

CONSUMPTION OF OPIUM  
IN  
INDIA.

CONSUMPTION  
OF  
O P I U M  
I N D I A.

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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



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# CONSUMPTION OF OPIUM IN INDIA.

## LETTER FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

### FINANCE AND COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

#### SEPARATE REVENUE.

#### Opium.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

MY LORD,

No. 289, dated 14th October 1891.

WE have now the honour to reply to your Lordship's Despatch No. 68 (Revenue), dated the 28th August 1890, forwarding for our consideration a memorial from the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, dated the 30th July 1890. It is alleged in the memorial that the society has received information from different quarters tending to show that in various parts of India the consumption of opium is on the increase, and that houses licensed for the smoking of opium and its products on the premises are the cause of great demoralisation in many of the towns of India; the memorialists further draw attention to what they consider a serious danger, namely, that the opium habit should spread throughout Her Majesty's dominions in India.

2. It is stated in the memorial that the information received by the society is contained mainly in papers which have been printed in the society's organ called the "Friend of China," and references to these papers were appended to the memorial. We have examined them, and we find them to consist almost exclusively of exaggerated and highly coloured accounts of what is alleged to have been seen and heard in visits to shops where opium and its products are smoked. There can be no doubt that, if the haunts of the dregs of the population of great cities are examined in any country in the world, scenes of vice and misery will be witnessed, and it, therefore, seems to us that the basis on which the memorialists rest their case is altogether too narrow for the conclusions at which they have arrived. It is well to bear in mind that in 1889-90 there were only 936 shops licensed for the smoking of opium and its products in British India, exclusive of Madras, where such shops are not now separately shown, or less than one shop to every 197,000 inhabitants, being at the rate of (say) three or four shops for such a town as Liverpool or Glasgow.

3. In order to obtain the information necessary for the discussion of the whole question on a broader basis than has been adopted by the society, we forwarded the memorial to the various Local Governments for report, and we requested that the general questions raised should be discussed so far as they affected each province, and that the suggestion made in the memorial for the closing of shops for the sale of opium to be consumed on the premises should be specially considered. We enclose copies of the replies from Local Governments, which contain much valuable information.

4. The memorialists have in some parts of the memorial referred to other drugs as well as to opium, and some Local Governments have in consequence discussed the case as regards drugs of all kinds. We shall have an opportunity of dealing with the case of ganja and other drugs separately in replying to your Lordship's Despatch No. 59 (Revenue), dated the 6th August 1891, and we think it best to confine our present remarks to the question of opium, which is alone discussed in detail in the memorial. Statement A, however, which is attached to this despatch, gives the number of shops licensed for the sale of drugs of all kinds during the last 10 years.

5. The main charge which the memorialists make is that the consumption of opium is on the increase, and that there is serious danger that the use of the drug may become more general throughout Her Majesty's dominions in India. If this charge is disproved, the memorialists' case, excluding the question of the demoralisation alleged to be caused in towns by shops for the smoking of opium and its products, falls to the ground.

Before considering in detail the statements made in the memorial we desire to state emphatically that neither the replies of Local Governments to the reference we have just made to them, nor the figures regarding the consumption of opium collected by us, nor the evidence contained in the previous correspondence on the subject, afford any foundation for the assertion that there has been a serious increase in opium consumption in India during recent years. We are therefore unable to find any ground for the apprehensions felt by the memorialists that the opium habit is likely to spread with fatal results throughout Her Majesty's dominions in India, unless stricter measures than have hitherto been found practicable are adopted without delay for its repression. We admit that in some parts of India, especially in some of the larger towns, the habit prevails more generally than in others, and that some useful reforms may still be instituted in particular provinces. But, taking India as a whole, we unhesitatingly deny that the practice of eating, drinking, or smoking opium is decidedly on the increase. The whole evidence before us points to the conclusion that opium is consumed in considerable quantities only by special classes or in particular localities; that even among these classes and in these localities the habit of consuming opium is neither growing in popularity nor causing an increase of misery and degradation; that among most classes of the population and in most localities the habit does not exist to any considerable extent, and that where it prevails at all it is kept in check by the strict precautions which have been for many years in force; and, lastly, that neither the demand for the drug nor the facilities for indulgence in it have increased, even in proportion to the increase in population, during the last 10 years. So far from its being true that we are encouraging in any way the consumption of the drug, we are met nearly everywhere with this difficulty, that the results of our action in raising the rate of duty, restricting the number of shops, and imposing conditions on the grant of licenses have made opium so expensive and so difficult to obtain that incessant watch has to be kept over the tendency to develop a regular trade in opium smuggling. This difficulty has become so serious under present conditions that we have no doubt of the absolute impossibility of enforcing the complete prohibition of opium consumption, even if the facts before us warranted our contemplating so serious an interference with individual liberty.

6. In support of the statements made in the last paragraph regarding the absence of any indication that we are face to face with an evil of increasing magnitude, we invite special attention to the enclosed Statements A and B,\* giving correct details of the number of shops for retail sale of drugs of all kinds, and the amount of opium

\* See page 15.

issued from these shops during the last 10 years. It will be seen that the figures of the number of shops given in Statement A differ somewhat from those given in paragraph 3 of the memorial. We have taken pains to make the statement as correct as possible, and we think that the figures may be safely accepted by your Lordship and the memorialists as more accurate than any which have been previously published. It will be observed that the total number of shops of all kinds for the supply of drugs to a population of 220 millions is about 22,000, while the remark entered in column 44 of the statement explains that in order to arrive at the actual number of separate shops a large deduction must be made from this total, inasmuch as a shop selling opium and some other drug is frequently entered in the returns as two shops. The tendency has been in recent years to enter the shops in greater detail, and the fact that the total number of shops appears to be nearly the same for the last 10 years is really an indication that the facilities for obtaining opium and other drugs have actually been reduced during that time. The population of British India has increased during these 10 years by 9½ per cent., exclusive of the increase due to the annexation of Upper Burma, so that there are now distinctly fewer shops for each million of the population than in 1880-81, and we know that the shops themselves are more strictly controlled. Turning to Statement B, it will be seen that very much the same inference may be drawn from the figures showing the amount of opium consumed. Omitting the figures for 1880-81, which are vitiated for the purposes of comparison by the doubt as to the correctness of the large amount of opium shown as consumed in the Punjab in that year, it appears that the total consumption in British India has increased during the nine years 1881-82 to 1889-90 by nearly 14 per cent. In considering the total increase it has, however, to be considered that a very large proportion of it occurs in the Bombay Presidency alone, where it is due to the substitution of licit or duty-paid opium for the smuggled opium which was more largely consumed in earlier years before the full effect of the measures adopted on the introduction of the Opium Act, I, of 1878, into that province was produced. We shall deal hereafter with the question of the apparent increase of consumption of opium in Bombay: for the present we content ourselves with stating the

following figures, showing the number of cases of opium smuggling in which convictions were obtained in Bombay in recent years:—

Year.	No. of Cases.
1886-87	372
1887-88	478
1888-89	429
1889-90	366

The number of cases in which the smugglers were detected, and convictions were obtained against them, must bear but a small proportion to the total number of cases of smuggling, and the figures we have given show there is still room in Bombay for increase in the consumption of duty-paid opium without increase of the total consumption, including in the total consumption both duty-paid and smuggled opium. Taking the other provinces, it will be seen that the increase on the whole is less than the increase of population during the period, while in some, such as Madras and Assam, it would appear that opium is losing rather than gaining ground. When allowance is made for the strictness with which the opium laws are now enforced, for the more active operations against smugglers, and for the greater care with which the amount of opium consumed is brought to account in consequence of the attention everywhere paid to the subject, we are satisfied that the habit of opium consumption is thoroughly kept in check, and that, so long as the present policy of Government is maintained, there is no ground for anticipating any sudden or rapid extension of it in future.

7. Having thus indicated our general views upon the assumptions made in paragraphs 2 to 4 of the memorial, we will now discuss the particular allegations and suggestions contained in paragraphs 5 to 15, taking the provinces in the order in which they are dealt with by the memorialists.

8. As regards Bengal, it will be seen that the number of licenses for retail sale has been largely reduced during the last ten years. The reduction occurs under all heads, but especially in the number of shops for sale of raw opium. The amount of opium consumed has indeed increased by about 8 per cent. during the period, as against an increase of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the general population, but the rate of increase in population in the districts where opium is chiefly consumed is fully equal to the rate of increase in the total consumption of opium, and the consumption has been practically stationary for the last seven years with only slight and unimportant fluctuations from year to year.

Under the circumstances the Local Government has confined its remarks to a discussion of the proposal for closure of shops for consumption on the premises. We reserve our remarks upon this question till the concluding paragraph of this Despatch, and it is only necessary to say that we regard the general facts about Bengal as on the whole satisfactory; when the enormous area and population are considered, and when further it is recognised how large a proportion of the area consists of alluvial, malarious tracts, in which the use of opium by the people is not a vice, or even a luxury, but to some extent a necessity of life.

9. As regards the Central Provinces, the memorialists have acknowledged the large reduction of shops effected during the last ten years; but have called attention to a small increase in the year 1888-89. The Chief Commissioner has explained that this increase is nominal, and is due to the more correct method adopted in that year of including in the returns shops which had previously been excluded on the ground that the licenses were only for the occasional and temporary opening of the shops. The figures for the whole period of ten years show, in our opinion, that the Local Government has gone as far as it is possible to go in the direction desired by the memorialists, with due regard to the great facilities for smuggling which exists in districts surrounded on all sides by Native States. The number of smoking shops has been steadily and largely reduced, and the Chief Commissioner has already, by orders issued in August 1890, prohibited consumption of drugs in any form on the premises of shops. We invite attention to the instructions issued to the Commissioner of Excise in Mr. Laurie's letter, No. 5106, dated the 14th August 1890, which is enclosed in Appendix A to the Central Provinces' reply of the 27th January 1891. It will be seen that the special measure advocated in paragraph 18 of the memorial had already been determined on before the receipt of your Lordship's Despatch. Statement B shows that the amount of opium consumed in the Central Provinces has been practically stationary during the last eight years, and somewhat less than the amount consumed during the years 1880-81 and 1881-82, notwith-

standing that population has increased in the meanwhile by more than 9 per cent. It will, of course, be recollected that there is opium smuggling in the Central Provinces as in most of the other provinces of India, and that we are unable to say what amount of smuggled opium is consumed.

10. Paragraph 6 of the memorial deals with Assam. In this province much has been already done to reduce the number of shops and increase the price of opium, and the remarks of the memorialists are confined to a request that further efforts may be made in this direction. As regards the number of shops the Local Government, by a comparison with the year 1874-75, when the province was constituted as a separate Chief Commissionership, shows forcibly how much has been done to carry out its policy for the restriction of the opium trade. During the series of 16 years ending with 1889-90, the number of shops has been reduced by over 74 per cent. It is not reasonable to anticipate so large a rate of decrease in future, seeing that opium is, as in some parts of Bengal, almost a necessity of life in the low-lying malarious tracts of the province. Still the fact that the number of shops for sale of raw opium is shown by the Excise Report recently received to have been further reduced from 990 in 1889-90 to 946 in 1890-91, is a sufficient proof that the attention of the authorities is still directed to this question. In regard to the price of opium, the memorialists have expressed a hope that prompt effect would be given to the suggestion for enhancement of the price made by the Chief Commissioner in his resolution on the report for 1888-89. The suggestion was acted on before the memorial was presented to your Lordship, and from the 1st April 1890 the price has, in fact, been raised from Rs. 32 to Rs. 37 a seer. It appears from the Excise Report for 1890-91 that the amount of opium consumed in that year was 52,333 seers, while the duty realised increased by Rs. 76,735. There has, therefore, been a reduction of over 22 per cent. in consumption since 1880-81, notwithstanding an increase of 11 per cent. in population as shown by the census of 1891.

11. Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the memorial afford a striking illustration of the difficulties under which the memorialists labour, owing to their imperfect acquaintance with India and its conditions. Lahore is placed by the society in the North-Western Provinces and Lucknow in the Punjab. Your Lordship has informed us that the memorial was presented by an influential deputation, and that the number and character of the names appended added weight to their representations. Without attaching undue importance to the errors just indicated, we think that we are justified in suggesting that the occurrence of two such extraordinary mistakes in successive paragraphs displays some want of care on the part of those persons on whom the memorialists appear to depend for information.

12. In paragraph 7 attention is called to what is considered to be a serious increase in the number of opium and other drug shops in the North-Western Provinces during the last ten years. The Local Government admits the substantial accuracy of the figures quoted, and defends the increase on the ground that it was required in order to prevent the greater evil involved in illicit consumption. Even after the increase in question the number of opium shops in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh is now smaller than that in any of the five larger provinces except Madras, although the population is greater than that of any province except Bengal. It is urged by the Local Government that a diminution in the number of shops would not reduce the total consumption, but might even have the opposite effect; and in view of the undoubted facilities that exist in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh for smuggling both from Native States and within the province, we are inclined to accept this view. While the number of shops for the sale of opium and its preparations has on the whole increased, the number of opium smoking shops has been reduced by 93 per cent., from 371 in 1882-83 to 26 in 1890-91. It is the case that the amount of opium consumed has increased by nearly 11 per cent. during the last ten years, as against an increase in population of about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., but the total amount consumed yearly is not conspicuously large in proportion to the total population of nearly 47 millions. The increase in the licit consumption is not necessarily due to the increase in the number of shops; it is much more probable that it is due to the substitution of licit for smuggled opium. The whole question is engaging the attention of the Local Government, which called for a report on the distribution of the opium shops in 1890, and has directed in paragraph 20 of its Resolution on the 24th July 1891, on the Excise Report for 1889-90, that the matter should now be disposed of with as little delay as possible.

As regards the Lucknow shops referred to in paragraph 8 of the memorial, it will be seen from paragraph 7 of the Local Government's reply that one of these shops has been recently closed, leaving two only in that city.

13. Before quitting subject of the North-Western Provinces, we invite a reference to paragraphs 8 and 9 of the North-Western Provinces letter, in which the Local Government has exposed the inaccuracy of the statistics given by Mr. Caine in the first of the extracts referred to in the memorial:—

“Turning to the appendix to the memorial, I am to observe that Mr. Caine (page 2) writes: ‘In the city of Lucknow there are 30 distilleries of native spirits, 201 liquor shops, 24 opium shops, and 92 for bhang and other intoxicating drugs.’ The assertion is of characteristic inaccuracy and hardihood. In the whole Lucknow ‘district’—an area of about 1,000 square miles, with a population of nearly 700,000—there were during 1888–89, 1 distillery, 136 shops for the retail vend of country spirits, 86 drug shops, 3 madak and chandu shops (the so-called ‘opium dens’), and 27 opium shops not licensed for consumption on the premises. There seems to the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner to be little practical usefulness in engaging in a never-ending discussion on the merits or demerits of the Indian Excise system with critics who have shown themselves quite incapable of understanding the uses of accuracy; whose object is not to prove their contentions, but to impress the general public, and to that end to declaim and to denounce; and who cannot therefore be expected to forego their methods of controversy before the most cogent reasoning or the most unanswerable statistics.”

“I am to point out that Mr. Caine is equally wrong (page 3 of the appendix) in confusing ‘doubled revenue’ with ‘doubled consumption.’ Inquiry shows conclusively that the increased revenue is very largely due to increased stringency on the part of Government, and to the persistent suppression of illicit traffic.”

14. The case of the Punjab is referred to in paragraph 8 of the memorial, and it is urged that there can be no adequate justification for an alleged increase in the number of opium licenses by 63 per cent. between the years 1879–80 and 1888–89. The figures given for the Punjab in paragraph 3 of the memorial differ considerably from those shown in column 2 of the enclosed Statement A. The reason for this is, that we have excluded the number of wholesale licenses throughout, while in the table upon which the society has based its remarks, these wholesale licenses were included for the years 1880–81 to 1886–87, and excluded for the years 1879–80, 1887–88, and 1888–89. Had the number of wholesale licences in 1879–80 (324) been included, the total for that year would have been not 1,164 but 1,488, and the memorialists would have then seen that there was little or no change before the year 1887–88. It will be seen from Statement A that the number of shops remained nearly stationary up to the year 1886–87, inclusive, and that almost the whole of the apparent increase has taken place in the years 1887–88 and 1888–89. This increase is really nominal and is due to a more correct method of counting shops introduced in those years. The cause of the sudden increase in 1887–88 was clearly explained in paragraph 2 of the Excise Report for the year, which is quoted in paragraph 3 of the Financial Commissioner’s letter No. 66 of the 30th January 1891, enclosed in the Punjab Government’s reply of the 24th March 1891. It was due to the substitution, in the case of some districts, of returns showing the number of separate shops, for returns showing the number of licenses, a license occasionally covering more than one shop. We regret that the statistics should have misled the memorialists, but an explanation of the apparent increase was given at the time when the change in the method of enumeration was first made, and as the Provincial Excise Reports are available for sale to the general public, it would not have been difficult for persons interested in the returns to satisfy themselves as to the cause of the variation in the figures. This explanation in regard to the Punjab figures should be borne in mind in considering the apparent increase from 1887–88 in the total number of opium shops in British India shown in column 40 of Statement A. Allowing for an error of about 650 shops on account of the Punjab in the earlier years, it appears that the total number of shops has decreased slightly from 1881–82 and very considerably from 1880–81.

15. In connexion with the Punjab, we invite attention to paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Financial Commissioner’s letter, from which it will be seen that the expediency of refusing licenses for shops in which opium was smoked on the premises was considered by the Punjab Government as early as 1883, and that all such licenses were discontinued between 1885 and 1890.

16. Paragraph 9 of the memorial deals with Berar, Coorg, and Ajmere-Merwara. It is true that there has been some increase in the number of shops for sale of drugs of all kinds in Berar, the figures making no distinction between opium and other drugs. The increase in the ten years ending 1889–90 is under 7 per cent. as against an increase in population of over 8 per cent. Excise has been for some time engaging the special attention of the Resident, and in his reply dated the 20th March 1891, he stated that



orders had issued for the reduction of at least 50 shops from the 1st April 1891. It has subsequently been explained in the Excise Report for 1890-91 that it was not found possible to alter the arrangements already made for the year 1891-92. The orders issued by the Resident will, however, secure that the matter shall be kept in view, and we have no doubt that all practicable measures will continue to be taken both for reduction of shops and discouragement of consumption. In Coorg and Ajmere the number of shops is small, and there is no reason to suppose that drugs are consumed in excess. In both cases our orders referred to in paragraph 29 below will effect all that is immediately required to improve the administration.

17. In paragraphs 10 to 13 the society has discussed the case of Lower and Upper Burma, and has asked, as regards Lower Burma, what reason there can be, except that of the revenue involved, why the same policy of absolute prohibition should not be adopted with regard to opium as has already been carried into effect since 1872 in regard to ganja. The opium policy in Burma has been discussed at great length by successive Chief Commissioners from the time of Sir Charles Aitchison, and as the conclusion in each case has been that it is impossible to altogether prohibit the supply of opium, we must demur to the attempt to settle the question without stating a single new argument in support of the assumption that the supply of opium can and ought to be absolutely prohibited. In his memorandum of 1881, Sir Charles Aitchison distinctly stated that there were considerations which, in his judgment, made "it impossible altogether to prohibit the supply of opium."

Sir Charles Aitchison's view has been accepted by his successors and is now fully concurred in by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who writes that—

"It has, moreover, been frequently explained that there is in this province a considerable non-Burman population, consisting of Shans, Chinese, and others, who are accustomed to the moderate use of opium, and who consume it without ill-effects or even with beneficial results. The Chief Commissioner is not prepared to advise the absolute prohibition of the possession or sale of opium in Burma by persons of non-Burman descent. Such a step would be an unjustifiable interference with the habits of a large section of the population and would be quite impossible to enforce. As the Financial Commissioner remarks, even the prohibition of the use of ganja cannot be absolutely enforced. Indians who are accustomed to use it will have it and can arrange to get it. The enforcement of a general prohibition of the use of opium would present still greater difficulties as the classes which consume opium are far more numerous than those which consume ganja. As regards this province, the opium question has been frequently discussed, and the opinions of the most experienced officers have been more than once placed on record. It may be considered as established beyond question that there is a legitimate demand for opium among the foreign residents in Burma, which would exist whether Government countenanced the use of opium or not; that if Government decided to declare the sale or possession of opium generally illegal, the demand would be supplied by illicit means; and that the results of any attempt to enforce absolute prohibition of the use of opium would be the loss of a large amount of revenue without any commensurate benefit."

Your Lordship will see that we have very carefully considered the Chief Commissioner's letter No. 1-10-E., dated the 2nd February 1891, and have in our reply

\* Enclosure No. 14.

No. 3166, dated the 29th July 1891,\* expressed our willingness to support Sir A. Mackenzie's proposal for prohibition of sale and possession of opium as regards Burmans in Lower Burma, provided that he is able to establish the necessity and practicability of so stringent a measure, and to make it clear that his remedy will not involve evils as great as those which it is desired to remove. We have specially instructed him that in dealing with this matter he is not to take into consideration the question of any possible loss of revenue owing to the adoption of more severe restrictions on the consumption of opium.

18. The only other remark we desire to make in regard to Lower Burma is to call attention to the very small number of shops in that province. The total number is 20 and the population is 4,569,170, giving one shop for every 228,458 inhabitants. The attempt to restrict consumption by reducing the number of shops has therefore been carried to an extreme in that province, and one result of the excessive restriction in the number of licensed shops has been the springing up throughout the province of numbers of unlicensed dens in many of which there is reason to believe that opium is secretly sold, while in all it is regularly consumed. It is this increase in the number of unlicensed places in which opium is habitually consumed which has led to the impression that every license issued in Lower Burma has been allowed to cover a large number of shops. The impression is, we need hardly say, a wholly mistaken one. The

local authorities have been unable to prevent the existence of those unlicensed shops in the past, and it is doubtful whether the more vigorous efforts now being made to do so will prove successful. These facts lead us to remark that too much reliance should not be placed on endeavours to reduce the consumption of opium by restricting the number of shops. A more potent weapon is an increase in the duty on opium, and this is one which we are always prepared to employ up to the limit at which the increase of price seriously stimulates smuggling.

19. In regard to Upper Burma a prohibition is already in force against sale of opium to, and possession of opium by, persons of Burman descent, and we are not prepared to attempt more repressive measures until at any rate sufficient time has elapsed to enable us to judge of the success of the experiment. The latest information before us, contained in the Excise Report for 1890-91, is to the effect that the quantity of opium imported into Upper Burma is much less than in the year 1889-90, while there has been some increase in the small amount of Government opium issued to licensed vendors. In paragraph 9 of his resolution on the report, dated the 24th August 1891, the Chief Commissioner has stated that the difficulties of checking smuggling in Upper Burma are very great, and it is clear that effectual means of dealing with the evil have not yet been devised. The difficulties referred to are due to the configuration of the country, and the presence of a large alien population habituated to the use of the drug.

20. In the Bombay Presidency there has hitherto been some confusion in regard to the published returns of licenses for sale of opium and other drugs. The figures given in Excise reports (column 38 of Statement A) have been understood to cover all shops for sale of drugs including opium, but it now appears from the Bombay Government letters of the 18th July 1891 and the 1st September 1891, that this is incorrect. In addition to the 1,290 shops for the sale of intoxicating drugs there were in 1889-90 1,281 shops selling exclusively opium and its preparations. We regret that the system under which opium is dealt with in a separate series of annual reports should have made a misapprehension possible, and we have now requested the Government of Bombay to show the number of opium shops distinctly in future.

21. With reference to the particular allegations made in paragraph 14 of the memorial as regards Bombay, it is true that the consumption in Bombay of licit, or duty-paid, opium has nearly doubled during the last ten years. It is explained by the Bombay Government that this increase is entirely due to the measures taken to check opium smuggling and to substitute licit opium for the contraband opium which previously formed the bulk of the consumption. The measures referred to have been gradually introduced since the year 1878, and "the general result is that the retail selling price of opium has been doubled everywhere within the last fourteen years." It will, we believe, be admitted by the society that the adoption of measures which result in the doubling in price of an already expensive luxury proves that the Government of Bombay has done a very great deal towards discouraging indulgence therein.

