As the demand went on increasing, the balance of trade turned against China, and silver began to flow out of the country. The Imperial Government viewed this state of affairs with alarm, and an edict was issued in 1796 prohibiting the import of opium, and referring to the drain of silver as the reason. The East India Company at once forbade any opium to be carried on their ships, though they imposed no conditions regarding the cargoes of private traders, to whom they gave licences for the China trade.

The trade in opium continued to increase, and in 1816 the Select Committee of the East India Company stated "that "the officers of Government (the Chinese Government) are "never sincere in their declared intentions of suppressing illicit "traffic, more particularly the trade in opium, as it is con- "sidered one of the principal advantages of their situations. "While it remains notorious that the Imperial edicts for the "prevention of this trade are annually issued by China with "one hand while large bribes are received by the other, it can "never be imagined that any new regulations are framed with "a view to the injury of such a trade, or that they for one "moment consider the moral habits and welfare of the people."

The close of the East India Company's monopoly of the China trade in 1834 gave a great impulse to the trade in opium as well as in other goods. In the period 1830-35 the total

average combined exports of Bengal and Malwa opium (to China and other countries) amounted to something between 20,000 and 25,000 chests a year, and the period 1835-36 to 1843-44 showed an average annual export from India of about 34,000 chests. In 1847-48 the figure had risen to 46,000 chests, two-thirds of which was Bengal, and for the three years 1852-55 the average figure was 73,000 chests. After this date there was little change for 38 years; Chinese-produced opium having begun to catch up with the demand and beginning to compete with Malwa, though not with Government Bengal opium. From 1895 onwards China produced so much opium that the Indian export figure fell steadily, until it reached the figure of 50,000 chests.

It is interesting to note that in 1830 and 1833 a Select Committee of the House of Commons examined the subject of the East India Company's China trade, affirming in 1830 that the prohibition edicts were disregarded by the Chinese people, and in 1833 approving the Indian revenue from the export of opium.

In 1836 a memorial to the Emperor from the Vice-President of the Chinese Sacrificial Court begged that the trade might be legalised on a foundation of barter, as notwithstanding the fact that opium smokers were liable to be punished with transportation and death, the practice had spread through the whole Empire, and the rise in the value of silver owing to its export led to acute economic disorganisation. The memorial was concurred in by other higher officials, who also suggested that the foreign opium should be combated by relaxation of the prohibition of cultivation in China. They were clearly more concerned for silver than for morals. In fact, as Captain Elliot (the British representative) pointed out, the Chinese were far more anxious about the coast missions and the dissemination of tracts than about opium as such.

A Chinese statesman had stated that Yunnan alone produced annually several thousand chests of opium, but that passed unheeded. The silver crisis had become acute, and the Chinese regarded the arrogance of the foreigners, now free traders, not under the influence of the East India Company, as intolerable. The strangers demanded diplomatic relations, contrary to "custom"; they were outside the law, except as regards homicide; their missionaries claimed to protect converts, and were an offence; they brought foreign women to Canton, employed native servants, and rode in sedan chairs. Conflict was inevitable, and as opium formed three-fifths of the imports, it was bound to occur over opium. A strong prohibition edict was issued in 1837, and in 1839 a strong Viceroy was sent to Canton. He seized the British representative and the Canton merchants, confiscated and burnt 20,283 chests of opium which Captain Elliot had collected and surrendered in order to save the lives of the Europeans, and in spite of Elliot's proposals for a complete abandonment of the opium trade, let loose war junks

on British vessels. China had decided to teach the foreigner his place. Britain declared war in 1840.

The history given above should prove that the war was not undertaken to force opium on China, and a few sentences from Lord Palmerston's instructions to the British representatives at the peace negotiations of 1841 show that the result of the war was not to compel China to take Indian opium: ". . . .  
 " You will state that the admission of opium into China as an  
 " article of legal trade is not one of the demands which you  
 " have been instructed to make . . . . It is evident that  
 " no exertions of the Chinese authorities can put down the  
 " trade . . . . It is equally clear that it is wholly out of  
 " the power of the British Government to prevent opium from  
 " being carried to China; because even if none were grown in  
 " any part of the British territories plenty of it would be  
 " produced in other countries." It was, therefore, suggested that the trade should be legalised. In fact, opium was not mentioned in the Nankin Treaty, which closed the war, and remained a prohibited and flourishing business.

The war of 1857 had no connection with opium, but when at the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858 (finally ratified in 1860) a new tariff was drawn up, the Chinese voluntarily legalised the trade by entering opium in the tariff at an import duty of 30 taels per picul or chest, double that on other articles, and subject to local transit duty in addition. The following extracts make the responsibility for the legalisation quite clear. Mr. Long, the Chinese Secretary to Lord Elgin's Mission, wrote to the *Times* on the 22nd October 1880: "When I came to opium, I enquired what  
 " course they proposed to take in respect to it. The answer  
 " was: 'We have resolved to put it into the tariff as foreign  
 " medicine.' I urged a moderate duty in view of the cost of  
 " collection, which was agreed to. This represents, with strict  
 " economy, the amount of 'extortion' resorted to. The Chinese  
 " Government admitted opium as a legal article of import, not  
 " under constraint, but of their own free will deliberately.  
 Mr. Long's statement was confirmed by Mr. Laurence Oliphant, Secretary to Elgin's Mission, in a letter to the *Times* on the 25th of the same month. The latter further stated: "When  
 " we came to the article 'opium,' I informed the Commissioner  
 " that I had received instructions from Lord Elgin not to insist  
 " on the insertion of the drug in the tariff, should the Chinese  
 " Government wish to omit it."

In 1885 an additional Article to the Chefoo Convention consolidated the import and transit duties into a lump sum of 100 taels per chest, payable before the opium went out of bond, with the further stipulation that foreign opium should not be subject to any taxation that was not levied on native opium.

In the negotiations preceding the Chefoo Convention, it had become clear that the Chinese Government had ceased to wish to prohibit import of opium, and had discovered the

possibilities of an opium revenue. They plainly said that opium smoking could not now be eradicated, a statement fully borne out by the observations of Vice-Consul Spence regarding cultivation in South-West China in 1882. Spence considered the arguments of the Anti-Opium Society regarding opium cultivation in China, the attitude of the Imperial Government, and the effect of opium smoking to be "absolutely untrue," and for the following reasons. The cultivation of poppy was carried on in nearly every district of Szechuan. In country hamlets almost every second house was an opium shop, and in the whole region Indian opium was unknown. In face of this, the people were healthy, well housed, well fed, and well clad, though probably six-tenths of the adult male population were opium smokers. The production of Szechuan, Yunnan, Kueichow and South-West Hupei, Ichang Fu, and Shih Nan Fu came to 224,000 piculs, or 29,866,666 lbs., from 850,000 acres. This was  $2\frac{1}{4}$  times the whole Indian import into China.

Here it may be noted that in view of the present conditions in China, and the recent recorded prices of the native drug, it looks as if, by depriving China of Bengal opium, we have prohibited champagne, but not affected gin. By 1905 one Chinese province showed a production two or three times the total Indian imports, and for many years before the stoppage of export in 1914 Malwa opium was suffering heavily from the competition of the China crop.

Spence added that Shensi was producing top grade opium in the very year that the Governor was reporting that he had uprooted the poppy everywhere in his jurisdiction. He concluded his report with the following prophetic remarks:—

"The right of the people to grow and smoke opium has been for years unquestioned by their officials: to compel them to surrender the right now, would be to provoke a rebellion. Even if the Government were willing to incur this risk, and determined *coûte que coûte* to be rid of opium, which it would be at present nonsensical to affirm, success would require a vigorous executive, free from venality and opium smoking, having under its orders armies of constables equally free from these faults. But China has no such executive and no such armies. Of the local official class, their attendants, hangers-on and constables, it may truly be said that if there is one quality more conspicuous than their venality, it is their love of opium smoking. Even were the prospect of a *bonâ fide* effort not a chimera its success would be impossible.

"What, under the circumstances, would be the practical effect of the rigorous prohibition of opium cultivation in India, and the attempted exclusion by China of foreign opium, it is easy to see. Its effect on opium smoking in Yunnan, Kueichow, Szechuan, Kansuh, Shensi and Western Hupei, where Indian and foreign opium are all but unknown, would be nil. Amongst the poor smokers in the East, who now use the



native drug, its effect would be equally nil. Many who now use Indian opium would take to native, and one effect would be to give a great stimulus to production in the West. But well-to-do smokers in the East and seaboard provinces, amongst whom I include all who at present spend 10*d.* a day on Indian opium, would everywhere seek for a high-class smuggled opium. Smuggling would be organised all along the coast, Chinese desperadoes would find willing associates in running foreign opium into the country in European and American adventurers, the Maritime Customs service would have to become an armed force, quiet seaports would be turned into hells of disorder, and international relations between China and foreign Powers would be embittered to an intolerable degree. The opium which could not be grown in India would come in part from Turkey and Persia; new fields for its growth would be opened in Mozambique and similar latitudes in Africa; and the profits of the trade, instead of passing, as they do now, to the support of our beneficent rule and civilisation in India, would become the incentive to, and the reward of, lawlessness, disorder and crime."

The attitude of the British Government towards China during these years was well expressed in the declaration in Parliament of Sir J. Fergusson on 10th April 1891, that, "if the Chinese Government thought proper to raise the duty on opium to a prohibitive extent, or to shut out the article altogether, this country would not expend 1*l.* on powder and shot, or lose the life of a soldier in an attempt to force the opium trade on the Chinese," and in Mr. Gladstone's statement of the 30th June 1893, that "we have left that matter to China herself. . . . The opium which we allow to be exported . . . is sent to that country to be received by China if she chooses to receive it."

In section I. (c) of their findings, the Royal Commission of 1893-95 stated that, in their opinion, it was not found that satisfactory reasons existed for unsolicited action by the British Government for the destruction of the trade in Indian opium with China, and they agreed in not recommending any action that would have that effect. If at any future time the Chinese Government declared a wish to prohibit import, however, they thought that the question would be changed and should be reconsidered.

The question changed in 1906, when, for the first time since 1858, the Government of China decided to prohibit the cultivation and consumption of opium.

Whatever the real causes of the anti-opium movement in China, and however badly that movement has failed, it seems true that both the Imperial Government in 1906 and the young China party in the best days of the Republic were earnest in their desire to suppress the importation, cultivation and use of opium; and when the British Government

were approached by China with a view to the reduction and ultimate extinction of the Indian import, there were no two courses open.

The result was the conclusion of an agreement at the beginning of 1908, by which, with effect from the 1st January 1908, the Government of India undertook to diminish progressively the total amount of opium sold at Calcutta by 5,100 chests a year for a period of three years, which it was expected would indirectly diminish the amount imported into China; and if the Chinese fulfilled their share of the agreement to reduce cultivation in China to a similar extent, they further agreed to continue annual reductions of 5,100 chests until the total export reached the figure of 16,000 chests. Over the five year period 1901-05 the average annual export to all countries was 67,000 chests, of which China took 51,000, so that progressive annual reductions of 5,100 chests would have brought export to China to an end in 1917, the limitation having begun in 1908, when the total export to all countries was 61,900 chests. The difficulty presented by the Malwa trade was overcome by a decision to throw the greater part of the burden of reduction upon the Bengal monopoly, and the situation was further eased by the fact that owing to bad seasons and the competition of the native Chinese drug cultivation had for a long time been declining in the Indian States. The net result was a very great diminution in Indian cultivation.

Mr. Leach, Councillor to the Peking Legation, reporting to Sir J. Jordan in November 1907, stated that the appreciable amount of success obtained up to that date by the Chinese Government in their "stupendous task of attempting by legislation to eradicate a national and popular vice in a country whose population is generally estimated at 400,000,000," showed that the task could be fulfilled, and that the Chinese people in general considered opium smoking a vice. In a further report, transmitted to London by Sir J. Jordan in June 1908, Mr. Leach remarked that since his previous report the chief feature of the situation had been the continued energy of the Central Government and the growing apathy of provincial officials, but he produced gratifying evidence of a reduction in cultivation from many provinces. In November 1908 Sir Alexander Hosie reported that there was no question as to the continued sincerity and zeal of the Central Government, which was backed by public opinion and a young but growing patriotism, and Sir J. Jordan agreed that, "considering the magnitude of the task, the success which has so far attended the movement is as great as could reasonably be expected." In October 1909 Mr. Max Muller, Councillor to the Peking Legation, reported that distinct progress had been made, especially in Shansi and Yunnan, and considered that the great test would arise in the case of Szechuan, the chief opium province, where sowing in the

autumn of 1909 had been prohibited. In April 1910 it was reported that cultivation in Szechuan had been greatly checked, and it was then arranged for Sir Alexander Hosie to make an extensive tour of inspection during the 1910 season. In March 1911 Sir A. Hosie reported that cultivation has been suppressed in Szechuan "for the present"; that there had been a reduction of 75 per cent. in the production of Yunnan, where raw opium had risen to six times its value in 1907; that in Kansu production had increased in some districts and had been energetically diminished in others; that very little decrease had been effected in Shensi, but that cultivation had been entirely suppressed in Shansi.

Negotiations were begun at Peking in the latter half of 1910 for a continuance of the 1908 arrangement, the Government of India agreeing that there was sufficient general evidence that cultivation had been substantially reduced in China to warrant their waiving statistical proof, and a new agreement was drawn up and signed on the 8th May 1911. Under the terms of this agreement the Government of India agreed (1) to the payment of an import duty three times the existing amount in return for the promised abolition of provincial taxes; (2) to the partial closure of China to Indian opium by provinces, including not only stoppage of transit passes, but also treaty port closure, Shanghai and Canton excepted; (3) to the total extinction of trade before 1917 on proof of total cessation of opium production in China; and (4) to revision of the agreement on due notice by either party. On her side China agreed, amongst other things, to reduce production in China *pari passu* with the reduction of exports from India.