The letter from the collector of Bombay, dated 4th February 1891, illustrates the danger of assuming that an increase in the consumption of duty-paid opium necessarily means an increase in the consumption of opium of all kinds, including both duty-paid and smuggled opium. The following figures state the consumption of duty-paid opium in the town of Bombay for a series of years:—

				lbs.
1881-82	-	-	-	10,730
1882-83	-	-	-	11,058
1883-84	-	-	-	11,253
1884-85	-	-	-	12,171
1885-86	-	-	-	15,216
1886-87	-	-	-	17,053
1887-88	-	-	-	16,903
1888-89	-	-	-	21,791
1889-90	-	-	-	20,477

In the course of eight years the consumption of duty-paid opium has doubled, but the increase has mainly shown itself in the two years 1885-86 and 1888-89. Now, during these eight years the number of shops for the sale of opium of all kinds, as well as the duty on opium, have remained practically unchanged. The first marked increase beginning with 1885-86 coincides with the substitution of the central opium warehouse

system for the previous practice of storage in scattered private warehouses. On this change being made the amount of alleged wastage fell at once to an extent which showed that when private warehouses were in use about 16,800 lbs. of opium were yearly smuggled from them and written off as wastage. Simultaneously with this decrease of alleged wastage there was an increase of about 5,000 lbs. in the consumption of duty-paid opium. It can scarcely be doubted that a reduction of 16,800 lbs. yearly in smuggled opium and an increase of about 5,000 lbs. in the consumption of duty-paid opium represents not an increase, but a substantial decrease in the total consumption of opium. Similarly, the increase in the consumption of duty-paid opium in 1889-90 was not due to any pushing of opium rates by lowering prices or opening new shops, but merely to a change from one-year licenses to three-year licenses. This change gave a greatly increased power, as well as inducement, to the licensees to bring to light and secure the punishment of opium smugglers. As already explained in paragraph 6 of this Despatch, the number of cases of opium smuggling in which convictions are obtained in the Bombay Presidency, even at the present time, amounts to about 400 yearly.

22. Among the measures referred to in the preceding paragraphs as having been adopted with the special object of checking smuggling has been the insertion in the licenses of a condition that the farmer shall pay duty in each year on a certain minimum quantity of opium, even though his actual sales should fall short of that minimum. This condition makes it the interest of the farmer to refrain from dealing in illicit opium, and also to help the authorities in preventing illicit dealings by others. Before it became the practice to insert this condition in the license, the license-holder paid merely for the right to open a shop, and made his profit by retailing smuggled opium, taking only a small quantity of duty-paid opium in order to avert suspicion. With a condition in his license binding him to pay duty on a minimum quantity of opium, he gains nothing by selling smuggled opium, as he must make up a certain amount of duty, however small his sales of duty-paid opium may be. We are of opinion that the stipulation to pay at least a certain amount of duty, whatever the quantity of opium sold might be, has been one of the main causes of the success which the Government of Bombay have attained in repressing smuggling in the last twelve years.

But the system of a minimum guarantee of this nature is open to plausible misrepresentation by those who are ignorant of, or choose to ignore, the difficulties which the system is intended to meet, and who assert that its object, or effect, is merely to force the licensee to sell a larger quantity of opium than there is a demand for, under penalty of a fine. We hope that the knowledge which has now been gained of the ordinary consumption in the several districts may enable the preventive establishments, which are much stronger than they were twelve years ago, to combat successfully, without the help of the guaranteed minimum clause, the very strong tendency towards smuggling and illicit practices which undoubtedly exists in the Bombay Presidency.

\* Enclosure No. 15.

For these reasons, as explained at greater length in our letter to the Bombay Government, No. 4120, dated 1st October 1891,\* we have requested that Government to discontinue the system. We cannot, however, hope that the result will be to decrease the amount of opium consumed in the province: we shall be content if no material increase of illicit consumption is caused.

With reference to the specific charges in connexion with the opium-smoking shops in Bombay city which are made in some of the enclosures of the memorial, we invite attention to the letter No. 950, dated the 4th February 1891, from the Collector of Bombay to the Opium Commissioner. We confidently leave it to your Lordship to decide whether Mr. Campbell's carefully written account is more likely to be near the truth, or the sensational descriptions drawn by Messrs. Gregory, Dyer, and Sessions.

23. In support of their indictment against the opium administration in Madras the memorialists have, as in the case of Bombay, relied on a simple comparison of the figures shown in the Finance and Revenue Accounts for the two years 1879-80 and 1888-89 under the head "Duty on opium consumed in India." The Local Government has explained in paragraph 2 of its reply that no proper inference can be drawn from a comparison between the revenue figures of those two years, as rules under the Opium Act were only brought into force in the Presidency from the 1st July 1880. But had the memorialists, when referring to the entries in the accounts on which they base their conclusion, included in their comparison the intervening years, they would have seen that there was not sufficient ground for serious apprehension that the con-

sumption of opium was increasing, as the revenue has been practically stationary during the six years ending 1888-89. The actual figures for these six years are as follows :—

	Rs.
1883-84	60,308
1884-85	62,896
1885-86	71,558
1886-87	62,664
1887-88	59,358
1888-89	60,858

We give these figures not because they accurately indicate the amount of opium consumed in the province, but as an illustration of the misdirected ingenuity, to use the mildest term, with which the agents of the society select for comparison any figures which appear to justify the assumptions with which they start, while omitting to notice the obvious inferences from figures which tell against them. The real facts as regards opium consumption in Madras are given in the margin of paragraph 2 of the Local Government's reply, and in column 10 of Statement B. The figures for the year 1880-81 may be left out of account, as they represent the consumption for nine months only, and it is probable that the recent change of system partially accounted for the abnormally large amount of opium shown as consumed in the year 1881-82. Disregarding these two years, it appears that from 1882-83 onwards the amount of opium retailed has declined from 38,591 seers to 33,612, or by nearly 13 per cent., as against an increase in population of  $15\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. during the period 1831-91.

24. A further allegation made as regards Madras is that certain evidence was given before the House of Commons Committee of 1871, to the effect that there was then practically no consumption of opium in the province, and that since that time "measures appear to have been taken to spread the habit of opium smoking." The explanation given in the following quotation from the reply of the Local Government is conclusive on this point :—

"The memorialists next refer to the evidence given by Sir T. Pycroft and Mr. E. F. Harrison before the Select Committees in 1871 and 1872, to the effect that there was practically no consumption of opium in this presidency. In regard to this I am to observe that a similar opinion was long entertained by this Government as the result of special inquiries made on the subject about the year 1855, but that this opinion was abandoned, twenty years later, when a careful further inquiry showed that it did not represent the actual facts, but that, on the other hand, there was a large consumption of opium in the four northern districts of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavari, and Kistna."

The later inquiry referred to in this extract was made throughout the Madras Presidency in the years 1873 to 1875. The facts then brought to light furnished one of the chief reasons which induced the Government of India to extend the stringent provisions of the Bengal Opium Law to the whole of India. The following is a quotation from the Statement of Objects and Reasons attached to a Bill introduced in the Legislative Council of the Governor General of India, in September 1875 :—

"In Madras no check, either legislative or administrative, exists at present on the growth of the poppy, or the transport, possession, or storage of opium, and practices have resulted injurious alike to the public revenue and to public morality and health."

That Bill passed into law as Act XXIII. of 1876, which was, however, never brought into force, its operation being postponed by Act VI. of 1877, while it was eventually superseded by the present Opium Act I. of 1878.

It will, therefore, be seen that the apparent increase of consumption and the real increase of revenue, and of licensed shops since 1879-80, in Madras, is due to the fact that before that year no attempt was made to regulate or restrict the sale of opium or other drugs in that province, owing to an erroneous belief that there was no such consumption. Before 1879-80 practically no duty was paid on opium or other drugs, and any person was at liberty to sell them who chose to do so, and it is assuredly the *ne plus ultra* of misrepresentation to represent the facts connected with the imposition of a heavy duty, and the limitation of the number of shops by requiring licenses and license fees, as indicating that "measures appear to have been taken to spread the habit of opium smoking."

25. The following passage shows that a similar mistake has been made in the memorial in dealing with the arrangements adopted in certain very feverish hill districts of the northern division of Madras, in regard to which it is observed that the memorialists "deprecate so cruel a kindness as that of teaching the people to rely on opium as a "febrifuge :"

“The memorialists next comment upon the statements contained in the progress and condition reports for 1884–85 and 1887–88 relative to the free grant of licenses in some of the hill tracts, and the supply of opium to the people in the hill tracts of the northern districts of the Presidency at a lower price than elsewhere. The memorialists have not correctly apprehended the policy of Government in this matter. A perusal of the appendix attached to the Board’s proceedings, forwarded herewith, will show that this Government has been endeavouring to reduce the consumption of opium in these tracts as much as possible, and that if any leniency was shown in the matter at first, it was only out of deference to the consideration that a sudden change might be productive of more harm than good among a population addicted by long habit to the use of the drug.”

26. In the preceding paragraphs we have, following the memorialists, considered chiefly the variations in the numbers of shops for the sale of opium. But, in our opinion, the price at which opium is sold has much more influence on the consumption than the number of shops at which opium can be bought. In all provinces the price at which opium is sold is more than double the cost of production, and in many the price has been considerably increased in the last ten years. It has been mentioned above that the retail price has been doubled in Bombay in the last 14 years. In Assam the wholesale selling price has, between 1880–81 and 1890–91, been raised from Rs. 26 a seer to Rs. 37, and in Burma from Rs. 24 to Rs. 28 and Rs. 32.

27. Having dealt with each province in turn we have now to consider the final remarks contained in paragraphs 16 to 18 of the memorial. In paragraph 16 the society states again its apprehension that there is a serious danger lest the opium habit should spread throughout India, and quotes the example of Japan and certain other countries as proving the practicability of entire prohibition. We have in paragraph 4 expressed our strong conviction that there is absolutely no ground for the society’s apprehension in regard to India as a whole, and we trust that our full explanation, province by province, will be accepted as showing conclusively that the memorialists have been misled by the incorrect, exaggerated, and untrustworthy information of their agents in India. We are, as the Resident of Hyderabad has said, always glad to receive suggestions as to the best method of establishing a strict system of control and supervision, but much of the good which might otherwise be effected in this way is neutralised by the rash assumptions, the intemperate language and the superficial methods of investigation adopted by the persons upon whom the society is dependent for its facts and figures. We do not consider it incumbent on us to enter on an elaborate exposition of the fallacy underlying the suggestion that a policy which may be practicable in such places as Japan, the Corea, Java and the Philippine Islands, can therefore be adopted by a stroke of the pen in the enormous continent of India. Where the whole circumstances of the history, geographical position, nationality, and habits of the people are so essentially different, no useful purpose would be served by a purely academic discussion which failed to take into account the primary conditions with which we have to deal in India. The unanimous opinion of our responsible officers is that it is impossible to devise any machinery by which the consumption of opium could be wholly suppressed, even if it were desirable on general grounds to do so, while the attempt to enter upon any such policy of suppression would involve gigantic evils of which the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade can have no conception from their experience of the wholly different conditions of life and society in England. We will quote one only from numerous passages in the correspondence before us to illustrate our contention. We select this particular passage because it expresses in temperate language the conclusion at which we have arrived, and because it is the opinion of an officer with unusually varied experience of India, acquired during a long service of 32 years, much of it spent in the three opium-consuming provinces of the Punjab, the Central Provinces, and Assam, before he was appointed to his present office of Resident at Hyderabad. In discussing the suggestion made to us by the society in a separate communication, and practically repeated in paragraph 17 of the present memorial, “that the Government of India should be directed to use the absolute discretion conferred on it by the Indian Opium Act of 1878 \* \* \* by the adoption of measures having for their object to limit the sales of opium to that which is necessary for medical use,” Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick says:—

“He will not go so far as to say that this would be impossible in a territory isolated from opium-producing tracts and in which the use of opium had been previously little, if at all, known; but in the various parts of India in which he had served, the practice of eating or smoking opium has come down from a period anterior to our rule; opium, if not got in one way, can be got in another, and any proposal absolutely to prohibit the

use of it now would, in his opinion, be so completely beyond the range of practical politics as to be scarcely worth discussing.

“There seems to be no doubt that there are, or until the other day have been, places in India where, owing to a want of proper supervision and control, abuses have prevailed like those described in these papers, and which at least strike one with greater horror than any corresponding abuses in countries where people are demoralised by drink, but the Resident would affirm without fear of contradiction that, speaking generally, the evils arising from indulgence in drink in England are vastly greater than those arising from indulgence in opium in those parts of India with which he is acquainted, and yet he presumes no responsible person would think of suggesting that the sale of intoxicating liquor in England, except for medicinal purposes, should be absolutely prohibited by law.

“That persons are found to suggest such a prohibition in regard to opium in the most general terms for the whole of British India is, he suspects, due, apart from the appalling but remediable abuses now brought to light in particular places, to two causes, viz., first, that while the drinking of alcohol seems to those persons the most natural thing in the world, the eating or smoking of opium, even in moderation, presents itself to them as a strange, wild, and unnatural sort of indulgence, deserving of no consideration whatsoever; and secondly, that they imagine that the Government of India as a despotic Government can do anything not naturally impossible. Hence they feel no hesitation in recommending the universal prohibition of the sale of opium except for medicinal purposes, and they suppose that such a measure could be easily carried out by the exercise of the ‘absolute discretion’ conferred by the Indian Opium Act.

“Now, upon this it may be observed, to begin with, that, though the Indian Opium Act of 1878, like some other Acts passed about the same time, confers upon the executive authorities a latitude of discretion which from a constitutional point of view Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick has always regarded as excessive, it will nevertheless be perfectly clear to any one who studies that Act, and bears in mind the state of things under which it was passed, that it was never intended to confer upon the executive authorities power to do anything of the sort now proposed, and that to attempt to do under it anything of that sort would be a very gross abuse of the powers which it confers.

“Further, supposing this difficulty to be got over, the question would remain whether it would be justifiable or expedient to take such action, and the Resident is decidedly of opinion that it would not. In the first place he is of opinion, though doubtless some persons will differ from him on this point, that it would involve an interference with individual liberty far in excess of what is justified by the nature and extent of the evils which necessarily result from the use of opium, that is to say, of the evils which do not admit of being checked by a stricter system of supervision and control; and in the second place, supposing considerations of this sort, which even the most despotic Government cannot venture to disregard, could be set aside, he is convinced that such a measure would be practically unworkable, and would lead to vastly more mischief than it would succeed in preventing.

“Every one who has had experience of the working of the opium law knows that opium, owing to its extremely small bulk and the facility with which it can be stowed away, presents facilities for smuggling and clandestine sale immensely surpassing those presented by any other commodity in ordinary use.

“As it is, our officers are driven to their wits’ ends to suppress the limited and not very highly organised system of illicit traffic which has been evoked by our severe duties on opium, and, if we were to make it impossible for those addicted to the use of opium to get anything but contraband opium, a system of illicit traffic would inevitably be started on such a scale and with such an organisation that we should be utterly powerless to cope with it. Speaking generally, 10 grains would be an ordinary daily allowance to an opium eater, 20 grains would be a very full daily allowance. A seer of opium contains 1,440 times ten grains and would be quite a stock in trade, and yet it is a very small thing, for opium is a heavy substance. Let any one picture to himself the difficulty of detecting the smuggling and surreptitious sale over an immense extent of territory, and for the supply of many millions of consumers, of such a commodity, and let any one who knows this country picture to himself what the attempt to suppress it here would mean. The imagination, at least the imagination of an ordinary practical man, refuses to conceive the establishments that would be required for such a purpose, and to any one who knows the class of persons who would have to be employed for such a purpose here, the prospect of oppression, corruption, and extortion which the suggestion opens out is truly appalling. No doubt, if we covered the whole face of the country with a network of preventive establishments and resorted to an extreme of

severity whenever we got a conviction, we should succeed in diminishing to some material extent the consumption of opium, but the advantage thus gained would be as nothing compared with the evils to be set against it."

28. We give this quotation *in extenso* subject to an explanation that the appalling abuses of which the Resident speaks refer to the descriptions of opium dens contained in the papers referred to in the memorial, and not to scenes which have come under Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick's personal observation in Berar or any other part of India. We have already explained that these descriptions are much overdrawn, but the argument against the total prohibition of opium is made all the stronger by the fact that the Resident has arrived at his conclusion even on the assumption that the existing evils are as great as has been alleged. We have only to add that the Resident has omitted to notice one very important difficulty which would arise in attempting to enforce the measure suggested by the society. We allude to the risk of serious disaffection which might arise in many provinces if the people were suddenly deprived of what they have for generations been accustomed to regard as a legitimate and harmless luxury. This difficulty would be most seriously felt in the Punjab, from which province the main element of the strength of our Native army is derived and where the Sikh population is specially addicted to the use of opium.

29. We have reserved to the end the consideration of the final request made in paragraph 18 of the memorial for the closure of shops for the consumption of opium on the premises. This is a question which has engaged our attention for some time, and we took the opportunity of your Lordship's reference to put the question definitely before Local Governments. The replies are not generally in favour of universal closure, but we have again carefully considered the point with special reference to the action which has been already taken in the Punjab and in the Central Provinces. In the former, shops in which opium may be smoked on the premises have been gradually abolished between the years 1885 and 1890, and in the latter consumption of drugs in any form upon the premises of shops has been prohibited from the 1st April 1891. The question is a difficult one to decide, and we fully recognise the force of the arguments which are stated by, among others, the Governments of Bengal and Madras, in favour of retention of a small number of smoking shops under strict supervision. We are aware that there is a risk that the abolition of these shops may in some places do more harm than good by substituting opium smoking in private for opium smoking at a licensed shop, and that the immediate and direct result of closure may not be in the interest either of the classes addicted to the practice or of the general public. Nevertheless we have decided that the policy initiated in the Punjab is on the whole the right one to follow, or at least that it should be given a trial on a large scale; and your Lordship will observe from our Resolution\* No. 4033, dated the 25th September 1891, that we have now

\* Enclosure No. 16.

directed all Local Governments to take steps for the earliest possible introduction of that policy wherever it can be safely adopted without risk of serious disorder. In the resolution we have not limited our instructions to shops licensed for the smoking of opium, but have requested that in future licenses the consumption of opium in any form upon the premises of shops may be prohibited. We shall watch the results of the experiment closely, and we are not without hope that the measure we have now directed to be taken may, on the whole, be productive of good.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servants,

(Signed)

LANSDOWNE.

F. S. ROBERTS.

P. P. HUTCHINS.

D. BARBOUR.

A. E. MILLER.

H. BRACKENBURY.

R. C. B. PEMBERTON.

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STATEMENT A.

NUMBER OF SHOPS IN BRITISH INDIA SELLING OPIUM AND OTHER INTOXICATING DRUGS.

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## STATEMENT A.—NUMBER OF SHOPS IN BRITISH INDIA

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
	PUNJAB.				NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH.				CENTRAL PROVINCES.			
Year.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.
	Opium.	Madak and Chandu.			Opium.	Madak and Chandu.			Opium.	Madak and Chandu.		
1880-81	1,166	Madak and chandu shops were not shown separately in earlier years, and were finally abolished in the Punjab from 1st April 1890.	945	2,111	677	315	4,284	5,276	1,409	467	1,288	3,164
1881-82	1,114		945	2,059	683	341	4,300	5,324	1,315	418	1,014	2,747
1882-83	1,122		959	2,081	707	371	4,799	5,577	1,104	360	846	2,310
1883-84	1,177		990	2,157	779	324	4,897	6,000	1,021	321	891	2,233
1884-85	1,136		984	2,120	808	248	4,786	5,842	915	288	960	2,163
1885-86	1,131		989	2,120	798	112	3,757	4,667	946	290	996	2,232
1886-87	1,185		1,135	2,320	1,012	74	3,857	4,943	967	280	1,066	2,303
1887-88	1,717		1,783	3,500	1,027	57	3,878	4,902	944	285	1,070	2,299
1888-89	1,849		1,790	3,639	1,128	54	3,894	5,076	1,004	291	1,121	2,416
1889-90	1,888		1,824	3,712	1,159	48	3,929	5,136	1,031	292	1,118	2,441

## selling OPIUM and other INTOXICATING DRUGS.

14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.
BENGAL.				ASSAM.				BURMA.		MADRAS.			
Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Lower.	Upper.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.
Opium.	Madak and Chandu.			Opium.	Madak and Chandu.			Opium only.	Opium only.	Opium.	Madak and Chandu.		
2,794	508	3,837	7,139	1,397	—	282	1,679	68	—	1,041	167		1,208
2,375	512	3,903	6,790	1,404	—	286	1,690	28	—	878	143		1,021
2,322	522	3,650	6,494	1,373	—	294	1,667	18	—	946	145		1,091
2,302	535	3,670	6,507	1,318	37	319	1,674	18	—	986	121		1,107
2,218	518	3,548	6,284	1,283	37	314	1,634	18	—	982	107		1,089
2,127	491	3,392	6,000	1,250	38	318	1,606	17	—	960	102		1,062
2,032	488	3,394	5,914	1,175	41	322	1,538	17	—	1,045	118		1,163
1,926	458	3,282	5,666	1,067	40	327	1,434	15	—	1,157			1,157
1,911	454	3,260	5,625	989	39	328	1,356	16	12	1,172			1,172
1,831	435	3,130	5,396	990	39	327	1,356	20	16	1,052			1,336

Provisions of Alkari Act extended to the sale of drugs prepared from hemp from 1869-90.

Madak and chandu shops included under opium from 1887-88.

## STATEMENT A.—Number of Shops in British India

YEAR.	28.	29.	30.	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.	37.
	COORG.				AJMERE-MERWARA.				BOMBAY	
	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Opium and its Preparations.	
	Opium.	Madak and Chandu.			Opium.	Madak and Chandu.			Opium.	Madak and Chandu.
1880-81	2		2	4	2	—	18	20	1,033	67
1881-82	3		3	6	6	—	13	19	1,013	70
1882-83	3		3	6	6	—	13	19	1,056	78
1883-84	3		6	9	13	—	13	26	1,068	100
1884-85	3		6	9	14	—	16	30	1,069	110
1885-86	3		6	9	9	5	16	30	1,112	111
1886-87	3		6	9	9	5	16	30	1,121	129
1887-88	3		6	9	10	5	23	38	1,139	132
1888-89	3		6	9	10	5	23	38	1,175	131
1889-90	3			9	10	5	23	38	1,164	117

Madak and chandu shops not shown separately from opium shops.

selling Opium and other Intoxicating Drugs—*continued.*

38.	39.	40.	41.	42.	43.	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.	
AND SIND.		Total Shops in British India.				Remarks.	Number of Licenses or Shops excluded from the Figures in Columns 2 to 43.				
Other Drugs.	Total Shops.	Opium and its Preparations.		Other Drugs.	Total Shops.		Licenses for Sale of Drugs for Medicinal Purposes.		Hyderabad Assigned Districts (not part of British India).		
		Opium.	Mudak and Chandu.				Bengal.	Madras.	All Drugs (Opium and other Drugs not distinguished).		
Poppy-heads.	Druggist's permits.			Poppy-heads.							
1,266	2,396	9,589	1,524	11,952	23,065	The total number of shops selling drugs by columns 2 to 43 is exaggerated in some provinces, as the same shops sell both opium and other drugs. Detailed figures are not available, but as an instance it is stated that out of 1,824 shops shown in column 4 as selling other drugs in the Punjab in 1889-90, 1,553 shops also sell opium and are included in column 2.	6	No druggist's permit granted before 1887.	30	550	
1,320	2,403	8,819	1,484	11,784	22,087		6		5	555	
1,274	2,408	8,657	1,476	11,838	21,971		5		7	579	
1,264	2,432	8,685	1,438	12,040	22,163		6		10	586	
1,292	2,471	8,446	1,308	11,906	21,660		7		18	585	
1,290	2,513	8,353	1,149	10,754	20,256		5		11	594	
1,306	2,556	8,556	1,135	11,102	20,793		8		12	601	
1,295	2,566	9,005	977	11,664	21,646		9		384	14	603
1,309	2,615	9,269	974	11,781	21,974		10		453	19	604
1,290	2,571	9,164	936	11,931	22,031		41		1,522	21	587

B.