In addition to the limit to the China trade imposed by the agreement, the Government of India agreed, in order to lessen the danger of smuggling into China, and as an earnest of their desire to assist that country, strictly to confine the remainder of the Indian exports to the legitimate demands of the non-China markets. The figure arrived at for these markets, the result of elaborate calculations based on Board of Trade statistics and the average exports for the period 1905-09, when no inducement for smuggling to China had existed, was 14,000 chests; the Government of India cut down their non-China exports to this figure in 1911, and in order to make assurance doubly sure, spontaneously reduced this to 13,200 chests in 1912. The whole of the very large revenue from the China trade was now lost to India, as well as the revenue from that part of the exports to non-China markets which was sacrificed as an unsolicited and indirect contribution to China's success.

Then followed the revolution in China, Szechuan being among the first provinces to revolt. Poppy began to be grown again everywhere. Cultivation in Yunnan was reported to be continuing as early as November 1911, and in the Cheng Tu

district of Szechuan in January 1912. In May and August 1912 the matter was the subject of questions in the House of Commons; but the Government declared its determination to carry out the British side of the 1911 agreement irrespective of events in China, in the hope that when a settled Government emerged in China it would take up the work of suppression where it had been left by the Manchus.

The hoped for change came towards the end of 1912, when the Republican Government was at last firmly in the saddle, and began to surpass the rigours of the Manchu rulers in the suppression of the opium habit. The movement had, as might have been foreseen, become indiscriminate, a hatred of native opium being accompanied by a hatred of imported, and the conditions of the 1911 agreement were lost sight of in the fervour of the moment.

This movement, holding up the stocks at Shanghai, led to an accumulation of 30,000 chests at that port. The situation became serious, and in April 1913 the Government of India stopped export to China. On the 7th May 1913, Mr. Montagu, at that time Under Secretary for India, stated that "we are prepared not to send any more opium to China not only this year, not only while the stocks are being absorbed, but never again, with the single exception that we desire to be satisfied that China . . . is steadfast in the pursuit of her present policy and determined to get rid of her indigenous poppy."

The closure of provinces now, of course, only affected the disposal of stocks at Shanghai and the general situation as far as it was affected by the stocks question, and the remainder of the history of the poppy in China is of academic interest only, so far as the 1911 Agreement is concerned. Throughout 1913 the suppression of cultivation went on, marked by violent methods of intimidation and repression, which were directed as much against the purchases of Indian opium as against the native cultivators and dealers, and by this time probably nobody except the Anti-Opium Society believed that poppy cultivation could be permanently suppressed in China. In 1917 the Chinese Government closed the whole of China to Indian opium, holding that the 1911 Agreement had automatically expired.

On the 17th October 1918 it was stated in the House of Commons that no official information had been received of any increase in the production of opium in China since 1917, but civil war and the breakdown of the machinery of central control were soon to lead to a change, in which native opium came to be regarded as the chief means of raising money for troops.

In 1918 considerable recrudescence of growing took place in five provinces, and in Kansu the price of opium had fallen 50 per cent. Large quantities of the drug were also produced

in Russian territory and imported into China, thousands of Chinese themselves crossing the border to grow the crop.

Further reports of planting and harvesting were received in April 1919, together with confirmation of the fact that cultivation in Fukien was connived at by the local officials. Fukien, however, being in the hands of the Southern Government, Sir J. Jordan considered it useless to protest to the Chinese Foreign Office at Peking. In May information was received of extensive growing, with official support, in Szechuan and Shensi, cultivation being permitted on payment of a tax, and Sir J. Jordan admitted that his representations would be likely to have little effect. It is worth noting that the Chinese armies were credited with reintroducing the opium smoking habit in all districts they occupied, and that the military governors and commanders were saddled with the responsibility of fostering the cultivation and consumption of the drug.

In June 1919 a remarkable letter was received from Sir J. Jordan, in which he said that Mr. Easte, travelling to take up his duties at Chengtu, reported that 30 to 50 per cent. of the fields in his line of march through Szechuan were full of poppy, and added that there appeared never to have been any real effort at eradication.

In spite of a formal protest to the Chinese Foreign Office, warning them that the continued and growing cultivation constituted a "grave infringement of the solemn pledge entered into by the Chinese Government by the 1911 "Agreement," reports received in July 1919 more than confirmed all that had gone before, and it was estimated that in 1918 the acreage under poppy in Kirin Province (North Manchuria) alone was 40,500. Affairs were rapidly returning to the position of affairs at the time when Vice-Consul Spence wrote his report in 1882.

The year 1920 continued the tale of flourishing cultivation, on the profits and extortions from which most of the armies in China appeared to be subsisting, while in spite of heavy taxation the price of opium remained generally only half the rates that had obtained in 1918. In Chinese Turkestan it had fallen from 45 taels to 15 taels per lb., and in Yunnan it was stated to be selling at 30 cents an ounce, less than the cost of production in India.

The reports of His Majesty's Consular officers, corroborated and strengthened by missionaries, private firms of standing, shipping companies, and the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, point conclusively to the fact that China is now much the greatest opium-producing country of the world.

The end of the China trade reduced the Indian export trade to extremely small proportions. Smuggling to China was guarded against by the imposition of a voluntary limit on exports, as has been stated above. It was decided in 1911, after a systematic examination of all the available data, to

accept the lowest estimate of the legitimate requirements of the non-China markets, namely, 14,000 chests annually, although evidence was produced to the effect that 16,000 chests would not be too high a figure, and to refuse to permit exports in excess of that amount. In 1912 the number of chests was cut down to 13,200.

In 1915 the Government of India embarked upon a policy of entering into agreements with the Governments of importing countries for the direct supply of the bulk of the opium requirements of those countries. These Governments are thus made publicly responsible for limiting their imports to the legitimate requirements of the territories under their control, and for the prevention of re-export. The system has the further advantage of eliminating the possibility of smuggling in respect of the greater part of Indian exports. Agreements of this kind are now in force with Hong Kong, the Straits Settlements (whose requirements include the Federated Malay States), British North Borneo, Ceylon, the Dutch East Indies and Siam. Efforts are at present being made to extend the system to the remaining importers of Indian opium, Japan, French Indo-China and Portugal (for Macao), and, if these attempts are successful, the disposal of opium by public auction at Calcutta will in all probability cease. The agreements contain a clause that the importing Government is not bound to take a minimum quantity of opium. Exports to the Portuguese Colony of Macao are at present regulated by a Treaty of 1913 with Portugal, prescribing maximum limits for the amount of Indian opium which may be imported by the opium farmer at Macao, but this Treaty was denounced on behalf of His Majesty's Government by the British Minister at Lisbon on the 4th February 1922. The denunciation takes effect one year from that date, when the amount of Indian opium which may be annually exported to Macao will be subjected to a lower limit than the present one of 500 chests.

More than three-quarters of the total exports are now sent direct to responsible Governments, and the amount of opium sold by auction at Calcutta, which was 48,000 chests in 1901, fell to 19,840 in 1912, and in 1921 amounted to 705 chests only. Even in respect of this small quantity importing Governments have full power of control, and the Government of India would willingly co-operate in any measures suggested by those Governments in order to make that control more effective.

The table on page 27 gives details of exports to a number of countries since the year 1870, and shows both the enormous diminution of the trade and its present exiguous proportions. The column for China includes also Hong Kong and Macao, and the figures for the years 1914-20 represent exports to those Colonies. As stated above, no Indian opium has been exported to China proper since 1913. The increasing figures for the United Kingdom from 1913 onwards represent medicinal needs

Year.	* China (including Hong and Macao).	Straits Settlements.	United Kingdom.	East Coast of Africa.	Mauritius.	Natal.	Reunion.	Aden.	Ceylon.	French Indo-China.	Dutch East Indies.	Philippines.	Australia.	Other Countries. (See p. 28.)	Total.	Year.
	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	Chests.	
1870-71	77,105	8,054	54	13	9	—	10	10	34	—	224	—	5	—	85,518	1870-71
1875-76	77,186	11,005	60	7	19	—	—	—	68	—	—	—	5	—	88,350	1875-76
1880-81	82,392	9,622	30	14	39	1	5	3	84	—	—	—	—	—	92,190	1880-81
1885-86	76,115	10,728	—	7	19	2	7	—	77	1,000	—	—	—	—	87,956	1885-86
1890-91	70,855	13,915	47	17	55	1	—	—	103	480	—	280	—	—	85,753	1890-91
1895-96	45,617	12,529	—	8	32	2	—	—	123	1,430	750	245	—	80	60,860	1895-96
1900-01	49,761	16,779	507	17	38	5	—	1	181	1,720	590	—	—	10	69,708	1900-01
1905-06	48,007	12,368	427	13	40	23	—	—	179	509	770	—	71	538	62,936	1905-06
1906-07	50,590	12,953	315	16	24	1	—	—	178	580	930	—	249	438	66,274	1906-07
1907-08	47,749	13,195	116	15	25	—	—	—	194	940	1,285	—	—	241	63,760	1907-08
1908-09	52,758	11,174	21	17	21	—	—	—	345	1,900	970	—	—	51	66,957	1908-09
1909-10	41,468	11,140	—	11	5	—	—	—	312	1,895	1,360	—	—	—	56,191	1909-10
1910-11	31,323	9,138	4	7	28	—	—	—	231	1,015	2,125	—	—	50	43,921	1910-11
1911-12	25,398	6,684	15	4	23	—	—	—	120	2,125	2,195	—	—	1,625	38,189	1911-12
1912-13	19,575	5,098	11	—	10	—	—	—	50	805	3,010	—	—	2,815	31,374	1912-13
1913-14	4,061	1,537	115	—	19	—	—	—	105	875	3,265	—	—	1,929	11,906	1913-14
1914-15	1,350	1,355	498	—	23	—	—	—	80	2,690	2,650	—	—	3,160	11,806	1914-15
1915-16	824	3,155	199	—	65	—	—	—	65	2,035	1,835	—	—	3,248	11,426	1915-16
1916-17	865	3,989	—	—	120	—	—	—	80	3,440	1,965	—	—	2,366	12,829	1916-17
1917-18	855	5,174	—	—	15	—	—	—	60	3,050	1,800	—	—	2,648	13,602	1917-18
1918-19	1,001	4,003	—	—	42	—	—	—	70	3,490	2,400	—	—	3,822	14,828	1918-19
1919-20	869	4,025	—	—	35	—	—	—	60	995	2,000	—	—	2,525	10,509	1919-20

\* This column includes exports to Hong Kong and Macao. Export to China was stopped altogether in 1913, and the figures from that time onwards relate to exports to Hong Kong and Macao alone.

caused by the war. At a later stage, in response to urgent appeals, the Government of India sent large quantities of medical opium direct to the Home Government. These are not recorded in the table, but amounted to 10,476 chests in all. No Indian opium has been exported to Great Britain by private merchants since 1916.

The principal importers recorded under the head "Other Countries" in the table are Japan, Siam and British North Borneo. No opium is exported from India to the United States of America or to Great Britain. The Governments of British North Borneo and Siam both entered into agreements for the direct supply of opium in 1918. During the three calendar years 1918-20 the former has taken 120, 120 and 192 chests, while Siam has imported 1,700 chests annually. Japan, who has not yet entered into an agreement with the Government of India, and therefore purchases at the Calcutta auctions, began to import opium from India in 1911, and has taken the following quantities since that time :—

Year.	No. of Chests.	Year.	No. of Chests.
1911-12	- - 425	1916-17	- - 963
1912-13	- - 950	1917-18	- - 971
1913-14	- - 799	1918-19	- - 1,936
1914-15	- - 900	1919-20	- - 980
1915-16	- - 1,080		

As it has been asserted that India is administered on the proceeds of opium, and that the policy of the Government of India is biassed by consideration for the opium revenues, a table is appended which shows the gross revenue derived from sales of opium for export during the period 1910-21 :—

Year.	£	Year.	£
1910-11	- 7,240,407	1916-17	- 2,455,442
1911-12	- 4,898,151	1917-18	- 2,135,810
1912-13	- 3,320,349	1918-19	- 2,454,321
1913-14	- 1,279,478	1919-20	- 2,386,305
1914-15	- 1,230,486	1920-21	- 1,953,167
1915-16	- 1,500,215		

The effect of the cessation of the China trade in 1913 is strikingly shown by these figures, which effectively prove that the policy of the Government of India in opium matters is not swayed by considerations of revenue. The increase in revenue since 1915-16 is due to the rise in the price of opium.

The revenue obtained from licence fees and the excise duty on opium is under the control of Provincial Governments, but for purposes of comparison the excise revenue figures, which were given in Chapter III., may be added to those given above, and the total may be compared with the gross



revenue of British India. In every case rupees are converted into sterling at the rate of 15 to the pound.

Year.	Excise Revenue plus Sales for Export.	Gross Revenue of British India.
	£	£
1910-11	8,216,540	80,682,473
1911-12	5,908,284	82,835,750
1912-13	4,470,815	86,862,598
1913-14	2,635,444	85,207,175
1914-15	2,603,152	81,157,666
1915-16	2,924,815	84,413,537
1916-17	3,828,508	98,050,430
1917-18	3,593,010	112,662,347
1918-19	4,042,054	123,257,744

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE HAGUE CONVENTION.

While the Indian trade in opium to China was being terminated, and China herself was in the throes of temporary suppression of cultivation, the opium question began to assume a more widely international aspect. In 1909, on the initiative of the United States of America, an International Opium Commission met at Shanghai and formulated a series of recommendations for the suppression of opium smoking and regulation of the use of opium and morphia. The United States then advanced a further proposal for an International Conference at the Hague, which met on the 1st December 1911.