STATEMENT showing CONSUMPTION of OPIUM and its PREPARATIONS in BRITISH INDIA for 10 Years ending 1889-90.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.
Year.	Seers of Opium retailed, including Chandu and Madak.															Total British India.	Hyderabad Assigned Districts.	Remarks.
	Punjab.	North-Western Provinces and Oudh.	Central Provinces (including Sales of confiscated Opium).	Bengal.	Assam.	Burma.			Madras.	Coorg.	Ajmere-Merwara.	Bombay Presidency.						
						Lower.	Upper.	Total.				Bombay.	Sind.	Aden.	Total.			
1880-81	<sup>a</sup> 95,001	61,451	27,050	70,544	67,433	54,265	—	54,265	26,971			37,749	4,240	129	42,118	444,833	14,870	
1881-82	47,692	58,660	26,280	68,935	63,317	41,857	—	41,857	49,760			38,183	4,937	132	43,252	399,753	17,690	
1882-83	47,245	61,145	25,506	72,082	69,531	41,349	—	41,349	38,591			47,413	5,902	119	53,434	408,883	20,065	
1883-84	45,826	59,847	25,636	76,738	56,169	43,291	—	43,291	38,289	No figures available.	No figures available.	52,930	5,790	114	58,834	404,630	18,612	
1884-85	47,638	58,959	25,134	75,041	59,290	41,993	—	41,993	37,302			57,399	6,537	97	64,033	409,390	16,064	
1885-86	46,273	59,809	25,111	73,668	57,856	38,710	—	38,710	31,403			64,768	7,817	112	72,697	405,617	16,170	
1886-87	47,444	60,404	24,519	75,517	57,876	46,983	—	46,983	34,089			67,238	7,979	111	75,328	421,160	18,463	
1887-88	44,113	59,336	23,596	77,580	56,672	48,226	—	48,226	33,412			63,238	7,924	101	71,263	414,198	18,575	
1888-89	47,845	66,211	24,786	77,017	56,453	51,139	6410	51,549	33,521			65,654	8,493	108	74,255	431,642	18,600	
1889-90	57,415	68,151	25,411	76,222	59,785	53,348	6746	54,094	33,612			70,863	9,465	96	80,424	455,114	20,621	

<sup>a</sup> The figure is believed to include a large weight of poppy-heads.

<sup>b</sup> These are the amounts issued from the Treasuries in Upper Burma. In addition the following amounts are shown in the returns as imported from beyond the Frontier :—

In 1888-89	-	-	-	19,330 seers.
" 1889-90	-	-	-	5,509 "
" 1890-91	-	-	-	1,094 "

No. 1.—From J. F. FINLAY, Esq., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, to ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS. No. 4938, dated 18th October 1890.

I am directed to forward copies of a letter from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, enclosing copy of the resolutions adopted by that Society on the 3rd June 1890, and of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State by the same Society, together with a reprint of the passages to which references are made in the appendix to the memorial.

2. I am directed to request that you will submit, for the consideration of the Government of India, any remarks which <sup>His Excellency the Governor in Council</sup> ~~His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor~~ <sup>you</sup> may desire to make on these papers. The general questions raised in the memorial should be discussed so far as they affect the <sup>you</sup>, and the suggestion made in paragraph 18 of the memorial regarding the grant of licenses for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises should be specially considered. Your reply should also notice any particular statements regarding the <sup>you</sup> contained either in the memorial or in the extracts referred to in the appendix.

No. 2.—From Captain L. S. NEWMARCH, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Coorg, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Department of Finance and Commerce. No. 1955—218-90-E I., dated 18th December 1890.

I am directed to reply to your No. 4938 of the 18th October last forwarding for report a memorial and connected papers submitted to the Secretary of State by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

2. The enclosed letter from the Commissioner of Coorg is his report on the subject.

3. The questions raised do not affect Coorg much; and, as the orders already passed by the Chief Commissioner, together with any general information that may be required, will be found in the several annual reports on the excise administration of the district, Sir Oliver St. John has no special remarks to offer here. He sees no reason, however, for treating opium shops differently from beer or spirit shops.

From Colonel T. G. CLARKE, Commissioner of Coorg, to the SECRETARY to the Chief Commissioner of Coorg. No.  $\frac{904}{353}$ , dated 29th November 1890.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement No. 1713-218 of 3rd instant, giving cover to copy of letter from the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 4938, dated 18th October last, and calling for my report thereon; and to submit the following remarks regarding the sale of opium and ganja in Coorg.

2. The exclusive right of sale of opium and ganja, including madat and majim, is leased for periods of three years at a time ordinarily to the highest bidder. Opium is supplied to the contractor by Government, being procured on requisition from the Malwa Opium Agency, and is sold to the contractor at the fixed rate of Rs. 1,500 per chest of 140 lbs. 4 oz. The difference between this rate and the actual cost of the drug is a profit to the State, and amounted in the last official year to Rs. 1,209.8.0.

3. The right to the sale of opium and of ganja is put up to public competition separately, but hitherto the monopoly in respect to both has been held by one contractor.

4. In 1880-81 there were two shops in all in Coorg for the sale both of opium and ganja. In 1881-82 the number was increased to three, a shop being opened at each of the towns of Mercara, Virajendrapett, and Fraserpett. Since 1883-84, when the opium and ganja contracts were separately leased, six additional shops have been opened for the sale of ganja, &c., Gonikopal, Somvarpett, and Shanivarasante being the other towns where shops have been opened. There are thus nine shops for the sale of both opium and ganja as compared with two in 1880-81.

5. The revenue to Government from these sources has considerably increased during the same period. In 1880-81 the revenue amounted to Rs. 1,200; in 1882-83, to

Rs. 1,925; in 1883-84, to Rs. 2,733. During the subsequent five years, it fluctuated from Rs. 760 to Rs. 2,745, and in 1889-90 it rose to Rs. 3,459.8.0.

6. There can be no question therefore that the consumption of these drugs is on the increase. The classes who indulge in them are not the Coorgs, but principally Mahomedans and others of the lower classes, usually strangers from the neighbouring districts.

7. The district magistrate whom I have consulted considers that "the use of opium and ganja does not exhibit any abnormal signs of increase, alcoholic drinks, the consumption of which is increasing, being a counter-attraction," but he is in favour of reducing the number of opium and ganja shops, as "the evil effects of the indulgence in these drugs are perceptible in the large towns."

8. The proposal made in the memorial to the Secretary of State to put a stop to the retail sale of opium in the shops is, it seems to me, well deserving of consideration. These shops are the resort of the most worthless and depraved characters in every town, and such gatherings might well be interdicted by law.

9. In regard to ganja shops, where madat and other deleterious substances are consumed, they should, I consider, be entirely disallowed.

10. The existing contracts will expire at the end of March 1892, and there is ample time therefore for the introduction of any restrictive measures which may be contemplated by Government.

No. 3.—From F. C. ANDERSON, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 601—820 B., dated 27th January 1891.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Finlay's letter, No. 4938, dated the 18th October 1890, forwarding, for the Chief Commissioner's remarks, copies of a letter from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, together with a copy of the resolutions adopted by that Society on the 3rd June 1890, also of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State by the same Society, and a reprint of the passages to which references are made in the appendix to the memorial.

2. In reply I am to forward herewith a copy of a letter from the Commissioner of Excise, Central Provinces, No. 2750, dated the 22nd December last, with a copy of its enclosures, and to invite the special attention of the Government of India to the orders contained in this Administration's letter, No. 5106—500, dated the 14th August 1890, to the address of the Commissioner of Excise (a copy of which forms one of the above enclosures).

3. I am to say that the Officiating Chief Commissioner agrees with the Commissioner of Excise in his remarks about distinguishing opium-eating from opium-smoking, and the greater importance of discouraging the latter in every legitimate manner.

From the COMMISSIONER of EXCISE, Central Provinces, to the SECRETARY, CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Central Provinces. No. 2750, dated 22nd December 1890.

I have the honour to reply as follows to your endorsement, No. 7065—696, dated 7th ultimo, in which I am requested to submit any remarks which I may have to offer on the memorial and resolutions of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, forwarded with Government of India letter, No. 4938, dated 18th October 1890 (Finance and Commerce Department), to the address of the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

2. The points to which the Society invites the attention of the Government of India and the action which it wishes to be taken on these points are apparently as follows:—

The Society is of opinion that the consumption of opium, except for medical use, is pernicious, and on this account deplores the spread in India of the consumption of opium as a vice. That consumption is so spreading, it considers to be "an established fact." In order to check this spread of consumption the Society thinks that the sale of opium, except for medical use, should be entirely prohibited. Further, while admitting that

the avowed policy of the Government of India is "to obtain a maximum of duty with a minimum of consumption," it thinks that in some cases more stress has been placed by local officers on the former than on the latter clause of this dictum, and, with especial reference to these provinces, it is pointed out in the memorial that in 1888-89 the number of opium shops was apparently 66 in excess of the number established in the previous year, while the number of shops licensed for the sale of ganja and other drugs has been steadily rising from 959 in 1882-83 to 1,121 in 1889.

Finally, the Society particularly requests that steps may be at once taken to close all opium dens or shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises.

3. With the general question as to whether or not the consumption of opium otherwise than as a medicine is pernicious, I do not think it expedient to deal. The question is obviously a purely physiological one and must be decided by medical men who have sufficient experience of the facts, and a sufficiently detailed knowledge of the people of this country to enable them to say how far and under what circumstances the drug is a necessity to them. What, however, Government has to deal with is the fact that there is among a considerable proportion of the population of this country a marked and almost imperative demand for the drug, and that this demand will (owing to the facility with which the drug can be smuggled), if it is not met by sale under Government supervision of a pure but comparatively high-priced article, be satisfied by illicit means and by opium of worse quality obtained at cheaper rates. The eating of opium (as distinguished from smoking it) in moderate quantities, though generally held in disrepute and regarded as a vice by those who do not indulge in it, is not considered to be always harmful. Indeed, the current belief is that in certain localities and for certain ages and constitutions its use may be actually beneficial and conducive to health and longevity. Under these circumstances I venture to think that it would be a useless task for the Government of this country to attempt to suppress altogether the use of the drug. All that it can properly do and does do is to secure the supply of a good article, and by suitable arrangements to make the retail price of this article as high as is compatible with the prevention of smuggling. Every effort should, no doubt, also be made to put a stop to the smoking of opium in all its forms, practices which are universally condemned as degrading and pernicious by all native opinion with which I have come in contact.

4. I proceed to show briefly that in these provinces everything that is practicable has been done to effect these ends.

The Government opium which is sold from the Treasury is issued to dealers at the price of Rs. 22 per seer as compared with the cost price as supplied from the factory of Rs. 7.4 per seer. Further, the monopolies of retail sale are auctioned each year to the highest bidder, a procedure which raises the price of shops very considerably and which forces each retail vendor to sell to purchasers at very high rates. These rates vary in various parts of the province from Rs. 35 to Rs. 40 and even Rs. 50 per seer.

5. Apart from this, shops for the sale of opium are only licensed at the larger villages and bazars where there is an actual and permanent demand for the drug. Thus, out of a total number of 45,854 villages in the Central Provinces, opium shops are only licensed in 1,228, while the average population per opium shop is nearly 10,000, according to the census of 1881 and is probably now considerably greater.

6. Finally, I may note that of the two preparations of opium, chandu, and madak, which are used for smoking purposes, licenses for chandu have never been granted in these provinces, while with regard to madak it has recently been decided, after careful and detailed inquiry, to close all opium-smoking dens in the province with effect from the 1st April next, and to prohibit entirely the consumption on the premises of licensed vendors of drugs of any kind. The circular which was issued in September last on this subject is appended to this letter (*vide* Appendix A.).

7. I come now to deal with the alleged increase in opium and ganja shops in these provinces during 1888-89 and since 1882-83 respectively. As regards opium shops, it will be noticed (*vide* Appendix B.) that there was a steady decrease in their number from 1880-81 (1,856) to 1887-88 (1,229). This decrease would have continued in 1888-89 had it not been for the issue of instructions directing that shops previously allowed in weekly bazars, and for which in former years temporary licenses had been granted, were in future to be regarded as permanent shops, and included as such in the statements. The apparent increase in the number of shops was, therefore, purely nominal. The shops which were apparently added were in existence in previous years also, but had not been classed as permanent shops. I append a copy of the circular letter on this subject, which shows how this change was made (*vide* Appendix C.).



8. The causes which led to the increase in the number of ganja shops from 1882-83 onwards may be briefly epitomised as follows:—The

figures are given in the margin for facility of reference.

1883-84.—The increase was entirely due to the opening of a number of new shops in the Sambalpur district. This district is surrounded on nearly all sides by feudatory States from which at that time untaxed ganja was freely imported. It was impossible to check this traffic without giving further facilities for the purchase by the ganja-consuming public of the taxed Government drug. Hence the addition to the number of shops.

Year.	According to Reports.	As given by Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.
1882-83 - - -	846	930
1883-84 - - -	891	980
1884-85 - - -	900	984
1885-86 - - -	926	975
1886-87 - - -	1,008	1,045
1887-88 - - -	1,070	1,070
1888-89 - - -	1,121	1,121

In several other districts, *i.e.*, Mandla (4), Betul (6), Hoshangabad (4), Narsingpur (7), Bilaspur (14), the number shops licensed as compared with 1882-83 actually decreased in this year.

1884-85.—The increase in this year is said to have been due to the shops in the Nagpur district having for the first time been sold for the whole year instead of month by month as had previously been the case. There was apparently little or no increase in the actual number of shops in existence (*vide* paragraph 47 of the Central Provinces Excise Report for 1884-85). The explanation given in the report is not very clear, but I am unable to ascertain anything further with regard to it.

1885-86.—The increase occurred chiefly in Chanda (16), Mandla (10), and Betul (15), and was due to the fact already referred to that it was found to be impracticable to displace the smuggled and cheaper article which was being illicitly imported from Berar and the Central India Feudatory States, without opening more shops for the purchase by consumers of the local drug.

The increase in 1886-87 and 1887-88 was due to similar causes. It was chiefly confined to the Chhattisgarh division where the habit of smoking ganja is very general, and where, owing to the numerous feudatory states by which the Khalsa area is surrounded, smuggling is extremely easy. The only effectual method of checking this illicit traffic is to provide sufficient facilities for the sale of the Khalsa drug, and, when this has been done, to punish with adequate severity all detected smugglers.

The methods which have been adopted have so far proved successful. The consumption of the taxed drug has increased, while smuggling is far less frequent than it formerly was.

The apparent increase in shops in 1888-89 was due to the same causes as have been already referred to in connexion with opium shops, *i.e.*, to the inclusion in the statements of certain shops which had been previously regarded as temporary.

9. The present number of ganja shops appears to be adequate for the existing conditions of the province: I do not think that any further increase will be necessary, and every endeavour will be made to abolish all shops which do not meet a permanent and regular demand.

10. In conclusion, I would point out that the figures showing the number of opium and ganja shops in the Central Provinces, which are given in the printed papers forwarded with your letter, do not, in several cases, agree with those in the Annual Excise Reports. The latter figures are given in Appendix B. for facility of reference.

#### APPENDIX A.

From H. H. PRIEST, Esq., Officiating Commissioner of Excise, Central Provinces, to all DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS, Central Provinces. Circular No. 4, dated 5th September 1890.

In forwarding, for your information and guidance, copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner containing the Chief Commissioner's orders regarding the proposal to close madak shops and prohibit the manufacture of madak, I have the honour to inform you that the instructions contained in that letter should have effect given to them from the 1st April 1891. From that date the consumption of opium, madak, ganja, foreign bhang, or majum on the premises of the licensed vendors of these drugs will be entirely prohibited, and a condition to this effect will be inserted in all leases granted to such vendors. These orders should be promptly made known to all who are interested in the sale of drugs. When they come into force special care will have to be taken to prevent the illicit manufacture of madak; and for this end a watch must be

maintained by both the police and Excise officers upon all habitual assemblages of madak smokers; and the sources of supply should be quietly ascertained in all such cases. Attention is also invited to the instructions contained in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Secretariat letter, which should be very carefully complied with. From my own experience, I incline to think that it is possible to reduce considerably the number of madak shops in these provinces, and Deputy Commissioners should carefully consider this point when submitting their annual proposals regarding the Excise arrangements of their several districts in November next.

From L. K. LAURIE, Esq., Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the COMMISSIONER OF EXCISE, Central Provinces. No. 5106—500, dated 14th August 1890.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1767, dated the 8th instant, submitting the replies received by you from Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners on the subject of your proposal to close madak shops and prohibit the manufacture of madak.

2. I am to say that after carefully considering the various arguments adduced, the Chief Commissioner is of opinion that, while there is much to be said in favour of the entire prohibition of the manufacture of madak, it is inadvisable, in view of the opinions expressed on the other side, to go as far as this at present. He thinks that the step which the facts and papers before him render justifiable and expedient, is to put a stop to the practice of allowing vendors of intoxicating drugs to maintain "taverns" for the consumption not only of madak, but of opium and ganja and all their preparations. It should be a condition of all retail licenses hereafter granted for the sale of intoxicating drugs of any kind that the drug is not to be consumed on the premises. Persons who cannot do without their regular dose of a narcotic must carry home from the shop what they require and smoke, or swallow it in private. Gregariousness in habits of vice must no longer be encouraged by Government.

3. As a rule, I am to add, the opium and madak contracts should, in future, be sold together. The opium vendor should be also the madak vendor, and if he declines in any instance to combine the sale of the preparation with the sale of the drug from which it is prepared, the madak shop should be closed.

4. Finally, no new licenses to manufacture and sell madak should be given in places where there are no madak shops at present, even though there may be an opium shop. As an ordinary rule, madak licenses should be granted only at large centres of population, where there is a considerable and permanent demand for the preparation.

#### APPENDIX B.

STATEMENT showing the number of Opium Shops in the Central Provinces in each of the Years 1880-81 to 1888-89.

Year.	According to Reports.	As given by Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.
1880-81	1,876	1,856
1881-82	1,733	1,733
1882-83	1,464	1,481
1883-84	1,342	1,515
1884-85	1,203	1,453
1885-86	1,236	1,236
1886-87	1,237	1,237
1887-88	1,229	1,229
1888-89	1,295	1,295

STATEMENT showing the number of Ganja Shops\* in the Central Provinces in each of the Years 1880-81 to 1888-89.

Year.	According to Reports.	As given by Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.
1880-81	1,288	1,288
1881-82	1,014	1,014
1882-83	846	959
1883-84	891	980
1884-85	960	984
1885-86	996	975
1886-87	1,066	1,045
1887-88	1,070	1,070
1888-89	1,121	1,121

\* Includes licenses for sale of foreign bhang and majun.

APPENDIX C.

From L. K. LAURIE, Esq., Officiating Commissioner of Excise, Central Provinces, to all DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS, Central Provinces. Circular No. 2981, dated 7th December 1881.

It has been brought to my notice by the Deputy Commissioner of Wardha that the rules contained in the Excise Manual as to temporary licenses are sometimes misunderstood or misapplied. Under cover of a temporary license granted for a weekly bazar, the licensee keeps his retail shop open daily (and not merely on bazar days) in the villages in which the weekly bazar is held. If it pays him to do this it is obvious that he ought to pay a separate license fee for the (so-called) "temporary" shop as though it were a permanent shop; or if a permanent shop is not really required, he should not be allowed to keep the shop open on other days than bazar days.

2. The difficulty is that it is not always possible to maintain such a watch as to make sure that licensee of a "temporary" shop sells only on bazar days. It seems to me that villages at which there is a weekly bazar should be distinguished from places at which bazars are held at rare intervals, say once or twice a year. Shops at the former places should be regarded as permanent and licensed as such whenever it is probable that it will pay the licensee to keep his agent permanently in the villages (even though the sales on days other than bazar days may be small) than to send the latter and his stock in trade out every week to the bazar site. There will be nothing harsh or revolutionary in this measure, for the bids for these permanent shops which depend mainly for their profits on weekly bazars will take full account of the sale prospects. Temporary licenses for bazar shops should only be granted when the bazar is held in a place the resident population of which is insignificantly small, or which is at such a short distance from the nearest permanent shop that the licensee of the latter can be under no temptation to maintain a permanent branch shop under cover of the temporary license.

3. The foregoing remarks apply to opium shops and ganja shops (paragraphs 38 and 49 of the manual) as well as to liquor shops (paragraph 28½). If they meet with acceptance from you, they may be given practical effect to at the approaching auctions.

No. 4.—From F. C. DAUKES, Esq., Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 466 R., dated 31st January 1891.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 4938, dated the 18th October 1890, forwarding copies of a communication from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, with copy of the resolutions adopted by that Society on the 3rd June 1890, and of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State by the same Society, together with a reprint of the passages to which references are made in the appendix to the memorial.

2. In reply, I am to forward the accompanying copies of letters from the Commissioner of Excise, Assam, and the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts, which, in the Chief Commissioner's opinion, furnish conclusive answers to the memorialists so far as opium and opium dens are concerned. The latter, however numerous in large Indian cities, are unsuited to the habits and ways of living of a sparse agricultural population such as that of Assam, and are not found in this province.

3. In regard to licenses for the sale of narcotic drugs, I am to point out that while it is true, as stated in paragraph 6 of the memorial, that the number of shops for the sale of narcotic drugs rose between the years 1879-80 and 1888-89, yet the numbers for the past four years have been almost constant (*vide* table under paragraph 51, page 21, of the Excise Administration Report of Assam for 1889-90), and that, as shown in table No. I., appended to Mr. Driberg's note, now forwarded, the number of such shops was reduced to 279 for the year 1890-91. At the same time the duty on choor ganja was raised from Rs. 6-8 to Rs. 7 per seer from 1st of April 1890.

4. In conclusion, I am to say that the Chief Commissioner bases no argument on the increase of population which the forthcoming census is expected to show, until he has before him the actual figures by which it can be supported.

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From J. J. S. DRIBERG, Esq., Commissioner of Excise, Assam, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER of ASSAM. No. 1 T., dated 2nd December 1890.

With reference to your letter, No. 3590 R., of the 12th November 1890, I have the honour to submit herewith a note in reply to the Government of India's letter, No. 4938, of the 18th October 1890, forwarding a memorial from the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

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NOTE ON THE MEMORIAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE OPIUM TRADE, presented to the Secretary of State on the 13th July 1890, copy received with Government of India's letter No. 4938 (Finance and Commerce), dated the 18th October 1890.

The question relating to the consumption of opium and other drugs in this province has been discussed more than once with reference to similar memorials made to the Secretary of State and the Government of India. I can recollect that I have twice at least reported, and only within the last few years I gave the Commissioner of Assam a note on the subject.

2. For readier reference I enclose two statements, No I. showing the number of shops licensed in each year, since the formation of this Chief Commissionership, for the sale of opium and other drugs, and showing also the total consumption of the drugs; and No. II., a similar statement of the number of places in which madak and chandu are sold, and the quantity of opium converted into these admixtures of opium. In Statement No. I. I have given the duty on opium year by year up to date.

3. It seems to me that these statements are in themselves a complete refutation of the charge, so far as this province is concerned, that Government encourages the use of these drugs by increasing the number of shops, or in other ways attracting people to their use. It will be seen that in 1874-75, when Assam was formed into a separate Chief Commissionership, we had 447 ganja shops, 58 places of vend for madak and chandu, and 3,977 opium shops; in the present year, 1890-91, we have 279 ganja shops, 33 places where madak and chandu are sold, and 934 opium shops. Surely this is evidence that we have striven to keep our shops at the lowest number actually required by the people, and it is hoped to further reduce the madak and chandu shops. In his resolution on the Provincial Excise Report of the past year the Chief Commissioner wrote as follows regarding these shops:—"These shops must be kept down to the smallest number consistent with the absence of inducements to smuggle, and must be still further reduced as opportunity offers."

4. I would also point to the duty on opium. In 1874-75 it was Rs. 23 a seer; in 1876-77 it was raised to Rs. 24, in 1879-80 to Rs. 26, in 1883-84 to Rs. 32, and since the 1st of April 1890 it has been raised to Rs. 37. Surely this, taken with the reduction—a very large reduction—in the number of opium shops is proof of the desire of Government to obtain a minimum of consumption with a maximum of duty, or, in other words, to make the drug as expensive as possible to the consumers and not to place

facilities of obtaining it in their way. These remarks apply equally to ganja. The duty been steadily raised and the shops reduced.