It cannot be too emphatically stated that the terms of the Convention finally drawn up presented no new ideas to the Government of India. That Government had for long regulated the consumption of opium in its territories in the most complete manner, and had already agreed to export no opium to countries which prohibited its import, and to control export to countries desiring to restrict import. They had already expanded their measures for the suppression of opium smoking to embrace the recommendations of the Shanghai Commission, and they had given the world a signal instance of disinterested self-sacrifice in the matter of discontinuing the China trade. Independently of the China agreement, they had voluntarily cut down the amount of opium allowed to be imported to non-China markets from the average figure of 16,000 chests to 14,000 chests in 1911 and 13,200 chests in 1912, as it was not clear how much non-China opium was being directed to that country owing to the high prices prevailing there. As regards morphia and cocaine, the use of these drugs in India was subject to exceedingly strict regulations long before 1912.

Bearing in mind the fact that, as the Royal Commission of 1893 had pointed out, any attempt to confine the use of opium in India to strictly medical needs vouched for by medical practitioners would be not only inhuman, but absurd, the regulations of the Government of India effected more than was likely to be required of them. Cocaine and morphia, on the other hand, the use of which for other than medical purposes invariably takes the form of dangerous vice, were becoming a menace to the entire world, but were not included within the scope of the proposals submitted by the United States of America for the consideration of the Conference. It was mainly owing to the pressure exerted by the Government of India that these drugs were included within the terms of the Convention finally concluded, and a rigid and universal application of the articles which apply to them would rid the world of the drug evil.

In view of the amount of misapprehension that continues to accumulate round the provisions of the Hague Convention, it is necessary to lay stress on its actual meaning. As regards raw opium, the contracting Powers undertook to control its production and distribution; to limit the number of ports from which it might be imported or exported; to prevent its export to countries which prohibit import, and to control export to countries which restrict import; to mark opium consignments as such; and to confine its import and export to authorised persons. As regards prepared opium, that is to say, smoking opium, which India does not, and never has, exported, and the sale of which in India is prohibited, the Powers agreed to aim at the gradual suppression of manufacture, internal trade, and use, with due regard to the varying circumstances of each country concerned, unless regulations on the subject are already in existence; and to prohibit import and export immediately, or as soon as possible. As regards medicinal opium, morphine, cocaine, and allied drugs, it was agreed to enact regulations confining manufacture, sale and use to medical and legitimate purposes, and to pass measures for controlling manufacturers, traders and exporters.

This summary contains the chief provisions of the Convention, which was no less than a complete vindication of Indian policy. The anti-opium party in Great Britain and in the United States of America has, however, completely failed to understand its purport, and has continually attacked the Government of India for not carrying out its provisions.

A second Opium Conference met in 1913 and decided that, although certain Powers who had been invited to sign the Convention had not then done so, the deposit of ratifications might, nevertheless, take place. A third met in 1914, and recommended early ratification by all the Powers who had not yet ratified, in order that the Convention should come into force as soon as possible. Progress was then suspended by the

outbreak of war, but finally, under Article 295 of the Treaty of Peace with Germany, it was provided that ratification of that treaty should imply ratification of the Hague Convention and a promise to enact the necessary legislation within a period of 12 months. Similar provisions were included in the treaty with Austria (Article 247), Hungary (Article 230), Bulgaria (Article 174), and in the unratified Treaty of Sévres with Turkey (Article 280). It is important to note that Turkey, the chief Middle Eastern source of opium, the fountain from which American supplies are drawn, refused to sign the Convention. Persia was among the signatories, but with a reservation of a number of articles, among these Article 3 (a), which requires the contracting parties "to prevent the export of raw opium to countries which should have prohibited its entry."

The preceding chapters have shown how rigidly the Government of India's practice conforms to, and in many respects goes beyond, the requirements of the Hague Convention. a summary of which was given above, but it may be as well to set out these requirements in detail, and to show categorically how they are satisfied by the law or regulations in force in India.

The principal articles of the Convention are as follows :—

#### CHAPTER I.—RAW OPIUM.

*Definition.*—By "raw opium" is understood—

*The spontaneously coagulated juice obtained from the capsules of the papaver somniferum, which has only been submitted to the necessary manipulations for packing and transport.*

##### Article 1.

*The contracting Powers shall enact effective laws or regulations for the control of the production and distribution of raw opium, unless laws or regulations on the subject are already in existence.*

The laws and regulations in force in India have been described in Chapters II. and III.

##### Article 2.

*Due regard being had to the differences in their commercial conditions, the contracting Powers shall limit the number of towns, ports, or other localities through which the export or import of raw opium shall be permitted.*

Opium is only allowed to be exported from British India through the ports of Calcutta and Bombay.

##### Article 3.

*The contracting Powers shall take measures—*

(a) *To prevent the export of raw opium to countries which shall have prohibited its entry, and*

(b) *To control the export of raw opium to countries which restrict its import, unless regulations on the subject are already in existence.*

The export of opium from India has been dealt with in Chapter V. Opium is not allowed to be exported to countries which have prohibited its import, and the Government of India would co-operate with any Government that desired to restrict its imports of Indian opium. To prevent the abuse of Indian opium, the Government of India have, in this respect, gone further than the terms of the Convention demand, by arbitrarily limiting the amount of their opium exports to a figure below the ascertained normal demands of countries which permit its import.

#### Article 4.

*The contracting Powers shall make regulations requiring that every package containing raw opium intended for export shall be marked in such a way as to indicate its contents, provided that the consignment exceeds 5 kilog.*

All chests of opium for export are packed in gunny and marked with a number, a red stripe and the words "Benares Opium."

#### Article 5.

*The contracting Powers shall not allow the import and export of raw opium except by duly authorised persons.*

Seventy-seven per cent. of the exports are sent by the Government of India direct to Governments of importing countries. Compliance with this Article in respect of exports by private merchants is secured by notifications issued under the Opium Act of 1878.

The import of opium by post is absolutely prohibited, and import by other means is only allowed to persons properly authorised by Local Governments.

### CHAPTER II.—PREPARED OPIUM.

*Definition.*—By "prepared opium" is understood—

*The product of raw opium, obtained by a series of special operations, especially by dissolving, boiling, roasting and fermentation designed to transform it into an extract suitable for consumption.*

*Prepared opium includes dross and all other residues remaining when opium has been smoked.*

#### Article 6.

*The contracting Powers shall take measures for the gradual and effective suppression of the manufacture of, internal trade in, and use of prepared opium, with due regard to the varying circumstances of each country concerned, unless regulations on the subject are already in existence.*

The measures taken by the Government of India for the gradual and effective suppression of the use of prepared opium are explained in Chapter IV. Except in Burma, manufacture is only permitted to private individuals from raw opium lawfully in their possession, and an individual may not manufacture for his own use more than eleven-fiftieths of an ounce at any one time. Burma is the only part of India where opium is habitually smoked, and there the Government of India have waged a long campaign for its suppression. Within a short period of time there will be complete prohibition of the use of opium by Burmans for other than medicinal purposes. The sale of prepared opium is prohibited throughout India.

*Article 7.*

*The contracting Powers shall prohibit the import and export of prepared opium; those Powers, however, which are not yet ready to prohibit immediately the export of prepared opium shall prohibit it as soon as possible.*

*Article 8.*

*The contracting Powers which are not yet ready to prohibit immediately the export of prepared opium—*

- (a) *shall restrict the number of towns, ports, or other localities through which prepared opium may be exported;*
- (b) *shall prohibit the export of prepared opium to countries which now forbid, or which may hereafter forbid, the import thereof;*
- (c) *shall, in the meanwhile, prohibit the consignment of prepared opium to a country which desires to restrict its entry unless the exporter complies with the regulations of the importing country;*
- (d) *shall take measures to ensure that every package exported, containing prepared opium, bears a special mark indicating the nature of its contents;*
- (e) *shall not permit the export of prepared opium except by special authorised persons.*

Both import and export of prepared opium are forbidden under section 4 of the Opium Act of 1878. At no time in her history has prepared opium been exported from India.

CHAPTER III.—MEDICINAL OPIUM, MORPHINE, COCAINE, &C.

*Definitions.—By “ medicinal opium ” is understood—*

*Raw opium which has been heated to 60° centigrade and contains not less than 10 per cent. of morphine, whether or not it be powdered or granulated, or mixed with indifferent materials.*

By "morphine" is understood—

*The principal alkaloid of opium, having the chemical formula  $C_{17}H_{19}NO_3$ .*

By "cocaine" is understood—

*The principal alkaloid of the leaves of erythroxyton coca, having the formula  $C_{17}H_{21}NO_4$ .*

By "heroin" is understood—

*Diacetyl-morphine, having the formula  $C_{21}H_{23}NO_5$ .*

#### Article 9.

*The contracting Powers shall enact pharmacy laws or regulations to confine to medical and legitimate purposes the manufacture, sale, and use of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts unless laws or regulations on the subject are already in existence. They shall co-operate with one another to prevent the use of these drugs for any other purpose.*

Under the rules in force in India, licensed dealers or chemists may manufacture and sell morphia drugs and cocaine, and may sell to other chemical dealers, or chemists, or to approved medical, veterinary and dental practitioners. In fact, however, no morphia is manufactured in India except at the Government factory at Ghazipur. The chemist can only sell on the prescription of an approved practitioner, and the latter may only possess morphia drugs for use in his practice. The ordinary individual may only possess morphia drugs and cocaine as issued to him on medical prescription. The Government of India, who were largely responsible for the inclusion of these drugs within the terms of the Convention, are prepared to co-operate to the fullest possible extent with other Governments to prevent their use for other than medical purposes.

#### Article 10.

*The contracting Powers shall use their best endeavours to control, or to cause to be controlled, all persons manufacturing, importing, selling, distributing, and exporting morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts, as well as the buildings in which these persons carry on such industry or trade.*

*With this object, the contracting Parties shall use their best endeavours to adopt, or cause to be adopted, the following measures, unless regulations on the subject are already in existence :—*

- (a) *to confine the manufacture of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts to those establishments and premises alone which have been licensed for the purpose, or to obtain information respecting the establishments and premises in which these drugs are manufactured and to keep a register of them ;*

- (b) to require that all persons engaged in the manufacture, import, sale, distribution, or export of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts shall be furnished with a licence or permit to engage in these operations, or shall make to the competent authorities an official declaration that they are so engaged ;
- (c) to require that such persons shall enter in their books the quantities manufactured, imports, sales, and all other distribution, and exports of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts. This rule shall not necessarily apply to medical prescriptions and to sales by duly authorised chemists.

These requirements are all fulfilled by the rules in force in India, with the following exceptions. As manufacture of morphia drugs is only carried on at the Government factory, the form of licence granted to dealers and chemists contains no reference to the premises where manufacture may be carried on. The Government of India therefore suggested to Local Governments early in 1921 that this omission should be remedied. The same position exists in respect of cocaine, but as no cocaine whatever is manufactured in India, it has not been thought necessary up to the present to make any amendments.

#### Article 11.

*The contracting Powers shall take measures to prohibit, as regards their internal trade, the delivery of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts to any unauthorised persons, unless regulations on the subject are already in existence.*

#### Article 12.

*Due regard being had to the difference in their conditions, the contracting Powers shall use their best endeavours to restrict to authorised persons the import of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts.*

The import by post of alkaloids of opium and cocaine is absolutely prohibited, and these drugs may not circulate through the post within India. Morphine drugs can only be imported by persons licensed to possess such drugs, and cocaine only under the authorisation of a special permit. The imports of cocaine for the year 1919-20 amounted to 172 ounces, to supply the needs of 318,000,000 people.

#### Article 13.

*The contracting Powers shall use their best endeavours to adopt, or cause to be adopted, measures to ensure that morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts shall not be exported from their countries, possessions, colonies and leased territories to the countries, possessions, colonies and leased territories of the other*

*contracting Powers, except when consigned to persons furnished with the licences or permits provided for by the laws or regulations of the importing country.*

*With this object each Government may communicate from time to time to the Governments of the exporting countries lists of the persons to whom licences or permits for the import of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts have been granted.*

The fulfilment of this Article requires the co-operation of importing countries, and the Government of India have expressed their readiness to prohibit the export of morphine and cocaine unless the consignment to be exported is covered by an import certificate granted by the Government of the importing country, to the effect that the drug is required solely for medicinal or scientific purposes. In fact, no cocaine has ever been exported from India, and morphia has only been exported in small quantities in the form of by-products obtained from waste materials at the Government factory.

#### Article 14.

*The contracting Powers shall apply the laws and regulations respecting the manufacture, import, sale, or export of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts—*

- (a) *to medicinal opium ;*
- (b) *to all preparations (medicinal and non-medicinal, including the so-called anti-opium remedies) containing more than 0·2 per cent. of morphine, or more than 0·1 per cent. of cocaine ;*
- (c) *to heroin, its salts and preparations containing more than 0·1 per cent. of heroin ;*
- (d) *to all new derivatives of morphine, of cocaine, or of their respective salts, and to every other alkaloid of opium, which may be shown by scientific research, generally recognised, to be liable to similar abuse and productive of like ill-effects.*

Medicinal opium in the past was subject to the same regulations as raw opium, but on the coming into force of the Convention the Government of India drew the attention of Local Governments to the question of amending the definition of morphine drugs contained in their rules so as to include medicinal opium. In fact, medicinal opium is not manufactured in India. Similarly, steps were taken at the same time to examine the lists of preparations excluded from the operation of the rules on the ground of the negligible amounts of morphine or cocaine entering into their composition, in order to comply strictly with the requirements of this article. Heroin is subject to the rules applicable to morphine drugs.

Articles 15 to 19 of the Convention are concerned with China and the Treaty Powers, and relate principally to smuggling into and out of China, and to the leased territories.



Article 20 suggests that the contracting powers should examine the possibility of making it a penal offence to be in illegal possession of any of the substances dealt with by the Convention, and Article 21 provides that they shall communicate to one another, through the Netherlands Government (for which the Secretariat of the League of Nations has now been generally substituted by arrangement) texts of their laws and regulations and statistical information concerning trade. Both these Articles have been complied with by the Government of India. The remaining Articles relate to details of signature and ratification.