5. In paragraph 18 of the memorial a suggestion is made that all opium dens or shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises should be closed. Now I can positively state that there are no "opium dens" in this province, such as have been described by Mr. Caine and other gentlemen; none of our opium eaters in the province sit in the opium shops and consume the opium. All our opium sellers carry on other business besides the sale of opium; nearly every opium vendor in the province sells also rice, dal, cloths, and other articles. A purchaser of opium may or may not consume the opium on the premises; the generality of them carry it home. Opium is not smoked in Assam as a rule, it is swallowed in its crude state in the form of a pill, or it is diluted with water and drunk; now a man when he wants opium buys  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a tola, or  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a tola, or  $\frac{1}{2}$  a tola, and consumes part of it at once, and puts the remainder in a pot (debia) which he carries with him. If you hinder him from swallowing a pill in the shop he will do so outside of it. In fact, there is no such thing as going into a shop. The place of vend is open on the outside, the vendor sits on a chang or platform, the purchaser standing in a narrow verandah outside makes his purchase and leaves. There is no room into which he is invited to enter or into which he can go and rest if so inclined. After making his purchase he must go on or sit below the nearest tree. The conditions of Upper India do not apply to this province. We have not a single "opium den," and it is not necessary to make any change in the mode of sale. We wish to restrict people to making small purchases of the drug. This will not result from debarring them from consuming the opium in the shop verandah, or outside it. If you compel a man not to take opium near a shop he will be careful to have a larger supply always at home, and this will be worse for him and worse for all the inmates of the house.

6. Much is said in the printed papers under consideration of the "alarming spread of the opium vice." This is not the case, again see Statement I. Our consumption of opium has fallen from 1,837 maunds in 1874-75 to 1,411 maunds in 1888-89. In the following year there was an increase of some 80 maunds, but this does not indicate increased consumption last year, but increased purchases by the vendors. As soon as it was known that the price was to be enhanced by Rs. 5 a seer from the 1st of April 1890, vendors laid in larger stocks in February and March for the current year.

7. Then, again, I am not prepared to admit that the present use of opium in Assam is a "vice." In most cases it is a necessity. When we first acquired Assam (I now speak of the Assam Valley) every villager grew his own opium, just as he now does his vegetables, or his chillies for his curry. He had no tax to pay for his opium field, no restrictions placed on him. The former rulers recognised that a certain amount of the drug was necessary. Taking it broadly, and excluding tea gardens, the valley is inhabited by two classes; the Cacharies, Lalongs, Meches, and other aboriginal tribes who reside on the higher submontane tracts or along the high banks of the larger rivers, and the Hindus, the Kolutas, Koshes, Keots, and others who reside in the low-lying country subject annually to inundation and always damp. The former people do not use opium, they do not require it, but the lowlanders use it. They are the opium-eaters of Assam. They live in a low, damp part of the country; year after year parts of their villages are submerged and temporarily abandoned, and these people use opium to counteract the damp and malaria. They themselves say that they would die from fevers if they did not use opium, and I have known medical men who have had much experience of the Province hold the same view. These people are opium-eaters, but not of the class described in the papers. They are good agriculturists, good subjects, and good fathers of families. They take their opium just as a good Englishman would take his peg. Of course there are Assamese who take too much opium, just as there are Englishmen who take too much liquor, but that opium-eating is always a vice I am not prepared to admit so far as Assamese are concerned, and that it is increasing I deny, and the statement I have referred to proves my view. In the Surma Valley little opium is consumed. The people there use ganja rather than opium, and even there the consumption of this drug is smaller now than it was in 1874-75, and the duty is higher.

## No. I.

STATEMENT showing the Number of Shops for the vend of Ganja, Sidhi, Madak and Chandu, and Opium, and the Consumption of Ganja, Sidhi, and Opium, in the Province of Assam for each Year since the formation of the Province.

Year.	Maximum Number of Shops Licensed for the vend of				Consumption of						Duty on Opium per Seer.	
	Ganja.	Sidhi.	Madak and Chandu.	Opium.	Ganja.		Sidhi.		Opium.			
					Mds.	Srs.	Ch.	Mds.	Srs.	Ch.	Rs.	
1874-75	447	—	58	3,977	868	9	1	—	1,887	11	0	23
1875-76	465	—	62	3,151	814	22	3	—	1,874	38	0	23
1876-77	267	—	55	2,833	633	36	10	—	1,793	38	0	24
1877-78	248	—	52	1,271	641	39	9	—	1,634	16	6	24
1878-79	271	1	55	1,342	587	1	13	—	1,655	19	0	24
1879-80	251	—	56	1,367	570	26	12	—	1,618	32	0	26
1880-81	282	—	—	1,397	583	13	5	—	1,685	33	7	26
1881-82	286	—	—	1,404	574	15	1	—	1,582	37	6	26
1882-83	294	—	—	1,373	579	15	1	—	1,738	10	13	26
1883-84	319	—	37	1,318	638	6	1	—	1,404	9	7	32
1884-85	314	—	37*	1,263	634	35	3	—	1,482	10	0	32
1885-86	317	1	38*	1,250	515	26	9	3 8 13	1,446	16	5	32
1886-87	321	1	41*	1,175	666	38	12	3 6 0	1,446	36	1	32
1887-88	327	—	40*	1,067	613	5	14	—	1,416	32	3	32
1888-89	328	—	39*	989	677	9	13	—	1,411	17	15	32
1889-90	327	—	39*	990	700	6	3	—	1,494	24	15	32
1890-91	279	—	33	934	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	37

\* Represent actual number of places of vend of madak and chandu, and include three opium shops which had permission to sell these admixtures in addition to opium.

## No. II.

STATEMENT showing the Number of Places of vend of Madak and Chandu in Assam, the Revenue Collections on account of License Fee and Duty on crude Opium used in the Preparation of these Admixtures, and the Quantity of Opium thus used every Year since 1885-86.

Year.	Number of Places of vend of Madak and Chandu in the Province of Assam (including three Opium Shops in the Assam Valley which had Permission to sell these Drugs in addition to Opium).	Quantity of crude Opium converted into Madak and Chandu.	Revenue Collections.		
			License Fees for the vend of Madak and Chandu.	Duty (net Price at Rs. 24.12 per Seer) on the Quantity of Opium converted into Madak and Chandu.*	Total.
		Mds. Srs. Ch.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1885-86	38	21 11 12	8,362	21,081	29,443
1886-87	41	24 32 15½	9,207	24,576	33,783
1887-88	40	23 31 0	6,856	23,537	30,393
1888-89	39	23 9 0	7,054	22,993	30,047
1889-90	39	22 17 8	7,553	22,213	29,766
1890-91	33	—	8,339†	—	—

\* NOTE.—In the annual reports the duty on opium issued to the vendors of madak and chandu is not separately accounted for, but is included in the total amount of duty shown under opium.

† Revenue demand.

EXPLANATION.—Only five years' figures are given in the statement, as the information about the quantity of opium converted into madak and chandu for any year previous to 1885-86 is not available.

From H. LUTTMAN-JOHNSON, Esq., Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER of ASSAM. No. 7046, dated 30th December 1890.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3589, dated the 12th November 1890, forwarding copy of a circular letter, No. 4938, dated 18th October 1890, from the Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, in which the Chief Commissioner is requested to submit any remarks which he may desire to make on a memorial submitted to the Secretary of State by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

In my letter No. 1459,\* dated 5th April 1889, I reported generally on what we had done for the suppression of the consumption of drugs and spirituous liquors. I find myself unable to imagine what further remarks it is expected that the Chief Commissioner should make. It cannot be intended that he should reiterate yet again the history of our interference with opium-eating and smoking in this province, or even give an account of the efforts made during the last few years

\* *Vide* enclosure to letter No. 1088, dated the 21st April 1887, from the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam to the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce.

to suppress this noxious habit; that has all been reported again and again. In my division I have this year 900 shops, and the consumption of excise opium will be about 1,300 maunds. In 1884, when I took charge, there were 1,188 shops, and the consumption of excise opium was 1,397 maunds. In the year 1873-74, when the province was included in the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal, there were 4,751 shops for sale of opium and its compound in this valley, and the consumption of excise opium was 1,758 maunds. I have always held that there is illicit importation both of excise opium and of contraband opium. I do not understand that the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Traffic accuse us of conniving at the smuggling of opium. The suppression of smuggling, with opium selling at Rs. 37 a seer at the treasury, is an almost impossible task in a country where most of the traders come from the Native States of Rajputana, and which is crowded with immigrants from Nepal. But we are making further efforts in this direction. The fact is that ever since we occupied Assam the suppression of the opium trade has been one of the cardinal points in our policy. In our efforts to suppress it we have gone as far as it was possible to go with any chance of success. - I think the success of our last step, the raising of the treasury price from Rs. 32 to Rs. 37 per seer, is not yet assured.

2. With regard to the specific proposal made by the Society that our licenses for the retail sale of opium should not include consumption on the premises, I have the honour to say that consumption on the premises is not common in my division. In the case of opium shops proper, of which I have 880, I may say that the drug is never consumed on the premises. In the case of chandu shops (I have three shops for sale of chandu and seven for sale of madak and chandu) the drug is always consumed on the premises. In the case of madak shops, of which I have ten, besides the seven licensed to sell both madak and chandu, it is often consumed on the premises. My annual Excise Reports give full particulars of the number of these shops, and the opium taken on their account from the treasury in each year. In 1889-90, 13 maunds 16 seers were sold from the treasury for madak and chandu shops, out of a total of 1,398 maunds. I would not mind closing these shops; such a measure would make no difference to the habits of the people. The few people who use them, chiefly foreigners, would make some other arrangements.

3. The consumption of opium, deleterious as the drug undoubtedly is, is not from the Society point of view a crying evil in this division. I think that ganja-smoking does much more harm than opium-eating or smoking. The habit of ganja-smoking is difficult to control, partly because ganja grows wild, and it is difficult to decide whether it is growing of itself or for use as an intoxicant, partly because the use of the drug forms an important part of religious ceremonies. I would commend to the Society's attention an article in the "Pioneer" newspaper of December 4th, 1890, on the subject of intemperance in India. The control of habits of intemperance so ancient and so well established, so intimately connected with religious ceremonies, as are those we meet with in India, is no easy task.

No. 5.—From H. THIRKELL WHITE, Esq., Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Burma, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 1-10 E., dated 2nd February 1891.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4938, dated the 18th of October 1890, concerning representations made by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade on the subject of the consumption of opium in India.

2. I am to submit a copy of a memorandum, dated the 8th December 1890, by the Financial Commissioner, on the subject of the representations made by the Society so far as they affect this province, and I am also to communicate the following remarks.

The main propositions advanced by the Society are—

- (i.) That the habit of opium smoking is on the increase;
- (ii.) That houses licensed for consumption on the premises are causes of great demoralisation.

The measures advocated by the Society are the closing of all opium shops, and the absolute prohibition of the sale and possession of opium except for medicinal purposes, or at any rate the closing of all shops licensed for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises.

3. As regards the allegation that the habit of opium smoking is on the increase, the statement is not made with special reference to this province. The following table shows the quantity of opium taken out from the treasuries in Lower Burma and the number of shops in each year since the year 1878-79 :—

	Quantity taken out from Treasury.	Number of Shops.
	Seers.	
1878-79	46,603	67
1879-80	47,797	67
1880-81	54,265	68
1881-82	41,857	28
1882-83	41,349	18
1883-84	43,291	18
1884-85	41,993	18
1885-86	38,710	17
1886-87	45,983	17
1887-88	48,226	15
1888-89	51,139	16
1889-90	53,348	20

There is no reason to believe that the increase in consumption during the past four years indicates any serious extension during that period of the practice of opium-eating and smoking among the Burmese, or that it is greatly disproportionate to the growth of the non-Burman population. Some part of it is certainly due to improved checks upon illicit consumption. It will be observed that the issues in 1889-90 were below those in 1880-81. At the same time there is evidence that the consumption of opium by Burmese is in some districts of Lower Burma already very considerable, and there can be no doubt that it is to people of that race an absolute poison, destroying their morals, and degrading them in every way. It cannot, moreover, be assumed that the figures showing the quantity of opium issued by Government to licensed vendors are a correct indication of the total quantity of opium consumed. In spite of the efforts which have been made to put a stop to smuggling, much illicit traffic in opium is still carried on. Sir Alexander Mackenzie would be disposed to infer from the reports and evidence before him that the use of opium among the Burmese is increasing, though not as yet to any very serious extent, save in special tracts, such as Arakan, the seaport towns, and the delta of the Irrawaddy.

4. But, even if it is admitted that the consumption of opium is increasing, the question whether the Government can take effectual measures to check the increase remains for consideration. The reduction in the number of retail shops has little effect in Lower Burma on the quantity of opium issued to retail vendors. If the number of shops is reduced, the average quantity of opium sold by each shop increases. In spite of all precautions the licensees arrange to hawk their opium about the country. If all shops were closed, it is certain that illicit trade would be carried on to a great extent, and so long as the possession of opium in the authorised quantities by Burmans is allowed, the difficulty of checking this traffic is almost insuperable. It has, moreover, been frequently explained that there is in this province a considerable non-Burman population, consisting



of Shans, Chinese, and others, who are accustomed to the moderate use of opium, and who consume it without ill effects or even with beneficial results. The Chief Commissioner is not prepared to advise the absolute prohibition of the possession or sale of opium in Burma by persons of non-Burman descent. Such a step would be an unjustifiable interference with the habits of a large section of the population, and would be quite impossible to enforce. As the Financial Commissioner remarks, even the prohibition of the use of ganja cannot be absolutely enforced. Indians who are accustomed to use it will have it, and can arrange to get it. The enforcement of a general prohibition of the use of opium would present still greater difficulties, as the classes which consume opium are far more numerous than those which consume ganja. As regards this province, the opium question has been frequently discussed, and the opinions of the most experienced officers have been more than once placed on record. It may be considered as established beyond question that there is a legitimate demand for opium among the foreign residents in Burma, which would exist whether Government countenanced the use of opium or not; that if Government decided to declare the sale or possession of opium generally illegal, the demand would be supplied by illicit means; and that the results of any attempt to enforce absolute prohibition of the use of opium would be the loss of a large amount of revenue without any commensurate benefit.

5. In the case of Upper Burma, where the prohibition of the use of opium by Burmans is well understood and was nominally enforced by the Burmese Government, the sale of opium to Burmans is prohibited by law. In Lower Burma, where for many years the sale of opium to Burmans has been permitted, successive Chief Commissioners have come to the conclusion, though not altogether without hesitation, that a prohibition such as that which exists in Upper Burma could not rightly be issued or enforced. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, with his present limited experience of the country, has some hesitation in expressing an opinion differing from that of his predecessors; but he finds, on perusing the voluminous reports and correspondence on the subject, that unanimous voice of all respectable Burmans denounces the use of opium by men of their race and temperament as deleterious and harmful in a very special degree. This judgment is confirmed by every European authority in the province, official and non-official. In view of this consensus of opinion, Sir Alexander Mackenzie would himself be willing to see the possession of opium in any quantity by natives of Burma declared illegal, save under medical certificate, both in Lower and Upper Burma. This measure would no doubt diminish the revenue and cause a certain amount of personal suffering and inconvenience to Burmans who had contracted the habit. But it is, in the Chief Commissioner's opinion, the only way of preventing the extension of consumption among the Burman population. Even in Upper Burma, where sale to Burmans is prohibited, a Burman may legally possess 10 tolahs weight of opium and 5 seers of poppy-heads. It would seldom be possible to trace the source from which the drug had been procured. The true and radical remedy is to declare the possession of any quantity illegal.

6. This was the conclusion clearly indicated by the argument in paragraphs 9 to 12 of Sir Charles Aitchison's minute\* on the subject of the 30th April 1880, paragraphs which are reprinted in an annexure to this letter. Sir Charles Aitchison gave two reasons, and only two, for not acting upon that conclusion.

One was the existence of a large opium-consuming non-Burman population. The other was that it would be cruel to withdraw the drug suddenly from the large number of Burmans whom we had allowed to take to it. Sir Alexander Mackenzie does not propose to interfere with the supply to foreigners of non-Burman race. As regards opium-eating Burmans, it is only necessary to provide for the case of those men of the present generation who are too old to break themselves of the habit all at once with safety. It might be provided by rule that Burmans of, say, not less than 40 years of age, who were accustomed to opium might register themselves as "foreigners" for the purpose of the Opium Act and Rules, and receive a certificate entitling them to purchase and possess the ordinary legal quantity. The registers once made up would be finally closed, and no such exception would be made hereafter. If the two collections of (further) papers relating to the consumption of opium in Burma, published in 1885 and 1886, be examined, it will be seen that the opinions of many local authorities,† especially of those best acquainted with the

\* Papers relating to the consumption of opium in British Burma, 1881, page 81, *seq.*

† See the annexure to this letter. Burmese, leant to the side of total prohibition, and, so far as Sir Alexander Mackenzie can see, no new arguments against this were advanced beyond those mentioned above. The chief reason for setting aside the suggestion was, the Chief Commissioner has little doubt, the loss of revenue involved. He is well aware that there would be difficulty

in enforcing such a prohibition, but he would not despair of making it more and more effective in its operation as time went on. The law would, to say the least, be a school-master inculcating on the Burmese mind the disfavour with which in their case the Government viewed the use of opium. The Government is at present in this respect in a false position.

7. There remains the question whether shops should be licensed for the sale of opium to be consumed on the premises. The remarks of the Society on this point apply to other provinces, but it is understood that their recommendation in this matter is of general application, and that if they cannot obtain the absolute prohibition of the sale of opium, they wish the practice of the consumption of opium on the premises of licensed shops to be generally forbidden. There is in the correspondence already before the Government of India a considerable body of opinion among the local authorities consulted in this province that one of the measures which might be taken to check the consumption of opium is the prohibition of its possession elsewhere than in a licensed shop. On this point opinions are not, indeed, unanimous, but the weight of opinion seems to incline in this direction. Sir Charles Aitchison, in his Minute of the 30th April 1880, recommended the adoption of this proposal. On the other hand, in his note forwarded with this office letter No. 8983-3-8, dated the 30th December 1880, Sir Charles Bernard showed cause against it; but later, as appears from paragraph 7 of this office letter No. 188-9 E., dated the 8th December 1886, his view of the proposal seems to have been modified, and he thought it possible that some such arrangement might be desirable hereafter. The view taken by the officers who have advised that opium should be allowed to be consumed only in licensed shops is that Burmans of the more respectable classes will not acquire the habit of opium eating or smoking if they are unable to take opium to their own homes, and that public opinion could be more efficiently exercised under an arrangement of this kind. On the other hand, officers whose opinion is entitled to respect have shown cause against this proposal, and support the view taken by the Society. If the suggestion above put forward (that the possession of opium in any quantity by natives of Burma should be illegal) found acceptance, there would, in Sir Alexander Mackenzie's opinion, be no need to interfere with the consumption on the premises of the licensed shops, which would be frequented only by Chinese and other opium-consuming races. The existence of such places would in a measure facilitate the exercise of check upon the habits of the Burman population. But, if the Government of India is not prepared to accept the proposal in question, then Sir Alexander Mackenzie has no hesitation in declaring himself an advocate for the absolute closing of opium taverns to men of Burmese race. As Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces (where there are no Chinese or other races generally accustomed to drugs) he ordered the closing of all drug taverns on the ground that it was desirable to put a stop to the temptation afforded by gregariousness in vice, and he sees no reason to doubt that the same principle would apply in Burma. He has no faith in the check supposed to be exercised by "public opinion," which is the main argument relied on by those who advocate the restriction of consumption to licensed premises. Public opinion has failed to check the resort of Burmans to opium shops in Arakan and other places. Only the law and its penalties can prevent the extension of a habit so pernicious to the Burman race, and the Chief Commissioner would, as already indicated, place under the stigma of criminal law the use of opium by any members of that race, and, failing this, he would exclude them from all opium shops, and make them consume their poison, if they will have it, in the retirement of their homes.

8. It is indisputable that the Chief Commissioner's proposals would involve some sacrifice of revenue in Lower Burma, but Sir Alexander Mackenzie does not think that this ought to outweigh the moral considerations on the other side; and if it were possible to prohibit the importation of Yunnan and other foreign opium into Upper Burma, and to insist on the general use by foreigners of the Bengal drug, it would probably be found that the loss to Government over the whole province would be largely made up. The Chief Commissioner is not, however, as yet in a position to say whether the enforcement of such a measure in Upper Burma would be feasible. It is a question which he has asked the Financial Commissioner to consider. The Government of India may, moreover, see some political objection to interfering so directly with the China frontier trade. But if the loss of revenue should prove to be serious, he believes that Burmese opinion would accept a moderate increase of the land tax or the rice duty as a small price to pay for the withdrawal of the drug which is ruining so many of their race.

## ANNEXURE I.

FROM W. H. A. ST. J. LEEDS, Esq., Secretary to the Financial Commissioner, Burma, to the CHIEF SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No 372-186 E., dated 17th December 1890.

In reply to your No. 841-36 E., dated the 24th November 1890, I am directed to submit a Note by the Financial Commissioner on the recommendations of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

Note by F. W. R. FRYER, Esq., C.S.I., Financial Commissioner, Burma, on the recommendations of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade. Dated 8th December 1890.

The general questions raised in the memorial of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, received with the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 4938, dated the 18th October 1890, so far as they affect Burma, are—

- (i.) all remaining opium licenses should be withdrawn;
- (ii.) complete prohibition is the only effective mode of protecting the population of the recently acquired province of Upper Burma from the evil habit of opium-smoking, which has wrought such havoc in Lower Burma:

and it is recommended that opium dens or shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises should be at once closed throughout British India.

2. The question of withdrawing all remaining opium licenses has been fully discussed in the memorandum of Sir Charles Aitchison, dated the 30th April 1880, and in a note by Sir Charles Bernard, dated the 23rd December 1880.

In Sir Charles Aitchison's memorandum, which the Society quote with approval, the following passages occur:—

“13. But there are considerations of another kind which, in my judgment, make it impossible altogether to prohibit the supply of opium. In the first place we have, for more than half a century in one part of the province and more than a quarter of a century in the rest of it, allowed the habit of opium smoking to grow up among certain classes of the Burmese. Having ministered to this taste, we should not be justified in suddenly withdrawing the supply at the risk of the lives of the unhappy consumers if the further spread of the evil can be prevented in any other way. In the next place there are large numbers of the non-Burmese community, constituting perhaps the most thriving and industrious section of the population, to whom the drug is a necessary of life, and by whom it is rarely abused. It is impossible to say precisely what the numbers\* of the Chinese and natives of India are, but they are probably not less than 200,000. The legitimate requirements of these people must necessarily be considered and provided for. Fortunately they are collected in tolerably well-defined centres.

“14. We must therefore be content to restrict and regulate a consumption which it is impossible for the present altogether to prevent. The first and most obvious step is to reduce the number of shops for the retail of opium: this is a measure which rests entirely in the hands of the local administration. Before the next licensing season comes round, the history of every shop in the province will be inquired into, and the opinions of district officers and commissioners will be taken as to the necessity for maintaining them. Such shops as are not declared to be really necessary, or may be situated where effective control cannot be exercised, will be closed. Licenses for new shops in new localities will not in future be granted, except on the strongest evidence that they are needed to meet a *bona fide* demand, and in places where the shops can be strictly supervised. A copy of the instructions issued to Commissioners is attached to this memorandum for information.”

3. In Sir Charles Bernard's note, in paragraphs 9 and 11, he concurs with Sir Charles Aitchison and writes as follows:—

“9. If it be admitted that the spread of opium shops and opium facilities is working evil among the Burmans and Arakanese, there is still doubt about the most suitable measure for checking the evil. Some officers have proposed that all opium shops in Arakan, if not in the whole of Burma, should be at once closed, and that opium should be made contraband, as was done with ganja a few years ago. Seeing that we have so

large a Chinese and Indian population, seeing that some opium is sure to come into the country somehow, seeing that a considerable section of the population has become accustomed to opium for many years past, and seeing that the large revenue of 13 lakhs is involved, I do not think that such an extreme measure is at present required.

"11. I think the most practical plan will be to follow the course indicated at paragraph 14 of Mr. Aitchison's Minute, dated the 30th April, to reduce considerably the number of shops and to enhance the selling price of the drug, all of which is supplied by the State to the vendors under a most strict monopoly. We can hardly expect that there will be no illicit traffic in opium, but at any rate such traffic will become more difficult and costly. Persons already habituated to opium-smoking will probably continue to get opium somehow, so long as they can afford to pay a sufficient price. But, at any rate, the spread of the habit among young men will be restricted; and when facilities for obtaining opium are largely reduced, and its price considerably enhanced, young men who have not yet settled down into habitual smoking will gradually forego the luxury. The reports received from the several divisional and district officers in reply to Mr. Aitchison's Minute enable us to settle what opium shops may properly be closed. The price of opium from the Government stores can, with the sanction of the Government of India, be raised to such rate as may be possible without inducing smuggling from Bengal or elsewhere. The selling price of opium in Chittagong, where the Bengal Government have recently raised the rate to Rs. 26 per seer, will guide us in fixing rates for the issue of Government opium to licensed vendors in Arakan, Pegu, and Tenasserim."