It will be observed that a thorough and honest application of the Articles of this Convention would fully secure the objects which the Convention was designed to attain. As regards the morphia and cocaine habits, a far greater danger than opium smoking has ever been, Chapter III., if rigidly interpreted by all the contracting Powers, provides a complete remedy. India cannot be held responsible for the failure of other Powers to control the traffic in their own territories, and the suggestion that the export of opium from India is the fountain of evil that drowns all attempts to eliminate these pernicious habits is merely a confession that some of the contracting Powers are not fulfilling their obligations. It cannot be denied that India has completely carried out her part of the bargain. Her production of opium is small compared with that of China, and she is only one of several exporters of raw opium. The bulk of her exports go direct to responsible Governments, who are in a position to gauge the requirements of their countries and to prevent re-exports, and the remainder goes to countries whose Governments are all signatories of the Convention. She is prepared to co-operate to the fullest possible extent in assisting those Governments to enforce any restrictions they may desire. If they desire to prohibit the import of opium no opium will be sent. If they desire to restrict imports to medicinal needs the Government of India will control export accordingly. There is no case whatever behind the attack on Indian opium. It expresses merely impatience at the slowness with which international action is rendered effective; but though it is possible to sympathise with this attitude, it appears illogical that the Government of India should be attacked by active spirits in the United States of America, because they see or think they see their country drenched with morphia manufactured from Turkish opium. The curse will not be lifted until Turkey has signed the Hague Convention, ratified it and put it into force; until Persia has adhered to Article 3 (a), which regulates the export of raw opium; until production has been effectively controlled in China, and until Governments have realised that they must shoulder their own burdens and attack the vice at home, as the Government of India have done.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE POSITION OF INDIA IN RELATION TO THE WORLD'S  
OPIUM PROBLEM.

In view of the facts that have been related in the previous chapters, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the attacks which have been made on the production and export of Indian opium were based on an uninformed and impatient idealism. India has been accused of failure to carry out the terms of the Hague Convention, and of flooding the world with her opium. It is hoped that the falseness of these ideas has been clearly demonstrated, but it may be well in conclusion to summarise briefly the action that has been taken by the Government of India, and to place the production and export of Indian opium in its true perspective, a correct understanding of which is essential if any hope is to be entertained of confining the world production of opium to legitimate purposes.

The principles embodied in the Hague Convention have been accepted and acted upon by the Government of India for many years past. Long before the Convention was framed India gave a ready assent to assist the Government of China in the great task of suppressing poppy cultivation which that Government undertook in 1906, an assent that involved a sacrifice of four millions sterling annually. The sacrifice was voluntarily and willingly made, though the sum lost represented no less than  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of India's net revenue at that time, and necessitated the imposition of fresh taxation in India. This action was taken in spite of grave doubts as to the possibility of suppressing the opium traffic in China, doubts which experience has proved only too well founded, and two years before the formulation of international opinion at the Shanghai Conference of 1909. Nor did India's co-operation end with the cessation of export to China. In order to guard against the smuggling of Indian opium into China, in 1912 she subjected her exports to markets outside China to a maximum limit of 13,200 chests, a reduction of 20 per cent. on the normal requirements of those markets, and a maximum limit has been imposed ever since.

The cessation of the China trade reduced the Indian export trade to very small proportions compared with the world supply. When all importing Governments faithfully carry out the provisions of the Hague Convention, and as the progressive suppression of opium smoking by those Governments begins to take effect, it is possible that they may take still less opium from India. In view of the fact, which cannot be too strongly emphasised, that effectual international action on the lines laid down in the Hague Convention is necessary for the attainment of the objects aimed at by that Convention, the Government of India would be fully justified in refusing to assent to a

modification of the Convention in the direction of greater stringency until the results of concerted and effectual action by all the signatories have been seen.

India exports no opium to any country that prohibits imports, she is ready to export no opium to any country in excess of the amount which the Government of that country expresses a wish to obtain, and, in order to place the responsibility for regulating import directly and publicly upon the Government of the importing country, she has followed since 1915 a policy of selling her opium direct to foreign Governments wherever that course has proved possible. Three-quarters of the amount exported is disposed of in this way, and attempts are even now being made to extend the system to the remaining considerable importers of Indian opium. Should these attempts prove successful, the Calcutta auction sales would in all probability cease, and the private merchant would be entirely eliminated. But even as regards the small quantity at present disposed of by public auction, amounting for the calendar year 1921 to 705 chests, the Governments of the importing countries have the fullest power of control. In this connection it may be noted that the Assembly of the League of Nations at its second session proposed that all Governments should adopt a licensing system for imports and exports of opium and other dangerous drugs. If this proposal is adopted responsibility for imports will be placed upon the Government of the importing country in the clearest possible manner.

The position as regards the import and export of the drugs other than raw opium referred to in the Convention was described in the last chapter, and can be very briefly disposed of here. The export of prepared opium is prohibited, and none has ever been exported from India. Medicinal opium is not manufactured in India, and has never been exported. The imports of morphia are small and those of cocaine negligible. No cocaine is manufactured in India or exported, nor is morphia, except in so far as certain waste products at the Government opium factory of Ghazipur are capable of being used for this purpose; until recently some of these were exported to England.

The question of consumption of opium in India was dealt with in Chapters III. and IV. Briefly summarised, the position is as follows:—

The production and distribution of opium is most strictly regulated from the time the poppy seed is sown to the time the opium reaches the consumer. Cultivation, production, manufacture, transport, sale, possession and use are controlled with a completeness and precision probably unequalled by any other country in the world. At the beginning of the 19th century it was the wish of the East India Company entirely to suppress the consumption of opium in India, but

owing to the facilities for smuggling opium from the Indian States and elsewhere, and the deeply-rooted nature of the habit, it proved impossible to pursue this ideal, and a policy was substituted which aimed at keeping the consumption within the strictest possible limits by continuously raising the cost of opium to the consumer. The success of that policy cannot be gainsaid. The population of British India to-day consumes annually 26 grains of opium per head, 20 grains less than the probable per capita consumption of the United States of America, and a very small fraction of the per capita consumption of other opium consuming countries in the East.

In India proper, apart from Burma, opium smoking occurs only to an extremely limited extent. It is strongly reprobated by public opinion, and the Government of India have done everything short of absolute legal prohibition to check the practice. The manufacture of opium for smoking, except by an individual for his own use, is prohibited; opium smoking preparations cannot be bought; the amount of opium an individual can obtain for manufacture into preparations is strictly limited; and the amount he can have in his possession is generally limited to 90 grains. Opium smoking is essentially a social vice, and the question of making illegal any assembly of three or more persons for the purpose of smoking is at present being considered by Local Governments, together with the question of the practicability of prohibiting opium smoking altogether. Burma, where opium smoking was introduced from China, and affects Burmans adversely, presents a separate problem. Since 1885 there has been absolute prohibition of the use of opium except for medical purposes for all Burmans in Upper Burma. The same prohibition has been in force since 1887 in Lower Burma, except for registered consumers. No new consumers are registered, and the number has now fallen from 34,000 to 5,405. The population of Burma consists of 12,000,000 people. Non-Burmans in Upper Burma, and non-Burmans and registered Burmans in Lower Burma can obtain opium at licensed shops, subject to limitations of amount, but, as in the rest of India, the sale of prepared opium is prohibited.