4. In accordance with the policy advocated by the two Chief Commissioners whose opinions I have quoted, the number of shops was gradually reduced from 68 in 1880-81 to 15 in 1887-88, the number in each division of Lower Burma being in 1887-88—

Arakan division	-	-	-	-	1
Pegu division	-	-	-	-	4
Irrawaddy division	-	-	-	-	3
Tenasserim division	-	-	-	-	7
					<hr/>
			Total		15
					<hr/>

In 1881-82 the price of opium was raised to Rs. 28 per seer in the Arakan division and to Rs. 32 per seer in all other divisions. The result of these measures was that the sales of opium rose at each of the limited number of shops, and in 1887-88 15 shops sold 6,039 seers of opium less than the sales of 1880-81, when there were 68 shops. The sales in 1887-88 were 48,226 seers.

5. In the resolution on the Excise Report for 1887-88 Sir Charles Crosthwaite remarked in paragraph 2:—

"Of the 3½ lakhs of increased revenue obtained from excise in 1887-88 two lakhs have been derived from opium. The opium revenue of Lower Burma is steadily increasing. This the Chief Commissioner regards as a natural consequence of the better regulation of the opium traffic, and when the traffic in Upper Burma is brought under supervision and the smuggling of Yunnan opium into Lower Burma is checked, the opium revenue will still further increase. The increase of the opium revenue does not necessarily indicate an increase of the consumption of opium, but only that those who use opium are compelled to procure it openly from the licensed dealers. The use of opium is condemned by public opinion in Lower Burma no less than in Upper Burma, and the Chief Commissioner agrees in the opinion that the more the consumption of opium is regulated and the more illicit consumption of opium is repressed, the less will persons not already habituated to its use take to it for the first time.

"The reduction of the number of shops and the closing of all shops in districts where it is known that opium is consumed is shown by experience to be futile, and, in the Chief Commissioner's opinion, is actively mischievous. A reference to Statement No. 7 in the Appendix will show that districts to which shops are denied supply themselves from other districts. The incidence of revenue per head in Akyab, where there is only one shop, is Rs. 0.15.10. In Prome it is Rs. 0.14.0, in Bassein Rs. 0.10.4, in Toungoo Rs. 0.12.7, in Rangoon Town Rs. 4.1.6, in Moulmein Rs. 2.12.0. These figures mean that the districts which are not allowed to have shops supply themselves from the nearest shops. It is certain that the licensed vendor in Prome, for example, sends out hawkers to go round and supply the people in Tharrawaddy and Thayetmyo. The

Akyab shop supplies the Arakan division. The Bassein and Rangoon shops supply Thongwa. Besides which, the difficulty and cost of getting Government opium from distant shops gives a great stimulus to smuggled foreign opium.

"The Chief Commissioner wishes the Financial Commissioner to consider whether the policy of closing shops has not gone too far. The Chief Commissioner has had a

\* *Vide Excise Report for 1887-88.* statement prepared, which is appended\* to this resolution, which shows the number of shops, the amount of opium issued from the treasury, and the amount of opium issued per shop for each year since 1878-79. In 1878-79, when there were 67 licensed shops in Lower Burma, 46,602 seers of opium were issued from the Treasury, or 696 seers per shop. In 1880-81 the number of shops was 68 and 54,265 seers of opium, or 798 seers per shop were issued. In 1881-82 the number of shops was reduced to 28, and the price of opium was raised by Rs. 8 a seer in the Arakan division, and by Rs. 4 a seer in the rest of Lower Burma. The immediate result was that the opium issued fell to 41,857 seers, or 1,495 seers per shop. In 1882-83 the number of shops was again lowered to 18, but the price of opium issued from the treasury was not enhanced. The result was that the opium issued was only 500 seers less than in the previous year, and the issues of opium have been steadily recovering themselves till, in 1887-88, the issues have been 50,485 seers with only 15 shops, or only 3,780 seers less than in 1880-81, when there were 68 shops. This shows that the amount of opium consumed in the province cannot be permanently reduced by the limitation of the number of shops, and has a tendency to recover itself.

"In the Arakan division the issue of opium from the treasury is authoritatively limited. The result is that when the issue of opium is reduced in the Arakan division it rises in the Chittagong division of Bengal, or *vice versa*. The total issues for both divisions are generally from 13,000 to 10,000 seers. The figures since 1881-82 are as follows:—

Year.	Akyab.	Chittagong.	Total.
	Seers.	Seers.	Seers.
1881-82	11,264	2,724	13,988
1882-83	7,378	3,547	10,925
1883-84	6,988	5,864	12,852
1884-85	4,953	6,024	10,977
1885-86	4,468	4,928	9,396
1886-87	6,778	3,287	10,065 "

6. As a consequence of this policy five new opium shops were opened in 1889-90, and in paragraph 5 of his Resolution on the Excise Report for 1888-89 the Chief Commissioner wrote:—

"It was shown last year, in paragraph 2 of the Resolution on the Excise Report, that it is not possible to prevent the use of opium in districts where there is a demand for it by refusing to open shops for its sale. On this principle five new shops for the sale of opium were opened in 1889-90, and yet the income obtained from the licenses for the retail sale of opium decreased. This fact is not connected immediately with the report now under review, but it is mentioned to show that an increase in the number of shops does not always mean increased consumption or increased revenue. When people want opium they will get it, and in a country where much of the traffic is carried on by boats plying in out-of-the-way streams and creeks opium can be hawked about for sale with impunity and with greater profit than if it is sold in a licensed shop. The question whether there is a demand requires careful consideration, and the increase in the habit of taking opium must be closely watched. The consumption of opium in the Arakan division fell off greatly in the year under report, and the income from license fees has decreased in 1889-90. The Chief Commissioner believes that this is mainly due to the bad harvest in Arakan in 1888-89, but he will watch with interest the figures of 1889-90 to see whether any indication of a permanent falling off in consumption can be found. The amount of opium consumed increased in the Prome district. This may be due to the Opium Act having been brought into force in Upper Burma, which has increased the price of Yunnan opium, and has rendered it more difficult to smuggle it into Lower Burma. In the Tenasserim division the increase in the consumption of opium is said to be due to increased vigilance against smuggling."

7. In 1889-90 there were 20 opium shops in Lower Burma distributed as follows :—

Arakan division	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pegu division	-	-	-	-	-	5
Irrawaddy division	-	-	-	-	-	4
Tenasserim division	-	-	-	-	-	10

This number of shops will not be increased without the clearest necessity.

8. From the foregoing *résumé* of what has been done with a view to the repression of the opium traffic in Lower Burma, it will be seen that the traffic in opium has been reduced to the greatest possible extent, and, in my opinion, any attempt to prohibit the traffic in opium altogether would be impossible for the following reasons :—

(1.) There exists in Burma a very considerable Chinese and foreign population, who are addicted to the use of opium, and who will have it at all hazards. The wants of these people and of those Burmans who have become habituated to the use of opium must be supplied.

(2.) The facilities for opium smuggling are so considerable that it is out of the power of the Government to effectually prevent the use of the drug; and, as it is grown in China and in the Shan and Kachin hills, a supply will always be procurable in Burma even though Government should cease to manufacture the drug and import it on its own account, and should prohibit its import into Burma.

(3.) It is a mistake to suppose that the prohibition of the cultivation, sale, or possession of ganja, which has been in force since 1872, is effectual. It was recently reported to me that ganja was being imported by parcel post, and there were 88 prosecutions in the town of Rangoon, in which 101 persons were implicated; in 1889-90, and this year there have been 61 persons prosecuted in 56 cases up to date. In the town of Moulmein there were 16 prosecutions in 1889-90, and this year there have been 11 up to date. I have not had a return compiled for the whole province, but these two instances are sufficient to show that the traffic in ganja is not stopped in spite of its being prohibited.

(4.) The Chinese at Bhamo and also in Mergui assured me that they could not exist in malarious countries, such as those in which the jade and amber mines and the tin mines are situated, without opium. As far as I know the use of opium is universal amongst the Chinese and hill tribes in feverish tracts. I believe that they seldom abuse the use of the drug, and I have every reason to suppose that its use is beneficial under certain conditions.

9. In this connexion I may mention that I have recently returned from the Arakan division, and that I found that in the districts of Kyaukpyu and Sandoway, in which the use of opium is prohibited, the smuggling of opium is very common. The following extract from a letter which I wrote advocating the establishment of an excise preventive establishment in the Arakan division may not be without interest :—

“ Besides the methods by which illicit opium can be introduced into the Arakan division, which are mentioned in paragraph 2 of your letter under reply, a considerable amount of opium finds its way into the division across the Yomas by the An pass, and a considerable quantity comes from Bassein by boat. It seems impossible to prevent smuggling by so many routes, as, if excise officers were posted on one route, the opium would be passed in by another, and 50 men would not be enough to watch all the routes.

“ The general opinion of the local officers is that the total prohibition of the use of opium in the Kyaukpyu and Sandoway districts, and its great restriction in the Akyab district, has made opium dearer in places where its sale is prohibited, but there are still numbers of people who use opium, and anybody who can pay for it can obtain it. All that Government has succeeded in doing is to raise the price of opium.”

10. I come now to the second recommendation of the Society, which is that complete prohibition of opium-smoking is the only effective mode of protecting the population of the recently-acquired province of Upper Burma from the evil which has wrought such havoc in Lower Burma.

I do not know whether the Society are aware that the use of opium by Burmans in Upper Burma is already prohibited—see Rule 28 :—

“ No opium shall be sold, either wholesale or retail, to any Burman, and no license or pass shall be given under these rules to any Burman.”

The Society say “ an attempt was made to restrict the sale to the Chinese and Shan population.” This attempt takes the form of complete prohibition of sale to Burmans. I suppose the object of the Society is to prohibit the sale of the drug to Chinese and

Shans, so as to prevent temptation from being thrown into the way of the Burmans. This would be a very strong measure and would be keenly resented by the Chinese, Shans, and other non-Burmans, who would certainly resist any endeavour the Government might make to deprive them of opium. Of course, the fact that opium if permitted at all does offer some temptation to Burmans, but in paragraph 5 of the Excise Report for 1889-90, "Upper Burma," it is said that district officers are generally of opinion that a taste for opium and liquor is not spreading to any appreciable extent among Burmans. I must confess that I do not see what can be done by the Government in Upper Burma with a view to prevent the sale of opium to Burmans in addition to the measures already taken.

11. With regard to the last recommendation of the Society, that shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises should at once be closed, I think that this recommendation might be tried. I believe no shops for the consumption of opium on the premises are now allowed in some of the provinces of India, and I think it not improbable that persons may be found who will refrain from the use of opium if they are driven to use it in private instead of in places of public resort. In any case there is no harm in trying results of this measure, even though it may not do all the good that is hoped from it.

The revenue from opium in 1889-90 was—

	Rs.
In Lower Burma - - - -	18,94,552
In Upper Burma - - - -	1,59,509
Total - -	20,54,061

If the use of opium could be effectively prohibited, I think the Government of India might well forego this revenue, allowing the use of opium only in feverish localities, in which its use is deemed beneficial by the inhabitants. My opinion, however, is that if Government were to declare the total prohibition of the use of opium, the large income it now derives from the control of the drug would pass to smugglers and illicit dealers, and in certain localities, such as the borders of China and of the Shan, Chin, and Kachin hills, I believe the price of opium would fall and that its use would become more general than it is now.

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## [ANNEXURE II.]

### OPINIONS IN FAVOUR OF TOTAL SUPPRESSION OF SALES TO BURMESE.

#### A.

#### EXTRACT FROM PAPERS OF 1881 RELATING TO THE CONSUMPTION OF OPIUM IN BRITISH BURMA.

Memo. by C. U. AITCHISON, Esq., C.S.I., LL.D., Chief Commissioner of British Burma,  
on the Consumption of Opium in British Burma.

\* \* \* \* \*

9. Probably a variety of causes has contributed to the spread of this vice. Burma is intellectually in a transition state. The people are becoming emancipated from many restrictions of their old creed. The inevitable tendency of the education we give, and of the new sense of personal liberty which our Government creates among an Oriental people, is to weaken the sanctions of religious belief and break down the restraints of social customs. Such results ought neither to surprise nor alarm us. However much the old fashioned among the population may regret it, or blame us for it, we can as easily put back the shadow on the sun-dial as arrest the disintegration of old-world customs.

10. But there are other causes within our control. Of these the principal is the increased and yearly increasing facility with which opium can be obtained. Our professed

objects are to supply only so much of the drug as may be needed to meet a *bonâ fide* demand, to discourage extended consumption, and to realise from restricted consumption as high a revenue as we can without affording inducements to the people to obtain supplies by unlawful means. Theoretically, these principles are sound enough. But there are many drawbacks in their practical application. After some experiments, more or less disastrous in their result, the plan which for years past has been adopted in British Burma is to sell by auction licenses to retail opium in shops established in carefully

*Year.	Seers of Opium sold (omitting confiscated Opium).	Revenue from Opium Licenses, &c.	Fixed Duty at Rs. 24 per Seer.
1877-78	38,967 $\frac{7}{8}$	Rs. 10,66,473	Rs. 9,35,221
1878-79	46,602 $\frac{1}{4}$	11,41,753	11,18,464

selected localities. By this means opium is made as dear as possible, and the Government endeavours to limit the temptation to consumption. The revenue derived from the sale of these licenses amounts to more than the fixed duty on the opium sold.\* But although the cost of opium to the consumer is by this means more than doubled, the consumption continues to increase and must necessarily do so under the present system. For it is the interest of the license-holder to tempt people to smoke and to stimulate consumption as much as he can; and so long as the possession of opium outside the shops is permitted, any really effective check on the smuggling of a drug so very costly, and so easily conveyed, is almost impossible.

Consequently the temptation for illicit consumption become

irresistible. For example, the Deputy Commissioner of Shwegyin, in which district there have hitherto been no licensed shops, writes†:—"The conviction has been gradually forcing itself on me that there is no advantage in not having opium shops in this district. There are

† To Commissioner of Tenasserim, No. 113, dated 5th March 1880.

shops in all the districts round it. The result is that a large illicit traffic in opium is being carried on. The opium which has been seized in two or three cases is, as far as I can judge from the shape and size of the balls, opium which has been supplied to license-holders in other districts. We are thus losing revenue without any compensatory advantage. I think it is right therefore to recommend that one shop for the sale of opium be allowed at Shwegyin and one at Kyaitko." This application has for the present been refused, but it furnishes a good illustration of the pressure which tends to force up the number of shops year by year. I find that since 1875 the number has

	1875-76.	1876-77.	1877-78.	1878-79.
Arakan	11	13	13	18
Pegu	22	23	27	30
Tenasserim	17	18	18	10
Total British Burma	50	54	58	67

increased‡ one-third. This need create no surprise. Unless some radical change of system be effected, no other result can be looked for than the steady increase of opium shops and the gradual spread of opium-smoking over the rural districts. Already, indeed, there is too much truth in the allegation that we are not merely supplying an existing demand, but artificially creating a taste for the drug. However pure our intentions may be,

the results are against us, and we shall not escape serious reproach if we persevere in our present course. Englishmen have a natural antipathy to legislate on questions of morality. But here the question is not one of better or worse morality, but of the salvation of a whole people from a vice which we have introduced among them, and from ruin which it is to a great extent in our power to retard if not prevent. Moreover, the Burmans have been accustomed to be legislated for in this matter. Under the native rule opium-smoking was an offence against the law as well as against the Buddhist religion. Under these circumstances it becomes all the more our duty to take precautions that the new liberty which we bring them is not used for a cloak of licentiousness.

11. No opium may be manufactured in British Burma, and with one insignificant exception, no opium may be imported except by Government. We have therefore the control of the supply entirely in our own hands, subject only to the risk of smuggling. Native opinion is unanimous in favour of stopping the supply altogether, and no measure we could adopt would be so popular with all the respectable and law-abiding classes of the population. Colonel Sladen says the remedy advocated by them in Arakan is "an absolute interdiction of the drug throughout the country and the peremptory closing of all shops. Mr. Hodgkinson adds: "The feeling of the people is strongly in favour of the absolute prohibition of the drug. A similar feeling, I find, also exists in Sandoway. In short the consensus of native opinion is in favour of the absolute prohibition of opium as the only practical remedy to be applied to stem the current of this evil." In the Pegu division, the elders of the town of Pegu consider that neither



liquor nor opium should be sold there. Mr. White, Assistant Commissioner in Bassein district, found it impossible to induce the natives to offer any other suggestion than the gradual closing of all opium shops. In Henzada, "respectable Burmans are in favour of the most drastic measures;" and Mr. Weidemann, the Deputy Commissioner, "found it impossible to obtain the suggestion of any half-measures from the elders consulted; to put away the accursed thing entirely was the only advice which appeared to them of any value at all." Mr. Richardson, Extra Assistant Commissioner of Myanaung, reports to the same effect. "I have consulted," he says, "several Burmese of intelligence and education, and one and all have the same radical cure to propose—the shutting of the excise shops. Their verdict is not modified by one 'if' or 'but.'" From the natives of Tharrawaddy, Thayetnyo, and other districts in the Pegu division, there comes up the same cry. From the Tenasserim division, the Commissioner reports that "native opinion is strongly in favour of reverting to the old Burmese plan of prohibition." While most European officers hold this drastic remedy to be impracticable, there are many of standing and experience who support it more or less strongly. It is advocated by Colonel Sladen, Commissioner of Arakan, Captain Butler, late Deputy Commissioner of Kyaukpyu, Colonel Hildebrand, late Deputy Commissioner of Sandoway, Major Pemberton, Deputy Commissioner Kyaukpyu, Colonel Davies, Deputy Commissioner of Thayetmo, and Mr. Richardson, Extra Assistant Commissioner of Myanaung. Mr. Hodgkinson, the Officiating Commissioner of Arakan, writes:—"Justice and fairness to the people at large, in my opinion, rather point to the interdiction of the sale of opium, if effectual interdiction is possible, when their very life's blood has been, and is being, poisoned by a system which, though intended only to supply a want to a few, has resulted in creating a want for many. It may be hard on those addicted to the use of opium that they no longer find their want supplied; some may even die; but when the whole body is suffering from a fatal disease which may be eventually eradicated by the loss of a member, he would be a poor physician who shrunk from the amputation, and a dishonest physician if he allows the disease to run its course for the sake of the fees he would receive from the patient. Things have now got to such a pass that Government will not act fairly by the people if mere revenue considerations are allowed to stand in the way of the remedy. The interdiction of opium throughout Arakan will no doubt at first lead to a large loss of opium revenue; but this consideration ought not to stand in the way of the interdiction even if no immediate means of replacing that revenue were at hand." The only difficulty he finds in recommending the absolute interdiction of the sale of opium in Arakan is the certainty of systematic law-breaking arising in the shape of smuggling. But in respect to those parts of the division which are suffering most, he writes:—"After a full consideration of this very difficult subject, I have determined to recommend that in Kyaukpyu, Chaduba, Sagu, and the islands which are to a great extent cut off from the rest of the province, and have for the size a strong staff of officers, the possession and the sale of opium shall be absolutely and entirely interdicted. In these islands things have gone too far for any half-measures; and if there is smuggling, it is better so than that any risk should be run of, by a legalised use of the drug, allowing these islands to continue the downward course in which they have entered. There is no time here for experiments if the people are to be saved."

12. In a matter so intimately affecting the well-being of the community, these expressions of opinion, especially those of the native population, are entitled to the greatest respect. When practical questions of this kind arise, it may become a duty to yield to the strong and general desire of the people, even when their opinions may appear unreasonable. All the more it may become a duty when the evil complained of is an innovation of our own times and our own Government, and when we have the entire control of the lawful manufacture and supply of the opium. As regards smuggling, I do not believe that, even with our open seaboard of 1,000 miles and our long and unguarded

	Rs.	A.	P.
* Price per seer paid to cultivator in Bengal in 1877-78	-	0	4 8
Duty (selling price Rs. 24)	23	11	4
Revenue per seer realised in Burma	-	24	8 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>48</b>	<b>8 0</b>

Percentage of price of duty-paid opium to prime cost of production, 16.629 per cent.

frontier with Upper Burma, the Shan States, and Siam; there would be a very great increase in illicit traffic, either from Bengal or from China, if the importation of opium were altogether forbidden and the possession of opium were made illegal. Already the price of opium is artificially forced\* up to a maximum, presenting the very strongest temptation to the smuggler, while the fact that possession of the drug is not unlawful increases the difficulty of detection. The pecuniary temptation cannot become very much greater than it is if opium were altogether forbidden; the drug wherever found would be

contraband without question, and we should have the sympathies of the people with us in the suppression of smuggling. One fact is worth a bushel of argument; we have succeeded in almost stamping out ganja, although the plant from which it is made grows wild in Burma. The difficulties we have in any case to contend with in preventing smuggling are so great that an addition to them would not be a very appreciable burden. Anyhow, smuggling, even on a considerable scale, would never lead to the universal consumption of the drug; and the evasion of the revenue is not to be compared with the gradual demoralization of the people. The question has altogether passed beyond the stage at which revenue considerations predominate.

13. But there are considerations of another kind which, in my judgment, make it impossible altogether to prohibit the supply of opium. In the first place we have for more than half a century in one part of the province, and more than a quarter of a century in the rest of it, allowed the habit of opium-smoking to grow up among certain classes of the Burmese. Having ministered to this taste, we should not be justified in suddenly withdrawing the supply at the risk of the lives of the unhappy consumers if the

\* According to the census of 1872, in a population of 2,747,148; there were 13,561, or 0.49 per cent., Chinese and Malays, and 136,648, or 4.97 per cent., natives of India. Applying the same ratio to a population of 3,088,902 in 1878-79, there would be Chinese and Malays 15,135, natives of India 153,518.

further spread of the evil can be prevented in any other way. In the next place, there are large numbers of the non-Burmese community, constituting perhaps the most thriving and industrious section of the population, to whom the drug is a necessity of life, and by whom it is rarely abused. It is impossible to say precisely what the numbers\* of the Chinese and natives of India are, but they are probably not less than 200,000. The legitimate requirements of these people must necessarily be considered

and provided for. Fortunately they are collected in tolerably well-defined centres.

\* \* \* \* \*

## B.

EXTRACT from PAPERS of 1885 relating to the CONSUMPTION of OPIUM in BRITISH BURMA.

Extract, paragraphs 6, 7, 11, and 15, of notes of a meeting held at Government House on the 6th April 1885, regarding the position of the Excise Commissioner and other Excise questions.

\* \* \* \* \*

6. \* \* Regarding opium administration Colonel Sladen was quite convinced that the closure of all opium shops in the Kyaukpyu and Sandoway districts had done great good, and that the consumption of opium in those districts had much decreased. Smuggling, no doubt, went on from Akyab and from Chittagong mainly in the British India Steam Navigation Company's steamers. The employes of those steamers engaged in the illicit traffic. But even if the illicit opium which escaped capture was five or ten times as much as was captured, still the total consumption in those districts was far below what it used to be. This year (1st April 1885) the opium shop at the Naaf had been closed, and only one shop was left in the whole of the Arakan division. The monopolist of that shop must be expecting to get a good deal of illicit custom, for he had bid more for the single Akyab shop than used to be paid for all the shops in the Akyab district put together. Colonel Sladen did not consider that a special excise establishment was needed in the Akyab district. The Arakanese do not, he believes, do much in the way of drinking or illicit-distillation of spirits. Their bane is opium. He believed that Mycôks, thugyis, gaungs, and village headmen all knew, more or less precisely, how and where opium was smuggled into Arakan. If these officials were kept up to their work, they could in a short time reduce opium-smuggling a great deal. He has taken steps for enforcing responsibility in this matter upon officials of all grades, and he hoped that good would result.

7. Colonel Sladen is of the same opinion that he has long held, namely, that opium has done and is doing great harm to the Arakanese and Burmese. The best of all opium reforms would be to prohibit its sale, or possession, or use (save for medical purposes) throughout Burma. He believes that the opinion of all respectable and decent classes of the population would be in favour of such prohibition; that such a measure would do great good to the province; and that no fatal results would be caused to habitual consumers. Smuggling would no doubt go on, just as illicit consumption of opium goes

on to some extent in Upper Burma. Such smuggling, into Arakan, at any rate, would be mainly from licensed shops in Bengal. If the Government decided to have no opium shops at all in Burma, the adjoining province of Bengal might surely help to prevent its people from smuggling opium into Burma. At present extra opium shops have been licensed close to the Arakan border, which drive a roaring trade with smugglers, who carried the opium into Arakan. But by careful administration such smuggling would be gradually reduced and kept down. And after some years of such administration opium consumption would become rare and future generations would be kept from the use of opium.

11. Colonel Street considered that opium had done, and was doing, much harm among the Burmese. The respectable people of the country would be glad to see the sale of opium entirely stopped. Colonel Street thought that such stoppage would cause misery, and perhaps even death, to a certain number of habitual consumers. If this opinion was mistaken, and if the sudden stoppage of all opium supplies would not cause pain and death, then Colonel Street would gladly see the sale, possession, and the use of opium (save for medical purposes) absolutely prohibited. At present no doubt there is a great deal of opium carried, kept, and sold illicitly about the country. Most of it is Government opium supplied from the treasury to licensed vendors. These vendors pay at auction enormous prices for the right to sell opium at central shops. They could never possibly make enough profit to cover these prices unless they had numbers of customers or agents who carry the opium about the country and sell it. These transactions are all illicit and they demoralize the people.

15. Mr. Hodgkinson was, and long has been, strongly of opinion that opium should be treated as the noxious drug "ganja" was treated in Burma some nine years ago. The importation, possession, use, or sale of opium, save for medicinal purposes, should be prohibited. We owe this measure to the people, who have for years suffered grievously from our licensed shops, which are supplied with Government opium, and which foster and spread the use and abuse of the drug. He believes that all respectable Burmans would be in favour of such abolition. The recent reduction of shops has, in some districts at any rate, done no good at all. As much Government opium is issued as before in those districts and a great illicit traffic distributes Government opium and Yunnan (smuggled) opium all over the country. This illicit traffic does great harm in many ways.

C.

EXTRACTS FROM PAPERS of 1886 relating to the CONSUMPTION of OPIUM in LOWER and UPPER BURMA.

(1.)

From H. BUCKLE, Esq., Deputy Commissioner, Amherst, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 6-35, dated 10th July 1886.

3. If Lower Burma was peopled only by Burmans, I should have no hesitation in recommending the entire prohibition of opium consumption; but such is not the case, and, I believe, the Burman is destined to be ousted by the more energetic and better disciplined Chinese and native of India.

(2.)

From A. H. HILDEBRAND, Esq., Deputy Commissioner, Tharrawaddy, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 93-1, dated 7th July 1886.

Every man I have consulted has been of opinion that—

(a.) The habit of the use of opium is the great cause of crime in the country, and of children disobeying and showing disrespect for their parents and guardians;

- (b.) That the habit is quite curable, and they instance cases of confirmed opium eaters going to jail coming out quite broken of the habit, but at once recommencing it;
- (c.) That the only way to prevent opium finding its way into the village is to prohibit its traffic and consumption altogether;
- (d.) That such prohibition would, in course of time, entirely eradicate the habit from among the people, but that it would not do so at once.

I am entirely of the same opinion as the Burmans I have consulted, and I think nothing short of absolute prohibition will cure the evil, which I look upon as of the gravest description, and that absolute prohibition will in time do so, except perhaps in the seaport towns.

(3.)

From Colonel W. C. PLANT, Commissioner of the Tenasserim Division, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, BURMA. No. 10-P., dated 21st July 1886.

\* \* \* \* \*

4. The first step which should be taken, and without delay, is to remove the temptation and facility of obtaining the drug from the rising generation, and this step is to be gained by prohibiting the use or possession of opium outside scheduled towns by any one except a Chinaman, under a special pass for a limited quantity equal to his own estimated consumption for one week.

\* \* \* \* \*

(4.)

From G. D. BURGESS, Esq., Commissioner of the Arakan Division, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, BURMA. No. 744-3-12, dated 26th July 1886.

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From the beginning of the discussion of the opium question it has seemed to me that the only effectual means of checking the consumption of opium in Burma is to forbid absolutely its introduction into the province, and I have never yet seen sufficient reason for modifying that view. To prevent the use of opium it must be treated in the same way as ganja, its importation or possession in any quantity being dealt with as an offence. Practically this is now the condition of affairs in Kyaukpyu and Sandoway, and the consumption of opium in those districts has naturally been restricted in consequence; but so long as opium shops exist at Akyab and on the other side of the Arakanese Yoma, it is of course impossible to stop the illicit supply of the drug. If all the shops in the province were closed a great stimulus would be given to smuggling from Bengal and other places, and it is possible that, for a time at least, repressive measures of a special character would have to be taken. But in the long run, doubtless, the law would prevail and opium, except in small quantities, would be unprocurable anywhere in Burma.

A certain number of people accustomed to the use of the drug, such as Chinese and Bengalis, would be put to considerable inconvenience by the stoppage of a licit opium supply, and many of them would, perhaps, try secret expedients for furnishing themselves with their habitual luxury; but they could not long carry on an illegal traffic without detection. They would be finally compelled either to forego the use of opium or to leave a country in which they could not obtain any. The latter alternative would be an undesirable result in many cases: but some price must be paid for the protection of the native population, and by-and-by their places would be filled by others more willing to conform to the requirements of the situation.

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In spite of the large loss of revenue which the total prohibition of opium traffic in the country would entail, and notwithstanding the other drawbacks and inconveniences which would attend the scheme, I consider that it would on the whole be better and more for the advantage of the people and the administration to have recourse to this step than to persist in the course which is now being followed. The present plan is one of inconsistency and can never prove satisfactory. If it is considered necessary or expedient to limit the consumption of opium by the inhabitants of Burma through restrictions on the supply, then my voice is in favour of excluding opium from the country altogether and absolutely forbidding its possession.

(5.)

FROM MAUNG SAN HLA BAW and MAUNG THA DO WE, Extra Assistant Commissioners, and MAUNG THU TAW U, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Akyab, to the COMMISSIONER OF THE ARAKAN DIVISION. Dated 22nd July 1886.

9. The entire prohibition of opium will save the present and future generations from threatened ruin. It will push on cultivation, for Arakan has a great part of its land now lying waste, though it has been under the British flag for 61 years, and will result in rapid increase in its population, and thereby in a few years regain the loss of revenue it will sustain at the commencement by entirely prohibiting opium. In this respect we are certain that the Government will not make any mistake. In case the Government finds its inability to realise its lost revenue after, say, five years, the people will be glad and will be in a position to pay an enhanced revenue on land, or anything else which Government may propose, for the purpose of making up the deficiency.

(6.)

FROM F. S. COPLESTON, Esq., Commissioner of Excise, Burma, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 457—64 E., dated 3rd August 1886.

In compliance with your letter, Financial Department, No. 485—9 E., dated the 21st June 1886, I have the honour to submit my opinion on the expediency of entirely prohibiting opium traffic or opium consumption in Lower Burma.

2. It is unnecessary to dwell on the evils attendant on the consumption of the drug in this province. These have been frequently and graphically described, sometimes with considerable exaggeration; and I assume it to be a proved fact that, except medicinally, the use of opium by the Burmese is an unmitigated evil, and that it has no title to be considered a legitimate luxury in the sense in which spirituous and malt liquors are admitted to be luxuries. It is assumed, too, that all respectable persons among the native inhabitants of the province are opposed to the sale and consumption of opium among members of their race. On the other hand, the use of opium by the Chinese and natives of Madras, who consume a considerable quantity, is not known or believed to work special evil either to individuals or to society, the reason being that these people do not abandon labour and active pursuits in order to eat or smoke opium, and its bad effects are therefore thrown off. The Chinese especially are well nourished, and this fact, too, appears to be an important one. In their case opium may almost be called a legitimate luxury. I am speaking, of course, only of the results of opium-consumption as they appear in this province.

3. The reasons for desiring the entire prohibition of opium in the province are these—

- (a) The unquestionable serious evil which it works to the Burmese as individuals and to society;
- (b) The wish of the respectable population for such a prohibition.

The reasons against such a measure are—

- (c) The loss of revenue which will ensue;
- (d) The increase of smuggling and law-breaking;
- (e) The possible death of many Burmese owing to deprivation of the drug;
- (f) The resulting annoyance and difficulty to Chinese and others to whom opium-eating is not obviously injurious.

It appears to me that the reasons for abolition (a) and (b) are so strong that almost anything possible should be done to give effect to them. The consequent loss of revenue (c) cannot, speaking provincially, be regarded as of any sufficient importance to be an obstacle, even if it be regarded as a total loss; but there can be no doubt that a gradual increase of revenue derived from land and capitation taxes, and other sources, would follow, both directly from the return of idle opium-smokers and eaters to honest labour, and indirectly from increase in the numbers and health of the population. The revenue difficulty is therefore not one which, in my opinion, should be allowed to interfere with prohibition.

The increase of law breaking, that is Excise law breaking, is a real evil, both because the practice of evading the law demoralizes, and because considerable expense might be required to check the illicit dealings, which would undoubtedly tend to become more numerous. On the other hand, possession being penal, it would be far easier to deal with the breakers of the opium law than it is at present; and theft, so constantly the work of opium smokers, and a worse crime than the breach of an excise law, would

certainly diminish. This difficulty, then, seems to me no sufficient ground for opposing prohibition.

Thirdly, it is said, many would die if they could not get opium. I believe that some would do so. Those opium-eaters who would die are, however, men who have already by their excesses ensured an early death; and I do not think the fear of making their decease more speedy is a good reason against prohibition, though I do think it a very strong one against a sudden and unexpected stoppage of supplies. Our hospitals would, no doubt, be crowded with men suffering from the usual results of an interruption of the use of the drug, but this is no great evil. Special temporary measures might become necessary in some parts to provide for the cure of confirmed opium-smokers, and they could be adopted.

I should not anticipate any difficulty on this score and see no reasonable obstacle under this head to a prohibition after notice of the possession of opium.

Lastly, there is the difficulty connected with the Chinese and others. Information as to the extent to which the Chinese consume opium is at present scanty. On the one hand, it is stated that nearly every Chinaman takes opium in one way or another, and, on the other, that only the labouring and lower classes do so. Probably the truth is that a large number do smoke opium, and it is certain also that a large number of the natives of Madras use the drug; and I do not think that at present it would be politic or desirable to prohibit opium entirely in the large centres of the populations of these classes. If it were essential to a scheme for prohibiting opium among the masses of the Burmese, I should certainly say that we might disregard the wishes of the Chinese and natives of Madras, however important these classes may in some respects be. But such a measure is not essential, and I, therefore, adhere to the opinion, which I have before expressed, that opium should be prohibited entirely in all parts of the province except the seaport towns. There are the cases of small classes, such as the Chinese tin-workers of Mergui, for whom special arrangements might possibly be required, but these are minor points.

4. It has been proposed to restrict the consumption of opium to licensed premises, with precautions which it is thought might be sufficient, the number of places of vend being increased. This scheme in no way commends itself to my judgment. I believe that it would be found in a very short time that the attempt to confine the opium within the premises was futile. Nor do I consider the suggestion to employ Government officers to dispense opium as a practicable or politic plan. Such a measure would, it seems to me, lower the Government in the eyes of the people, and would probably fail of the desired result. If the consumption of Government opium were successfully confined to the shops, a free field, within the limits which our preventive system might impose on the circulation of opium of any description, would be left outside them to foreign opium, which pays no taxes; and there is no reason for yielding up the field for smuggling to the Yunnan drug. If we can prevent the circulation of the latter, we can also prevent that of Indian opium, and restriction to the premises is unnecessary. I am only repeating what was said in the Excise Report for 1884-85.

5. I am then of opinion that the possession and use of opium can be and should be prohibited entirely outside the limits of the seaport towns, but should be permitted therein, at any rate, for the present.

It might after some experience be found possible to abolish opium altogether from the province, but this cannot be done suddenly. The reduction in the number of opium shops has in the last few years checked the growth of the habits of opium eating and smoking. The measure I advocate would form a fresh stepping stone from which further progress might hereafter be made.

6. I have not had an opportunity, owing to other pressing work, of consulting in person Burmese gentlemen, but Maung Shwe Go, the Extra Assistant Commissioner of Shwegyin, has favoured me with an expression of the opinion of himself and other Burmans whom he had already consulted in compliance with Mr. Weidemann's instructions. Their opinion is that, while the consumption of opium by the Burmese and Talaings is unnecessary and injurious, and should be prevented as far as possible even by total prohibition, the use of the drug by the Chinese being habitual, and not a cause of crime as in the case of the Burmese, should be permitted.

These gentlemen would, however, only allow the privileges in the seaport towns, where the numbers of the Chinese are large and where effectual supervision can be carried out.

They express agreement with the view set forth in the Excise Report of 1884-85 on this subject.

(7.)

- From A. R. BRIMS, Esq., Deputy Commissioner, Kyaukpyu, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 183-3-3, dated 27th July 1886.

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2. The respectable Arakanese in this district are, I believe, unanimous in favour of a total suppression of the opium traffic, if it can be effected. The arguments stated in paragraph 11 of the Society's memorial forwarded with your letter appear to me to be unanswerable. I have consulted several native gentlemen on the subject. The opinion of Maung Saw Hla Pru, Myook of Ramree, who is a well-educated Arakanese gentleman, and has great influence in his sub-division, is of value. I have often discussed measures of our policy with him, which he has criticised in an intelligent way. He states that the general opinion is that the action of the British Government in licensing the sale of opium is almost the only portion of their policy which the better class of natives unreservedly condemn.

This officer has reported a very marked improvement in his sub-division since the closing of the opium shop at Kyaukpyu in 1882. I think there can be no doubt that the closing of the opium shop here has diminished the consumption of the drug.

\* \* \* \* \*

3. The total suppression of the traffic might not affect this district immediately, but the discredit it would bring on the practice and the moral effect it would have outweighs all minor considerations.

4. Mr. (now Sir Charles) Bernard, in his note of the 23rd December 1880, alludes to the universal wish of the more respectable natives to suppress the traffic altogether, though he believed the evils of the opium smoking to be much exaggerated. I think it would be more in consonance with the extended powers given to natives as members of municipalities and rural boards to meet their wishes on this subject. If they believe, rightly or wrongly, that opium smoking is a harmful and degrading practice, I think we incur a grave responsibility in forcing it upon them.

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(8.)

From LIEUT.-COL. G. A. STROVER, Officiating Commissioner of the Arakan Division, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 764-3-12, dated 31st July 1886.

\* \* \* \* \*

2. The opinion of Burmese gentlemen regarding the total prohibition of the traffic appears to be somewhat decided. Some are in favour of abolishing the traffic altogether, while others are in favour of limiting and restricting the traffic as far as possible. That opium consumption has had a very pernicious and demoralizing effect upon the inhabitants of the country generally admits of no question. The consensus of opinion, not only of European Government officers connected with the administration of the country, but of all native officials and respectable native gentlemen, is that the introduction and traffic in opium in Lower Burma by the Government has been attended with lamentable results, and that from every point of view it is most desirable that speedy measures be taken either to entirely abolish the traffic or to restrict it within harmless limits, if such can be done.

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(9.)

From COLONEL C. W. STREET, Commissioner of the Pegu Division, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 160-1, dated 16th August 1886.

With reference to your letter No. 651-9 P., dated the 26th July 1886, asking for my opinion as to the expediency of entirely prohibiting the use of opium in this province, I have the honour to inform you that the general opinion appears to be that to prohibit entirely the use of opium, if such a prohibition could be effectively carried out, would be very desirable, but to suddenly prohibit its use would have the effect of causing numbers of those who are addicted to it to die.

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(10.)

From G. L. WEIDEMANN, Esq., Deputy Commissioner, Shwegyin, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 835-10, dated 29th August 1886.

I think that, if we are justified in interfering with the liberty of the people at all, we are justified in interfering to prohibit the consumption of opium. I further think that nothing short of total abolition, whether sudden or gradual, will meet the necessities of the case so far as regards the Burmese.

If it be a question between gradual and sweeping measures, I should, notwithstanding the present state of the finances, be inclined to advocate the latter. Half remedies have been tried and have failed, and it will, I think, be easier to organise the Excise establishment, which will in all probability be necessary if opium is contraband whenever and wherever found. An exception might be made in the case of foreign residents who have become habituated to the drug; but for them I would establish a special Government agency in order to conduct sales very much as it has been lately suggested that the sale of ammunition should be brought more completely than at present under official control. That complete, or almost complete, prohibition is possible can, I think, be proved by the comparatively small way yet made by ganja, a plant which has the advantage over the poppy, that it is of native growth and easily cultivable in remote clearings.

(11.)

From W. DE COURCY IRELAND, Esq., Commissioner of the Irrawaddy Division, to the SECRETARY to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Burma. No. 2624-13 E.,- dated 31st August 1886.

2. Deputy Commissioners have consulted trustworthy and influential members of Burman society, and there is a unanimity of opinion in favour of the total prohibition of the sale of opium. The district officers also entirely agree in the views expressed by the Burmese elders.

3. That the answer of the Burmese to the question would be what it is was never for a moment in doubt. They have for the last 20 years or so answered this question in the same way, and the more experience is gained of the baneful effects of opium the more rooted has become Burmese public opinion in favour of total abolition of its sale.

4. The Burmese are not remarkable for steadfastness in opinions, but on this one question they have never wavered.

Regarding the opium question in the Irrawaddy division, I cannot do better than refer to the masterly and exhaustive "Note on Opium in Burma," by Mr. G. J. S. Hodgkinson, dated the 5th February 1835. I have attached a copy to this paper for reference.

The results of the partial measures adopted for checking the opium traffic described in the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs of the above are true of this division to-day. In the 8th paragraph the writer says: "If it be objected that the evils of opium amongst the Burmese are here exaggerated, I can only express my conviction that this is not the case, and that the evils, so far as they affect the administration of the country, are more apparent now than they were five years ago; and I appeal with confidence to any body of representative lugyis to support this opinion." This was written in 1885; and I have now to add that my own limited experience of this division shows that the evils are still rapidly growing. The writer advocated the entire abolition of opium shops, and as an alternative proposition the following:—

- (i.) The establishment of shops for consumption of opium on the premises only in certain centres.
- (ii.) That the possession of any quantity of opium outside be prohibited and rendered penal.

The latter propositions were on other occasions put forward by a large body of officials, myself amongst the number.



(12.)

Memo. by G. J. S. HONGKINSON, Esq., Commissioner on Special Duty, Rangoon.  
Dated 24th September 1886.

These papers show a remarkable consensus of opinion in favour of the total prohibition of opium either at once or after a time, though in several cases an exception is made of seaport towns, where the number of Chinaman and others who are accustomed to use the drug, and use it for the most part without deleterious effects from excessive indulgences, is very large.

My own views have been set out at length in my memorandum of the 5th February 1885. My recommendations are as follow:—

(a.) That the possession of opium should be absolutely interdicted, and all shops for the sale of opium closed throughout the country; or, if this measure is thought too drastic,

(b.) (i.) That shops be licensed for the sale or consumption of opium, or the possession only in places where there is a considerable population of Chinamen and natives of India, namely, at—

Rangoon	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Moulmein	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Akyab	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Bassein	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Mergui	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

(ii.) That the possession of opium in any quantity, no matter how much, outside these shops be prohibited and rendered penal.

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No. 6.—From Colonel G. H. TREVOR, Chief Commissioner, Ajmere-Merwara, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 371 C., dated 22nd February 1891.

In reply to your letter, No. 4938, dated the 18th October 1890, forwarding a copy of the memorial of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, and asking for an expression of my opinion and for any remarks I may have to offer thereon, I have the honour to submit a copy of a letter, No. 418 R., dated the 12th of February 1891, from the Commissioner of Ajmere-Merwara on the subject, with the following remarks from myself.

2. The view expressed by Colonel Biddulph that the closing of the opium and chandu shops in Ajmere and Merwara "would not cause any decrease in the use of the drug, while on the other hand it is far preferable to have these shops under strict supervision and open to inspection at any time than to have smoking dens which could not be controlled in the same way," is that under which the existence of the shops has hitherto been justified and is not without force. But I have always felt a doubt as to whether Government should indirectly lend its sanction to the establishment by contractors of what are rightly called "dens," where opium and chandu are smoked on the premises.

3. So far as Ajmere and Merwara are concerned, these dens are not largely frequented, and those who attend them are the dregs of the population, who are not repelled by their unsavoury surroundings and customers, or by the fact that they are constantly visited by the police, to whom they are often convenient as furnishing a ready means for the apprehension of bad characters who are "wanted." They can hardly be said to attract any but the lowest class, and rarely perhaps to inoculate customers who have not previously imbibed the habit of smoking opium and chandu. To close these dens might result in more comfortable, and in the long run more pernicious ones being secretly established by private persons, but there is no safeguard at present against such a contingency, and on the whole I am inclined to think that a contractor who farms revenue from Government should not be allowed to establish shops for the consumption of opium and chandu on the premises, because, rightly or wrongly, such action on his part encourages the idea that Government does not do all it may legitimately be expected to do for the suppression of such consumption, and it is certain that the control it exercises over these shops does not extend to regulating the amount or quality of the drug consumed at them by any individual.

Should the closing of these shops lead to others being opened by private persons, which it would be more difficult to control without more interference than is at present thought expedient, then I am disposed to think that to resort to such interference as may be required would be the lesser evil of the two.

4. It may fairly be asked, "How does the case of shops in which opium and chandu are smoked on the premises differ in principle from that of shops in which liquor is drunk on the premises, and why should one be differently treated from the other?" I would reply:

- (1.) In the one case the baneful effects of non-interference on the part of the Government are, I believe, much greater than in the other; in respect to the decoctions consumed; in respect to the habit engendered and encouraged; in respect to the vitality, physical and moral, impaired.
  - A man who frequents a liquor shop is not so likely to become a confirmed drunkard as one who pays even a few visits to an opium den is likely to develop into a confirmed opium-eater or smoker; it is to the interest of a vintner not to let him get intoxicated on the premises for fear the license should be revoked, and for the same reason not to encourage drinking that makes men disorderly. The liquor having issued from a Government distillery its quality has been tested, and, as a rule, it does not pay the vintner to change the quality except by dilution, which is common enough. These conditions do not, I believe, apply to the case of the opium den, at any rate in equal degree. There no attempt is made, or if made, it is more difficult to check excess; and though excess may not lead to crime in the same way as liquor does, it produces a more lasting effect upon the individual, and through him or her on future generations.
- (2.) The community that would be affected by the suppression of opium dens in India is very much smaller than that which would be affected by the suppression of shops where liquor may be drunk on the premises. In some parts it is possible that the number of those who take a little opium is not much less than the number who drink a little liquor, but an infinitesimal fraction of the former resorts to opium dens, and my present remarks do not contemplate fresh interference with shops at which opium sold is not consumed on the premises.

From the COMMISSIONER of Ajmere-Merwara to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER, Ajmere-Merwara. No. 418 R., dated 10th February 1891.

With reference to your office memorandum, No. 1,200, dated the 3rd November last, giving cover to Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 4,938, dated 18th October 1890, forwarding for opinion printed copies of a letter and memorial from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, I have the honour to state as follows:—

2. The Society assert that the use of opium is on the increase in India, and recommend that the Government of India should close the shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed both in and off the premises, and more particularly the former. They also give in their memorial a comparative statement showing the increasing number of shops in certain parts of the country for the ten years up to 1888-89.

3. I beg to subjoin a table showing the number of licensed shops in the districts of Ajmere-Merwara during the past five years:—

Year.	Ajmere.		Merwara.	
	Opium Shops.	Chandu Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandu Shops.
1885-86	8	4	1	1
1886-87	8	4	1	1
1887-88	9	4	1	1
1888-89	9	4	1	1
1889-90	9	4	1	1

The number given above is in no way excessive.

4. In the districts of Ajmere and Merwara, Part I., Chapter II., of the Opium Rules (cultivation, manufacture, possession, and sale) applies only to the municipal limits of

Ajmere, Beawar, and Kekri, and the cantonment limits of Nusseerabad, while in the other parts of the two districts the cultivation of the poppy and the manufacture, possession, and sale of opium and poppy-heads in any quantity are permitted absolutely under section 16 of the said rules. If, then, the shops for the retail sale of opium be closed, people who are addicted to the use of the drug will most assuredly buy it outside the limits of the defined areas, where they will be able to purchase it at a less cost than they at present pay in the towns. As it is the contractor complains bitterly of the people of Beawar buying their opium to a large extent from dealers outside the municipal limits. It is also particularly certain that opium would be smuggled into the defined areas.