Those who advocate the suppression of poppy cultivation in India do so on two grounds. First, that the inhabitants of India are being drugged against their will, and, second, that India is flooding the world, especially China, with her opium. Space need not be wasted over the first of these contentions. It has been seen that the Government have been engaged in a struggle to keep the consumption of opium in India as low as possible during the last hundred years, and the opinions expressed by the Royal Commission of 1893 were described in Chapter I. If the Government of India ceased to control the production of opium and prohibited poppy cultivation in British India, an unregulated supply would at once begin to flow from

the Indian States, over the border from China, and from Persia and the Levant. Armies could not stop it. Further, as Provincial Governments have now been invested with control over excise, it may be expected that under the pressure of public opinion, exerted through the new Legislative Councils, the policy of restriction hitherto followed will not be abandoned. It may indeed become more stringent.

It is not clear why the delusion should persist in some quarters that India floods the world with opium, and that Indian production is responsible for the morphia epidemic in China and the Western countries. Once the amount of opium produced in India and exported is viewed in its proper perspective, compared with production and export in other parts of the world, that delusion must immediately vanish. The legitimate markets for Indian opium, apart from export to China, took 16,000 chests of Indian opium a year in days when the China trade was in full swing, and there was no inducement to smuggle to that country. Now those markets take only 6,000 to 11,000 chests, and will very probably take less in future. Indian opium is not exported to the United States, and Chinese opium is sold retail in China at less than the cost of production in India. Such are the facts regarding the statements sometimes made that India is drenching America and China with her opium. The production of opium by the Government of India in 1919-20, including a certain quantity supplied by the Native States, amounted to 936 tons, of which 643 tons were exported. In 1906 China produced 34,852 tons, and in 1908, according to an estimate by Mr. Hamilton Wright, 21,887 tons. So far as it is possible to ascertain, she produces to-day about 20 per cent. of her output in 1906, say 7,000 tons, or more than seven times the production of India. So far as Turkey is concerned, accurate information is not obtainable in respect of total production, but authorities agree that in normal times the average Turkish export amounts to 7,000 chests annually, each chest containing 150 lbs. of opium, rising in a good year to 12,000 chests. Seven thousand chests of Turkish opium represent by weight 469 tons, but when comparing Turkish with Indian opium it must be remembered that the former contains 12 per cent. of morphine, while the average morphine content of Indian opium is only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Seven thousand chests (469 tons) of Turkish opium are the equivalent in morphine of 662 tons of Indian opium, and Turkey has not signed the Hague Convention. Persia, according to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, produced 10,000 piculs of opium in 1907, nearly all of which was exported, and there is no reason to believe she exports much less to-day. Ten thousand piculs (594 tons by weight) of opium, with a morphia content of 12 per cent., are equivalent to 838 tons of Indian opium containing only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of morphine, and Persia signed the Hague Convention with a reservation of Article 3 (a), which deals

with the prevention of export to countries whose Governments prohibit import.

China produces seven times as much opium as India ; Persia exports 30 per cent. more than India, and Turkey in normal times exports about the same amount as India which is, therefore, responsible for less than one-third of the world's exports, apart from the smuggling abroad of Chinese grown opium. Moreover, India has signed, ratified and carried out the Hague Convention, and has gone far beyond what is demanded by the terms of the Convention in order to safeguard her exports from being abused, while Turkey has not signed, and Persia remains outside the scope of the Convention's most important article. India would be thoroughly justified in refusing to agree to the modification of the terms of the Convention in the direction of greater stringency until she is convinced that such modification will lead to beneficial results. The proposal at present most favoured by international idealists is to bind the nations to restrict the production of opium to medicinal and scientific needs, and an attempt to obtain international approval of this ideal was recently made by the representative of China on the Council of the League of Nations. As her critics are aware, India alone among the producing nations could give practical effect to such a decision, which, apart from causing unimaginable sufferings in the East, would result in enormously stimulating the production of opium in Persia, China, and Turkey. This opium would be sold in thousands of chests to the highest bidder, and exported without hindrance to mysterious destinations all over the world. India demands to see the terms of the Opium Convention translated into action by others, and would no doubt return an emphatic negative to any proposal which aimed at suppressing Indian cultivation in order to provide a scapegoat for the rest of the world.

---

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- Statistics of British India. Vol. II. : Financial Statistics.  
 Annual Statement of the Sea-borne Trade of British India.  
 Vol. I.  
 Statistical Abstract relating to British India.  
 Imperial Gazetteer of India. Vol. IV., Chap. viii.  
 The Report of the Royal Commission on Opium, 1895. Seven volumes.  
 The Moral and Material Progress of India. Decennial Reports.  
 Government of India Despatches Nos. 14 and 28, dated 24th and 18th March 1921. Published in the Supplement to the Gazette of India, dated the 17th September 1921.

- China. Imperial Maritime Customs, II.—Special Series No. 13.  
 (Historical Note on the Poppy in China, by Dr. Edkins.)  
 Dictionary of the Economic Products of India: Sir George  
 Watt.  
 Commercial Products of India. Sir George Watt.  
 Proceedings of International Conferences and of the League of  
 Nations.  
 Colonial Reports: Hong Kong, Ceylon, Straits Settlements and  
 Federated Malay States.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

- C. 5660 of 1911. Agreement between the United Kingdom  
 and China.  
 C. 7052 of 1914. Agreement between the United Kingdom  
 and Portugal for the regulation of the opium monopolies in  
 the Colonies of Hong Kong and Macao.  
 Cmd. 1520 of 1921. The International Opium Convention,  
 1912, and subsequent relative papers.  
 China: C. 4735 of 1886, C. 3881 and C. 4316 of 1908, C. 4702,  
 C. 4898 and C. 4967 of 1909, C. 5658 of 1911, C. 6876 of  
 1913.  
 Miscellaneous: C. 6448 of 1912-13.  
 China: Cmd. 1531 of 1921. Papers regarding poppy cultiva-  
 tion in China.
-

14 DAY USE  
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

**DOCUMENTS DEPT.**

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or  
on the date to which renewed.  
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

DEC - 9 1963	
NOV 25 1980	
<b>INTER-LIBRARY LOAN</b>	
AUG 28 1980	
RECD IN DOCS DEPT. SEP 23 1980	
<b>INTERLIBRARY LOAN</b>	
MAY 9 1989	
<b>UNIV. OF CALIF. BERK.</b>	
	DEC 20 2001

LD 21A-20m-4,'63  
(D6471s10)476

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley



478635

4V5816

G7

1972

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