With reference to the suggested closing of the chandu shops, I am of opinion that it would result in the opening of private smoking dens which should in all probability be far more comfortable than the present establishments and tend rather to attract than to repel new smokers. I am of decided opinion that the closing of the opium and chandu shops would not cause any decrease in the use of the drug, while, on the other hand, it is far preferable to have these shops under strict supervision and open to inspection at any time than to have smoking dens which could not be controlled in the same way.

5. With regard to paragraph 9 of the memorial, which alone applies to Ajmere, I have nothing to add to what I have stated in paragraph 3 of this letter.

No. 7.—From C. A. GALTON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Madras, Revenue Department, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 221, dated 19th March 1891.

In reply to your letter No. 4,938, dated 18th October 1890, forwarding, for the remarks of his Excellency the Governor in Council, a memorial presented to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, I am directed to forward the marginally-noted proceedings of the Board of Revenue and to offer the following remarks.

2. So far as this Presidency is

Years.	Quantity of Opium consumed.	Number of Places of vend for Opium and other intoxicating Drugs.	Revenue.
	lb.		Rs.
1880-81	53,942	1,208	6,30,751
1881-82	99,520	1,021	4,03,519
1882-83	77,182	1,091	5,61,501
1883-84	76,578	1,107	5,96,615
1884-85	74,605	1,089	6,12,885
1885-86	62,806	1,062	7,11,150
1886-87	68,178	1,163	6,21,780
1887-88	66,824	1,157	5,96,155
1888-89	67,042	1,172	6,32,041
1889-90	67,224	1,052	5,93,967

concerned, the facts adduced by the memorialists are contained in paragraph 15 of the memorial. In that paragraph the memorialists institute a comparison between the revenue receipts of 1888-89 and those of 1879-80; but no inference of any value can be drawn from this comparison, as one large source of revenue, consisting of the fees levied for licenses for the sale of opium, and for the manufacture and vend of intoxicating drugs, was absent in 1879-80, the rules in this respect having been put into force for the first time only in July 1880. Since the introduction of these rules the statistics in regard to opium and other intoxicating drugs have been as shown in the margin, and these figures clearly show that, so far as this Presidency is concerned, there is no ground for the apprehension expressed in paragraph 4 of the memorial that local

officers may regard the revenue as their first consideration and the limitation of consumption as quite secondary.

3. The memorialists next refer

\* G. O. No. 1716, dated 17th December 1850.

Letter to Government of India, No. 1,226, dated 15th July 1871.

Letter to Government of India, No. 1,230, dated 15th July 1871.

Letter to Government of Bombay, No. 603, dated 15th April 1872.

Letter to Government of India, No. 1,629, dated 29th November 1872.

† E.M.C., No. 583, dated 15th May 1855, and letter to Government of India, No. 584, dated 15th May 1855.

Letter to Government of India, No. 702, dated 11th June 1855.

Letter to Government of India, No. 909, dated 26th July 1855.

‡ G.O. No. 518, dated 29th April 1874.

to the evidence given by Sir T. Pycroft and Mr. E. F. Harrison before the Select Committee in 1871 and 1872, to the effect that there was practically no consumption of opium in this Presidency. In regard to this I am to observe that a similar opinion was long entertained\* by this Government as the result of special inquiries made on the subject about the year 1855,† but that this opinion was abandoned 20 years later when a careful further inquiry showed that it did not represent the actual facts,‡-but that on the other hand there was a large consumption of opium in the four northern districts of Ganjam, Vizagapatani, Godavari, and Kistna.

4. The memorialists next comment upon the statements contained in the progress and condition reports for 1884-85 and 1887-88 relative to the free grant of licenses in some of the hill tracts and the supply of opium to the people in the hill tracts of the northern districts of the Presidency at a lower price than elsewhere. The memorialists have not correctly apprehended the policy of Government in this matter. A perusal of the appendix attached to the Board's Proceedings forwarded herewith will show that this Government has been endeavouring to reduce the consumption of opium in these tracts as much as possible, and that if any leniency was shown in the matter at first, it was only out of deference to the consideration that a sudden change might be productive of more harm than good among a population addicted by long habit to the use of the drug.

5. As regards the proposal made in paragraph 18 of the memorial, I am to state that his Excellency in Council agrees with the Board of Revenue in thinking that opium dens, such as those described in the appendices to the memorial, do not exist in this Presidency, and that, so far as there do exist shops where opium is bought and consumed on the premises, the provisions always inserted in the licenses for the vend of opium and for the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drugs, with a view to secure decency and good order in the place of vend, have been found to be quite sufficient to prevent the occurrence of scenes such as those to which the memorialists refer.

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EXTRACT from the Proceedings of the Government of Madras, Revenue Department,  
No. 220, Revenue, dated 19th March 1891.

Read the following—

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, No. 65 (Separate Revenue), dated 17th  
February 1891.

Read the following—

From J. F. FINLAY, Esq., Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Finance  
and Commerce Department, to all LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS,  
No. 4,938, dated 18th October 1890.

I am directed to forward copies of a letter from the Chairman of the Society for the  
Suppression of the Opium Trade, enclosing copy of the Resolutions adopted by that  
society on the 3rd June 1890, and of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary  
of State by the same society, together with a reprint of the passages to which references  
are made in the appendix to the memorial.

2. I am directed to request that you will submit, for the consideration of the Govern-  
ment of India, any remarks which his Excellency the Governor in Council may desire  
to make on these papers. The general questions raised in the memorial should be  
discussed so far as they affect the Madras Presidency, and the suggestion made in  
paragraph 18 of the memorial regarding the grant of licenses for the retail sale of opium  
to be consumed on the premises should be specially considered. Your reply should also  
notice any particular statements regarding Madras contained either in the memorial or  
in the extracts referred to in the appendix.

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ENDORSED by the GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS, No. 7,046-R., dated 18th November 1890.

Referred to the Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue for early  
report.

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RESOLUTION. — The only portion of the memorial which has special application to  
Madras is paragraph 15.

2. With reference to the remarks regarding increase of opium revenue in this province,  
the Board begs to point out that in 1879-80, the year selected by the memorialists for  
comparison with the present figures, no rules had yet been framed under the Opium  
Act (I. of 1878—India), and the only opium revenue realised was a duty on import  
and export, and the export was, of course, practically *nil*. Since the rules framed under

the present Act came into force in July 1880, revenue is derived from the following sources :—

- (a.) A pass duty (Rs. 5 per lb.) on opium imported into the Presidency ;
- (b.) The sale by auction of the right to sell opium, and to manufacture and vend intoxicating drugs prepared from the poppy ;
- (c.) Fees levied on licenses for the sale of poppy-heads.

COLLECTIONS according to the Demand, Collection, and Balance Statements.

	Pass Duty.	Other Receipts.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1880-81	4,74,967	1,55,784	6,30,751
1881-82	2,06,410	1,97,109	4,03,519
1882-83	3,08,000	2,53,501	5,61,501
1883-84	3,59,800	2,36,815	5,96,615
1884-85	3,54,200	2,58,685	6,12,885
1885-86	3,54,550	3,56,600	7,11,150
1886-87	3,04,850	3,16,930	6,21,780
1887-88	3,27,600	2,68,555	5,96,155
1888-89	3,66,100	2,65,941	6,32,041
1889-90	3,36,700	2,57,269	5,93,969

NOTE.—In the Finance and Revenue accounts of the Government of India, the opium receipts of this Presidency prior to 1880-81 are shown as *nil*. The realisations from the duty referred to above would come under "Customs" but there is no separate sub-heading, and the Board does not know whence the memorialists obtained their figure for 1870-80.

Deducting the pass duty realised on opium supplied to the Native States of Travancore and Cochin, the amount realised in each year since 1880-81, the first in which the present system was in force, was as shown in the margin. It will be observed that, taking one year with another, there has been no material increase; and that the receipts for 1889-90 are lower than in any year since 1882-83 :—

3. The following statement shows the number of licenses issued for the sale of opium and intoxicating drugs during the same period :—

	Opium.	Intoxicating Drugs.	Total.
1880-81	1,041	167	1,208
1881-82	878	143	1,021
1882-83	946	145	1,091
1883-84	986	121	1,107
1884-85	982	107	1,089
1885-86	960	102	1,062
1886-87	1,045	118	1,163
1887-88		1,157	1,157
1888-89		1,172	1,172
1889-90		1,052	1,052

It will be observed that though there was, as quoted out by the memorialists, a trifling increase in 1888-89 as compared with the year preceding, there was a considerable reduction in 1889-90, and that the number of shops in that year was less than in any period since 1881-82.

4. The Board is unable to understand the statement quoted by the memorialists that "there is practically no consumption of opium in the province." It is well known that opium has always been largely consumed in the Northern circars, and more especially in the hill tracts, though not, speaking generally, to any deleterious extent, as is proved by the generally fine physique of the opium-smoking classes.

5. The memorandum appended to these proceedings gives a history of the special measures adopted to obviate a too sudden enhancement of price in the agency tracts of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, and Godavari. It will be seen that the measures adopted were necessary to prevent serious discontent and distress among the hill people to whom opium had become almost a necessary of life; that the system of issuing free licenses for retail vend is at present in force only in the Ganjam Maliahs and in portions of the Vizagapatam agency tracts; and that the retail price has been gradually raised from 5 tolahs per rupee to from 3½ to 2½ tolahs.

The Government is aware that the opium traffic is carefully watched by the agents and their assistants, and that, so far from "teaching the people to rely on opium as a febrifuge," we are doing all we can to gradually wean them from their hereditary habit of using it on all occasions.

6. With reference to paragraph 18 of the memorial it must be observed that, whatever the truth of the highly coloured accounts of "opium dens" furnished in the memorialists' appendix, they do not in the least apply to this Presidency. The Board's

assistant secretary recently, at the desire of the Commissioner, visited most of the places in the Madras town where, if anywhere, " opium " dens would exist, and reports thereon as follows :—

(1) " Most of the smoking dens were visited, and in each from 10 to 20 smokers were seen. They were of all ages—from 20 to 60 years of age—and comprised both Muhammadans and Hindus. Several professions were represented—jutka drivers, native doctors, musicians, professional beggars, butchers, sweetmeat sellers, and petty shop-keepers. Some were smokers of a few months, some of 20 and 30 years' standing.

(2) " In most cases the smokers left immediately after they had finished their smoke. They purchased 8 pies to 2 annas and 6 pies worth each. Each smoker usually brought some sweetmeats or sugarcane with him and ate or chewed it while smoking. This, it was said, was done as the opium produced a bitter taste in the mouth.

(3) " To see any smoker more affected than a man who had taken his usual glass of liquor was very rare, and in such cases it was said that the man had either taken his smoke out of time or had smoked more than he was used to.

(4) " No women or children were seen in the dens, and it was stated that they do not frequent them.

(5) " Cases of emaciation from the effects of opium-smoking were not seen. Many of the old smokers seen were, on the contrary, very robust and well-conditioned; notably among these might be mentioned the keeper of one of the dens, a Chinaman who is reported to have smoked for over 30 years and who is now over 50 years of age; a vendor of country spirits, a smoker for over 20 years; and a Muhammadan Hakim of about 45, who has smoked for over 10 years.

(6) " Most of those spoken to admitted that the habit once contracted was difficult to give up, but they said that it did them no more harm than the workman's glass of liquor did, if they did not exceed their usual quantity.

(7) " Several complaints were made that the opium was now so dear, that what a few years ago cost 3 or 4 pies could not be purchased for 1 anna."

7. The licenses for retail shops for the sale of opium or of intoxicating drugs made from the poppy always stipulate that the shop shall be closed and no person harboured therein at night time; that no gaming or disorderly conduct shall be permitted; and that persons of notoriously bad character shall not be permitted to resort thereto. The exchange of opium, &c., &c., for anything but coin is also prohibited—*vide* Forms III. to VI. attached to the opium rules sanctioned in G. O. dated 17th June 1880, No. 685, Revenue.

8. The Board considers that these precautions are ample, and that to forbid consumption on the premises altogether, as desired by the memorialists would be an unjustifiable restriction on the tastes and liberty of an orderly and respectable section of the population. Moreover, it seems hardly open to question that it would be a step of more than doubtful propriety to transfer the indulgence in the vicious habit denounced by the memorialists from such establishments to the homes and family circles of its victims.

## APPENDIX.

### ADMINISTRATION OF OPIUM REVENUE IN THE HILL TRACTS OF THE GANJAM, VIZAGAPATAM; AND GODAVARI DISTRICTS.

The Opium Act of 1878 was extended to this Presidency only in 1880, and the rules passed thereunder for the control of the opium traffic came into force only on the 1st July of that year. The restriction imposed by these rules led to a marked rise in the price in the hill tracts of Vizagapatam from 5 or 6 tolahs per rupee to 2 tolahs, and in some parts opium was not procurable at all. This produced serious discontentment and distress among the people, who consume opium largely, the drug being almost a necessary of life in those parts, and it was therefore found necessary to take steps to make it available in sufficient quantities at a reasonable price. The Collectors of Ganjam and Godavari were also requested to state whether the rise in the price of opium consequent on the levy of a pass duty was giving rise to distress or discontentment in the hill tracts of their districts, and whether any special measures were necessary.

2. The measures finally adopted for the agency tracts in the three districts are noticed below.

3. *Vizagatapam*.—Mr. Garstin, the then Collector, suggested that the opium required for consumption in the hill tracts might be imported by Government and stored in

depôts centrally situated for sale to the retailers at cost price. It was proposed that some of the hill mittadars and heads of villages should receive free licenses as retail vendors; that the inferior kinds of opium should be sold by Government at 5 tolahs a rupee; and that the price of superior qualities should be gradually raised, the retail price being fixed at 4 tolahs per rupee at first and subsequently at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs. The system of selling opium to the vendors on behalf of Government was introduced on 1st April 1881. The opium imported by Government was sold only in the hill tracts above the Ghâts

\* Collector's report in Board's Proceedings No. 257, dated 25th January 1882.

at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  or  $4\frac{1}{2}$ \* tolahs per rupee to the vendors (irrespective of quality) who sold it to the people at not less than 4 tolahs; while in the agency tracts below the Ghâts the opium was supplied by native enterprise.

4. In March 1882 the Government approved† of the Collector's suggestion to sell the first two sorts of opium to licensed vendors at 4 tolahs per rupee, and the third sort at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs. The retail price of the first and second sorts rose from 4 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs per rupee. The third sort was sold to the vendors at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs, and they retailed it at 4 tolahs. The fourth and fifth sorts were sold to the vendors at 6 tolahs, and they sold it to the people at  $5\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs. Under this arrangement a portion of the duty had to be foregone, but as opium is to some extent a necessary of life in these feverish tracts, the Board did not think it advisable to enhance the price considerably until more experience was gained.

† Board's Proceedings No. 257, dated 25th January 1882, and G. O. dated 23rd February 1882, No. 22.

5. In its Proceedings No. 350, dated 2nd February 1884, the Board recommended that the supply of opium to the hill tracts might be safely left to private enterprise from 1884-85. A contractor agreed to bind himself to supply the shopkeepers licensed by Government at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs per rupee, and the retail price rose to 3 tolahs per rupee, while the price in the ordinary tracts was 2 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs. In 1885-86, 1886-87, and 1887-88, the supply monopoly was disposed of by tenders, and the retail price underwent no alteration. As this system was not, however, found to work satisfactorily, the Board approved of the Collector's proposal to revert to the old amani (Government management) system from 1888-89, the monopoly of vend being sold in auction in selected localities, and the retail price of opium being restricted to 3 tolahs per rupee as formerly. This was sanctioned as a temporary measure for one year, but as there was only one bidder in 1889-90, whose terms were unreasonable, the amani system was continued in 1889-90. - The privilege of retail vend in shops was sold by auction in selected localities, fixed fees were paid for shops in some portions, and free licenses were issued only for shops whose average annual consumption was less than 1,000 tolahs. The retail selling price was enhanced to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs per rupee, except in the Gudem hills and in the Paderu and Mulkenjeri taluks, where it was fixed at 3 tolahs. During the current year the amani management has been discontinued, and the retail price in the excepted tracts above-mentioned enhanced to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs per rupee.

6. *Godavari*.—The Board proposed that the agency tracts in the Godavari district should be treated in the same way as the Vizagapatam Maliah tracts, and that a remission of the pass duty should be granted, but the Government thought it unnecessary to undertake the supply under the amani system, as no distress or discontentment had been felt in the hill tracts on account of the rise in the price of opium. The agents of the mittas and heads of villages, and such other persons as the Collector deemed fit, were granted free licenses. It must, however, be observed that the issue of free licenses did not cheapen the price of opium, which remained as high as  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 tolahs per rupee.

7. In its Proceedings No. 1699, dated 19th May 1884, the Board approved of the Collector's proposal to put up to sale by auction the right of vend in certain villages, while as regards the rest it was directed that free licenses for new shops should not be issued except with the Board's special sanction. In August 1889 the Board recommended that the privilege should be sold by auction throughout the agency tracts on the following conditions:—

- (i.) That the opium sold shall be of good quality;
- (ii.) That not less than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tolahs shall be sold for a rupee;
- (iii.) That the maximum quantity to be sold to a single individual should be restricted to 6 tolahs; and
- (iv.) That free licenses should be issued only when a shop does not find a purchaser.

G.O. dated 18th October 1889,  
No. 848.

This was approved‡ by Government and has been brought into effect during the current year.

8. *Ganjam*.—From the Collector's reply to Board's Proceedings No. 51, dated 17th January 1881, it was evident that there was no regular traffic in opium in the hill tracts of this district, and the Government consequently approved of the Board's proposal to grant free licenses in localities in which there was any demand.

9. From the above it will be evident that the system of issuing free licenses for the retail vend of opium is at present in force only in the Ganjam Maliahs and in portions of the Vizagapatam and Godavari Agency tracts in localities in which there is very little traffic in the drug, and where, owing to difficulty of communication and other causes, it would be felt as a hardship to deprive the people of the opportunities of obtaining this drug when necessary.

No. 8.—From J. A. CRAWFORD, Esq., Secretary for Berar to the Resident, Hyderabad, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 89 of 1891, dated 20th March 1891.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 4,938, dated 18th October last, calling for remarks on certain papers received from England regarding the sale of opium and other intoxicating drugs, and to state as follows:—

2. It is true, as stated in those papers, that the number of licensed shops in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts had between the years 1879–80 and 1888–89 increased from 532 to 604, and, except in so far as it may be accounted for by the increase of the population and of wealth, Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick cannot find that there was any reason for the increase. From the 1st of April 1890, however, the number of shops was reduced to 587, and the Commissioner has now been directed to reduce it by at least 50 more, following the principles recently laid down for his guidance in the case of liquor shops, and to report how much further it can be reduced.

3. As regards the matter of consumption on the premises, there is at present no direct prohibition of consumption there, it having been thought sufficient to provide under a penalty that no intoxication shall be permitted on the premises, and indeed it would be obviously impossible to prevent a purchaser swallowing before he leaves the premises the very minute dose of opium which he buys. As a matter of fact, it is believed that drugs which are swallowed are, as a rule, not consumed on the premises, but maduk, in which form opium is smoked, though only to a limited extent in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts, is commonly smoked on the premises. The Resident, however, has now directed that a clause shall be inserted in all future licenses for the retail sale both of drugs and liquor, providing under a penalty that no persons shall be allowed to collect or loiter on the premises, and in the case of drug licences, that no smoking of drugs shall be permitted on the premises. He has further directed that the police shall be specially instructed to insist upon the enforcement of this condition, and that the manner in which it is enforced shall be noticed in the annual Excise reports.

4. As for the suggestion made by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, "that the Government of India should be directed to use the absolute discretion conferred on it by the Indian Opium Act of 1875 \* \* \* by the adoption of measures having for their object to limit the sales of opium to that which is necessary for medical use," Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick will not go so far as to say that this would be impossible in a territory isolated from opium-producing tracts, and in which the use of opium had been previously little, if at all, known; but in the various parts of India in which he has served, the practice of eating or smoking opium has come down from a period anterior to our rule; opium, if not got in one way, can be got in another, and any proposal absolutely to prohibit the use of it now would, in his opinion, be so completely beyond the range of practical politics as to be scarcely worth discussing.

5. There seems to be no doubt that there are, or until the other day have been, places in India where, owing to a want of proper supervision and control, abuses have prevailed like those described in these papers, and which at least strike one with greater horror than any corresponding abuses in countries where people are demoralised by drink, but the Resident would affirm without fear of contradiction, that, speaking generally, the evils arising from indulgence in drink in England are vastly greater than those arising from indulgence in opium in those parts of India with which he is acquainted, and yet he presumes no responsible person would think of suggesting that the sale of intoxicating liquor in England, except for medicinal purposes, should be absolutely prohibited by law.



6. That persons are found to suggest such a prohibition in regard to opium in the most general terms for the whole of British India is, he suspects, due, apart from the appalling but remediable abuses now brought to light in particular places to two causes, viz., first that while the drinking of alcohol seems to those persons the most natural thing in the world, the eating or smoking of opium even in moderation presents itself to them as a strange, wild, and unnatural sort of indulgence, deserving of no consideration whatsoever; and, secondly, that they imagine that the Government of India as a despotic government can do anything not naturally impossible. Hence they feel no hesitation in recommending the universal prohibition of the sale of opium, except for medicinal purposes, and they suppose that such a measure could be easily carried out by the exercise of the "absolute discretion" conferred by the Indian Opium Act.

7. Now upon this it may be observed, to begin with, that, though the Indian Opium Act of 1878, like some other Acts passed about the same time, confers upon the executive authorities a latitude of discretion which from a constitutional point of view Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick has always regarded as excessive, it will nevertheless be perfectly clear to anyone who studies that Act, and bears in mind the state of things under which it was passed; that it was never intended to confer upon the executive authorities power to do anything of the sort now proposed, and that to attempt to do under it anything of that sort would be a very gross abuse of the powers which it confers.

8. Further, supposing this difficulty to be got over, the question would remain whether it would be justifiable or expedient to take such action, and the Resident is decidedly of opinion that it would not. In the first place, he is of opinion, though doubtless some persons will differ from him on this point, that it would involve an interference with individual liberty far in excess of what is justified by the nature and extent of the evils which necessarily result from the use of opium, that is to say, of the evils which do not admit of being checked by a stricter system of supervision and control; and in the second place, supposing considerations of this sort, which even the most despotic government cannot venture to disregard could be set aside, he is convinced that such a measure would be practically unworkable, and would lead to vastly more mischief than it would succeed in preventing.

9. Everyone who has had experience of the working of the opium law knows that opium, owing to its extremely small bulk and the facility with which it can be stowed away, presents facilities for smuggling and clandestine sale immensely surpassing those presented by any other commodity in ordinary use.

As it is, our officers are driven to their wits' ends to suppress the limited and not very highly organised system of illicit traffic which has been evoked by our severe duties on opium, and if we were to make it impossible for those addicted to the use of opium to get anything but contraband opium, a system of illicit traffic would inevitably be started on such a scale and with such an organisation that we should be utterly powerless to cope with it. Speaking generally, 10 grains would be an ordinary daily allowance to an opium eater, 20 grains would be a very full daily allowance. A seer of opium contains 1,440 times 10 grains, and would be quite a stock in trade, and yet it is a very small thing, for opium is a heavy substance. Let anyone picture to himself the difficulty of detecting the smuggling and surreptitious sale over an immense extent of territory, and for the supply of many millions of consumers of such a commodity, and let anyone who knows this country picture to himself what the attempt to suppress it here would mean. The imagination, at least the imagination of an ordinary practical man, refuses to conceive the establishments that would be required for such a purpose, and to anyone who knows the class of persons who would have to be employed for such a purpose here the prospect of oppression, corruption, and extortion which the suggestion opens out is truly appalling. No doubt, if we covered the whole face of the country with a network of preventive establishments, and resorted to an extreme of severity whenever we got a conviction, we should succeed in diminishing to some material extent the consumption of opium, but the advantage thus gained would be as nothing compared with the evils to be set against it.

10. For these reasons the Resident is of opinion, with all deference to those who have put forward this proposal, that, subject to a possible exception in the case of districts which are isolated from opium-producing tracts and in which the use of opium has not yet become established, the idea of prohibiting the sale of opium, except for medicinal purposes, may be at once put aside as wholly impracticable.

There are in his opinion only two ways in which we can check the evils which form the subject of this correspondence. The first is by putting on duties so severe as to raise the price of opium to the highest figure to which it can be raised without unduly stimulating illicit trade and thereby defeating our object. We have already, I am to

say, carried this so far in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts that opium there sells to the small retail purchaser for its weight in silver. The other way is by a strict system of control and supervision. We have not as yet, it is true, done all that can be done in this direction, but we are endeavouring to do it, and we shall always be glad to receive suggestions from outside as to how it should be done.

No. 9.—From R. SMEATON, Esq., C.S., Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 57 of 1891, dated 20th March 1891.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge your letter No. 4,938, dated the 18th October 1890, with which were forwarded, for any remarks the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner might desire to make, papers received from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

2. The exaggerated and inaccurate nature of the statements on which the memorial addressed by the Society to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India is mainly founded was explained in paragraph 2 of my letter No. 433, dated the 28th November 1889, to your address. Mr. Caine's account of the "opium den" in Lucknow has already formed the subject of inquiry and correspondence. The account given by the special commissioner of the "Bombay Guardian" of the similar place at Allahabad consists mainly of a report of a conversation purporting to have been held between the special commissioner and the frequenters of the den. This gentleman was obliged to utilise the services of an interpreter, who appears to have explained matters, as guides are apt to do, in a manner which he thought would be gratifying to the commissioner. But he was abusing even the most blind credulity when he informed the special commissioner that the opium eaters before him were asserting that a memorial for the prohibition of the drug would probably be signed by every opium consumer in Allahabad. It is hardly conceivable that he could have expected to be believed when he made it appear that habitual opium smokers were expressing themselves to a stranger as desirous of foregoing the use of the drug for the sake of public reform.

3. In this connexion I am to point out that if every shop licensed for the sale of opium were at once abolished, the drug would unquestionably be consumed by those who indulged in it at their own homes; and that if the Government levied no excise on opium, the consumption of the drug would without doubt be enormously increased. The poppy is very extensively grown in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh; and very great facilities for its illicit sale and consumption necessarily exist even under the present restrictions. Any relaxation of Government interference would result in greater opportunities for illicit consumption and in a large increase in the number of opium consumers.

I am to refer to paragraph 21 of the Resolution of this Government, No. <sup>232</sup>XIII-38, dated 4th August 1890, to show that the restriction engages its attention.

4. With reference to paragraph 3 of the memorial, I am to remark that, whatever the rise in the number of opium shops since 1879-80 may have been, there are now fewer shops of this kind in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh than in any other province of India, except Burma and Assam. Shops for the sale of ganja, hemp, &c., are more numerous in comparison, because it is in these provinces, and especially in the eastern districts, that these drugs are mostly grown and used. In this case too the effect of removing the excise would in all probability be to increase the consumption of these drugs. The sale being under Government control any tendency to increase the number of these shops unnecessarily has always been closely watched by Government, as the figures given in the memorial and reproduced below will show:—

Year.	No of Shops for the Sale of Drugs.
1883-84	4,799
1884-85	4,897
1885-86	4,785
1886-87	3,757
1887-88	3,857
1888-89	3,878

5. As regards paragraphs 4 and 7 of the memorial, I am to say that the figures given are substantially correct. The question of the consumption of hemp drugs, opium, madak and chandu was fully discussed in the resolution above quoted. I am to invite attention to that portion of paragraph 20 of the resolution which deals with opium shops, as evidencing the feeling and action of this Government in the matter. The Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner is of opinion that the policy of opening new shops for the sale of opium is questionable. The number of shops has no doubt risen from 792 in 1879 to 1,084 in 1888 (to quote the figures given); but this has been mainly due to the necessity of choice between two evils, viz., increased illicit use of opium on the one hand, or increased number of places where licit opium may be bought on the other. The Government prefers to choose the latter, and lesser, of these evils.

6. I am also to invite attention to paragraph 18 of the resolution quoted above, which deals with hemp drugs. The number of shops in 1888-89 was only one to every 11,300 persons.

7. As regards paragraph 18 of the memorial, I am to invite a reference to paragraph 21 of the resolution (No. 223, dated 4th August 1890) on the last provincial excise report. It was there shown that there had been from year to year a continuous decrease in the number of the so-called "opium dens."

Districts.	No. of Shops.	Districts.	No. of Shops.
Dehra Dún	1	Allahabad -	2
Meerut -	1	Jaunpur -	1
Aligarh -	2	Azamgarh -	1
Agra -	2	Mirzapur -	2
Farukhabad	2	Benares -	2
Moradabad	1	Jhānsi -	1
Badaun -	1	Lucknow -	2
Bareilly -	1	Fyzabad -	2
Pilibhit -	1		
Cawnpore -	1		26

At the close of the excise year ending 30th September 1889 there were only 54 madak and chandu shops (that is, shops for the consumption of opium on the premises) in the 49 districts of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh—with their population of about 48 millions—as compared with 324 shops at the close of 1883-84. During the current excise year this number has been still further reduced to 26, as shown in the margin; and

in 31 districts out of 49 there are now none of these shops in existence.

8. Turning to the appendix to the memorial, I am to observe that Mr. Caine (page 2) writes: "In the city of Lucknow there are 30 distilleries of native spirits, 201 liquor shops, 24 opium shops, and 92 for bhang and other intoxicating drugs." The assertion is of characteristic inaccuracy and hardihood. In the whole Lucknow "district"—an area of about 1,000 square miles, with a population of nearly 700,000—there were during 1888-89 one distillery, 136 shops for the retail vend of country spirits, 86 drug shops, 3 madak and chandu shops (the so-called "opium dens"), and 27 opium shops not licensed for consumption on the premises. There seems to the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner to be little practical usefulness in engaging in a never-ending discussion on the merits or demerits of the Indian Excise system with critics who have shown themselves quite incapable of understanding the uses of accuracy; whose object is not to prove their contentions, but to impress the general public, and to that end to declaim and to denounce; and who cannot therefore be expected to forego their methods of controversy before the most cogent reasoning or the most unanswerable statistics.

9. I am to point out that Mr. Caine is equally wrong (page 3 of the Appendix) in confusing "double revenue" with "double consumption." Inquiry shows conclusively that the increased revenue is very largely due to increased stringency on the part of Government, and to the persistent suppression of illicit traffic.

10. As regards the temperance movement to which Mr. Caine refers, I am to invite attention to paragraph 7 of the resolution (No. 223, dated 4th August 1890) on the Excise Report referred to above, where the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner alluded to the growth of a temperance movement in these provinces. The Government will always be glad to welcome such movements on the part of the people.

No. 10.—From R. G. THOMSON, Esq., Officiating Revenue Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 642, dated 24th March 1891.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4,938, dated 18th October 1890, forwarding copies of a letter from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade and of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State by the same society, and asking that any remarks which his Honour the Lieutenant Governor may desire to make on these papers may be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

2. In reply I am directed to forward a copy of a letter No. 66, dated 30th January 1891, from the Financial Commissioner, Punjab, with its enclosure, in which the facts and statistics in regard to the consumption of opium and drugs in the Punjab are clearly set forth and the statements concerning this province contained in the papers forwarded with your letter under acknowledgment are discussed. Briefly, the facts in regard to the Punjab may be summarised as follows :—

Opium-smoking shops are now prohibited in the Punjab.

The figures regarding the increase of opium and drug shops in this province, referred to in the enclosures of your letter under reply, are erroneous and misleading. The increase indicated by the figures is explained by the fact that since 1887 the returns show the number of shops, and not merely the number of licenses as was previously the practice, when one license frequently covered several shops.

The consumption of opium has been restricted of late years through Government's action in—

(1) Checking the smuggling of Malwa and Nepal opium.

(2) Rendering it penal for cultivators to consume opium grown by themselves.

The ratio of consumption of opium to population is not so high as to be a cause of anxiety in regard to the health and morals of the people. In the few tracts where the habit may be said to be general among certain classes of the population it is of old standing, and does not seem to do so much harm as might be expected. The people, on the contrary, assert that they find it a protection against fever.

Of hemp drugs, ganja is not consumed in the Punjab. The consumption of bhang and charas increases at a very slow rate. The revenue derived from the taxation of these drugs is unimportant. The question of further taxation is about to be considered by Government.

3. Six copies of maps showing the consumption of opium, charas, and bhang in the Punjab are enclosed herewith. These maps will be found published with the Punjab Excise Report of the year 1889-90.

From D. C. JOHNSTONE, Esq., Junior Secretary to Financial Commissioner, Punjab, to the Officiating REVENUE SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT, Punjab. No. 66, dated 30th January 1891.

With reference to your No. 2,133 of 1st November 1890 to the address of the Commissioner of Excise, I am directed to forward copy of Mr. Dane's No. 239 of 24th December 1890, and to address you as follows on the subject of the consumption of opium and intoxicating drugs in the Punjab.

2. In the papers forwarded with your letter under reply "the alarming spread of the opium vice" in India generally is made the subject of remark, and in two resolutions the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade calls upon the Indian Government to close the licensed "opium dens" and to put an end to the Bengal Opium Excise system. Against the Punjab in particular it is urged that there has been in recent years a large increase in the facilities afforded to the public for the purchase of opium and drugs, while the closing of the Lahore "opium dens" is acknowledged. The Financial Commissioner, I am to say, proposes to show in the following paragraphs that the Punjab system does not necessarily encourage real increase of consumption of drugs and opium throughout the Province, and that the figures taken from past annual reports have been misunderstood by the society.

3. In 1879-80 the Punjab Annual Excise Report showed a total of 1,164 retail opium licenses, and 986 such licenses for the sale of hemp drugs. In 1889-90 the numbers were 1,388 and 1,824 respectively. These latter figures, however, hardly admit of comparison with the former figures. The number of

licenses (as shown in annual returns) for retail sale of opium remained nearly stationary during the years 1880-81 to 1886-87 inclusive. In 1887-88 the figures rose from 1,439, to 1,717, and the explanation of this is to be found in the following extract from paragraph 2 of the Excise Report for the year in question :—

"2. The first important change is in the entry of numbers of retail licenses. In past years there has been a want of uniformity in this matter, some Deputy Commissioners showing number of leases and others number of shops. A glance at the prefatory note

submitted herewith will show that shops, whether for sale of country spirits, rum, opium, or hemp drugs, may be put up to auction singly or in groups. It follows that there may be in one year three leases (say) in a district and in the next ten leases, the number of shops remaining precisely the same; and Mr. Elsmie thinks it would be misleading to show the figures three and ten in such a case. An effort has therefore been made this year to ascertain the exact number of shops in which during 1887-88 exciseable articles were sold."

It was not found possible in 1887-88 to effect with complete accuracy this alteration in the mode of recording licenses; and when the report for 1888-89 came to be written, it was found that there were really 156 opium shops in the Amritsar District and not only 29, as shown in the returns for 1887-88. This correction, with one or two minor alterations, accounts for the increase to 1,849 in the report for 1888-89; and the increase upon this figure in 1889-90 is slight.

4. The apparent increase from 1,107 to 1,783 in the licenses for retail sale of hemp drugs in the year 1887-88 is to be similarly explained. The figure for 1889-90 is 1,824.

5. Neither in the case of opium nor in that of hemp drugs is it believed that any important increase has occurred in the last eleven years in the real facilities afforded to the public for purchasing these articles. It may be possible here and there, the Financial Commissioner remarks, to reduce the number of shops, and the Excise Commissioner is understood to be

Facilities for purchase of opium and hemp drugs in the Punjab not excessive.

paying attention to the matter; but, taking the Province as a whole, the number of shops does not seem to the Financial Commissioner very excessive. Of the 1,824 shops in which hemp drugs are sold 1,553 are also opium shops; so that the total number of shops for the retail sale of opium and hemp drugs is only 2,159 for a population which stood at 18,818,220 in 1881, and which is now probably much greater. This gives one shop per 8,693 souls.

6. The following table shows the figures in maunds of consumption of opium and hemp drugs in the Punjab during the eleven years 1879-80 to 1889-90 inclusive. These figures are not very reliable, as they are obtained from the retailers themselves; but such as they are, they certainly do not bear out the view that the Punjab Government has by its policy fostered the consumption of these intoxicants:—

Years.	Opium.	Hemp Drugs.				Amount per Head per Annum in Tolabs.	
		Charas.	Bhang.	Other Preparations.	Total.	Opium.	Hemp Drugs.
1879-80	(a)2,898	Detail not given.				5,123	
1880-81	(a)2,375	480	3,001	58	3,539		
1881-82	1,192	433	3,561	55	4,049		
1882-83	1,181	510	3,440	43	3,993		
1883-84	1,145	555	3,966	34	4,555		
1884-85	1,191	601	3,632	44	4,277		
1885-86	1,157	663	3,687	57	4,407		
1886-87	(b)1,186	798	3,565	24	4,387		
1887-88	1,103	869	3,798	28	4,635		
1888-89	1,196	891	3,709	25	4,625		
1889-90	1,435	943	4,238	30	5,211		
Average -	1,460	674	3,658	39	4,885	25	825

(a) Probably includes a large weight of poppy-heads.

(b) Excluding 730 maunds of poppy-heads.

Three maps are appended showing the distribution of the opium and drug consuming population in the year 1889-90.

7. Another test of the matter is the comparatively slow growth of the revenue from opium and drugs in the province during the last decade. If the facilities for purchasing drugs had been really increased by two-thirds during the ten years, from 1879 to 1889, as supposed, the revenue from drugs, Mr. Elsmie remarks, might have largely increased; but, as already pointed out by Mr. Elsmie in

Slow growth of the revenue from opium and hemp drugs.

this office No. 216 of 11th August 1888, the revenue from opium and drugs has increased very slightly indeed.

The years 1879-80 and 1889-90 may be thus compared:—

	1879-80.	1889-90.
	Rs.	Rs.
Average duty - - - -	34,390	36,806
Licenses to sell opium - - -	2,80,137	3,24,284
Licenses to sell hemp drugs - - -	1,39,577	1,54,885
Total - - - -	4,54,104	5,15,975

The increase amounts only to Rs. 61,871, which represents a rate of 1·2 per cent. per annum on the figure for the earliest year. This, the Financial Commissioner observes, is a rate of increase probably slower than that of the increase of the population generally, and is certainly very gradual compared with the rapid increase of the material prosperity of the people, and is probably attributable not to a real increase of consumption but to improved administration.

8. The opium dens mentioned in the printed papers received are shops for the smoking of the preparation of opium—madak and chandu. These, I am to say, have been wholly prohibited in the Punjab. The question of closing these shops seems to have been first discussed in the Excise Report for 1881-82, paragraphs 23 and 24; and in March 1883, by a Circular Memo. No. 2,181, copy whereof is attached for easy reference, Commissioners were asked to consider the matter of repression. In his No. 476 of 17th May 1884, the Financial Commissioner (Colonel Davies) reported to Government in favour of stopping the public sale of madak and chandu by giving no more special licenses for opium-smoking shops and by prohibiting the ordinary retail vendors from manufacturing and selling these preparations. In its reply (Punjab Government No 250 of 5th November 1884) Government admitted the evils of opium-smoking, and expressed itself ready to sacrifice revenue should a reform of the kind proposed be practicable; but Sir Charles Aitchison thought that the experiment should first be tried in a few places and experience of its working gained before the introduction of a sweeping measure applicable to the whole province. Accordingly, with effect from 1st April 1885, measures were to be taken for the suppression of opium smoking at Peshawar, Delhi, and Lahore; and elsewhere the existing shops were to be strictly supervised and no new shops were to be licensed,—*vide* Financial Commissioner's Circular Memo. No. 8,582 of 22nd November 1884, copy of which is attached. This order was not carried out in Peshawar, because it was found that the opium contract there had been given for a term of years not yet expired. In Lahore the closure of madak and chandu shops caused a loss of revenue amounting to about Rs. 6,000 in 1885-86; but the results both in Lahore and Delhi were otherwise favourable. In 1886-87 it was reported that the results were good in Delhi, but the Excise officer of Lahore, an official of great local experience, stated that there had been in Lahore city simply a loss of revenue with no appreciable decrease in opium smoking. In paragraphs 24 and 25 of the Annual Excise Report for 1887-88 the state of the madak and chandu trade was briefly sketched as follows:—

“The result of the closure in Delhi has been favourable, as has been already intimated to Government in this office No. 119 of 16th February 1888, and the number of chandu-smokers is steadily diminishing. That letter also shows that the closure in Lahore was not so successful, but now the Deputy Commissioner admits that, though smoking clubs frequented by old hands are common, the new regulations certainly tend to discourage further recruitment of the ranks of the smokers. As to Peshawar, a special report has been received from Mr. Merk. Opium smoking began there in 1865; and in 1887, when the shops were closed, there were 300 to 400 regular frequenters. After one year's closure the number of habitual smokers is reported to have fallen to 50 or 60, and native public opinion is strongly in favour of the new policy. The returns now submitted show that Government certainly loses revenue by the closure of the shops, and must expect to lose revenue for some years. The following are the figures for special madak and chandu licenses in recent years:—In Peshawar, viz., 1882-83, Rs. 7,236; 1883-84, Rs. 8,688; 1884-85, Rs. 8,688; 1885-86, Rs. 8,688; 1886-87, Rs. 7,980. In 1887-88 no such licenses have been granted.

"As stated in this office No. 119 of 16th February, in nine districts there is no appreciable amount of opium smoking, and it is believed there are no special shops in eight others. Special shops are licensed only in Umballa, Ferozepore, Mooltan, Amritsar, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Rawal Pindi, Hazara, Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ghazi Khan. In Umballa there is one shop in the cantonment and one in the city, and the consumption amounted to four maunds three seers, the value of which is about Rs. 6,500. In Ferozepore there is only one shop, the sales of which amounted to one maund in 1887-88. In the Mooltan cantonment are two shops and in the city one, and the sales are said not to be great. In the three shops of Amritsar city the consumption is said to have slightly increased. In Sialkot, where there are two shops, opium smoking is said to be confined to the lowest classes. In Gujrat no chandu is smoked, and only five or six men smoke madak. In Gujranwala there are two madak shops, and chandu is little known. From Jhelum it is reported that chandu is unknown and madak smoking is decreasing. The Deputy Commissioner of Rawal Pindi says: 'There is a general outcry against the existence of the shops in the city, as it is said that many young men of good family ruin health and character in them.' In Hazara only a little madak is smoked; and in Kohat, where there is one shop, the contractor has agreed to allow no new smokers into the shop, of which at present there are 38 customers. In Bannu a little chandu is smoked and no madak; but from Dera Ghazi Khan the report is that chandu is much indulged in by young men of the educated classes. The number of shops has, however, been reduced from ten to three."

9. Towards the end of 1887 Government asked for a special report on the whole question of opium smoking; and, in his Secretary's No.

Closure of madak and chandu shops effected.

119 of 16th February 1888, Mr. Elsmie advocated the extension to the whole province of the measures experimentally adopted in Peshawar, Lahore, and Delhi.

Government in reply expressed a wish that the whole case should be considered by the Excise Commissioner to be shortly appointed, and the Excise Commissioner's report was forwarded to Government with Financial Commissioner's No. 733 of 23rd October 1889, Mr. Elsmie adhering to his views already expressed, with the result that Government ordered the closure of all madak and chandu shops with effect from 1st April 1890.

10. In the table in paragraph 6 of this letter it will be seen that an increased consumption of opium is shown to have taken place in

Apparent increase in consumption of opium in 1889-90 due to substitution of licit for illicit consumption.

\* 1. Correspondence ending with Punjab Government No. 456 of 14th September 1888.

2. Punjab Government (Foreign) Proceedings Nos. 5-14 of May 1887.

3. Financial Commissioner's No. 459 of 20th June 1889, to Punjab Government.

4. Paragraph 19 of Financial Commissioner's No. 189 C. of 15th July 1890, to Punjab Government.

5. Paragraph 32, Excise Report for 1889-90.

1889-90 as compared with the preceding years. This increase is, no doubt, partly the result of better record of sales, but it is also, in the Financial Commissioner's opinion, partly due to the substitution of licit for illicit consumption. In connexion with this matter I am to refer you to the papers noted in the margin,\* from which it will be seen that smuggling of Malwa and Nepal opium was and is very common, and that efforts are being made to suppress this contraband trade. Prosecutions have increased of late years, and it is natural to suppose that, if the standing attempt to suppress illicit traffic in drugs were not kept up, the evil would be much worse than it is at present. The curtailment of the illicit supply of the drug must naturally lead to increased demand for opium

that has paid the proper duty. Further, I am to refer you to the new Opium rules, published in Punjab Government Notification No. 653 A. of 1st April 1889. In these rules two changes were introduced which undoubtedly tend to check illicit consumption of opium. Before the revision of the rules it had been held by the Chief Court that it was not an offence for a licensed cultivator of the poppy to consume his own crop, but home consumption is now forbidden by the new Rule 9 (a). Again, it had been found that in certain districts containing large areas under poppy hardly any opium was reported as manufactured, the inference being that a large amount of locally grown opium was consumed in those districts without passing through the shops of the retail vendors, and that much of the produce was consumed in the form of post, the produce in neither case paying Government any revenue beyond the very low acreage duty of Rs. 2 per acre. The existence of this unlicensed consumption was found to be interfering with the value of the retail vendors' contracts, and thus to be causing loss to Government without any real advantage to the people. The new Opium Rules, therefore, provided that the Local Government might enhance the acreage duty up to any rate not exceeding Rs. 2 per quarter acre or fraction thereof; and under this power the Local Government has doubled the duty in nine districts of the Punjab in which it was seen that a large area

was annually cultivated with poppy, but a disproportionately small amount of opium was reported as manufactured: The Excise Commissioner is now considering whether further enhancements should not be made.

11. The use of charas is, Mr. Elsmie remarks, probably more harmful than that of opium. The price of the drug is low, and the idea of imposing an import duty in addition to the ordinary license fees has been under consideration for some time. In his No. 199 of 17th March 1888 to Government, Mr. Elsmie expressed himself in favour of the levy of an import duty; and in his No. 691 of 25th September 1888, he gave it as his opinion that Government should not attempt to levy a duty at a higher rate than Rs. 40 per maund. In replying to this letter his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor said he thought the whole subject required further consideration, especially with reference to the probable effect of the proposed duty upon the Central Asian trade generally. The Excise Commissioner has now reported fully on the whole case, and has also submitted draft rules of an improved kind regarding the administration of the Excise on hemp drugs generally. The report and the draft rules are now under consideration, and the Financial Commissioner hopes very shortly to be able to send up matured proposals for the approval of Government, the objects in view being the raising of the retail price of hemp drugs and the introduction of a stricter supervision over their import and transport and consumption.

12. The proposal in question will also deal with bhang, a locally-produced hemp drug. The hemp plant, as Government is aware, grows wild in several districts of the province, and bhang is consequently very cheap. This circumstance, and the fact that hemp is used for other purposes than that of the manufacture of bhang, makes restriction of the use of the drug a matter of difficulty, and experience only can show how far the difficulty can be surmounted.

13. In conclusion, I am to say that the Financial Commissioner desires to express his general concurrence in the views stated by the Commissioner of Excise in his report herewith submitted.

Conclusion.

From R. M. DAÑE, Esq., Commissioner of Excise, Punjab, to the JUNIOR SECRETARY to FINANCIAL COMMISSIONER, Punjab. No. 239, dated 24th December 1890.

As directed in Punjab Government Endorsement, No. 2,133, dated 1st November, 1890, I have the honour to submit the following remarks upon the accompanying copies (1) of a letter from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade to his Excellency the Viceroy, enclosing copies of resolutions adopted by the society at a meeting held on June 3rd, 1890; and (2) of a memorial presented to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India by a deputation of the same society on 30th July 1890.

2. The resolutions are more strongly worded than the memorial, but both in the resolutions and in the memorial the Government of India is urged to prohibit the sale of opium in India, except for medicinal purposes, and the principle of a maximum revenue with a minimum consumption is declared in the memorial to be unsatisfactory, while in the resolutions the arrangements made to safeguard the opium revenue by licensing the cultivation of the poppy and by auctioning the right of retail vend of opium are declared to be contrary to the elementary principles of morality and to be inconsistent with the gospel of Christ. The memorial further draws attention to the increase in the facilities for opium vend in the Punjab and other provinces apparent from the return furnished by Sir J. Gorst to Mr. M. Stewart, M.P., during the last ten years, and concludes with a request that steps may be taken throughout British India to close opium shops for the consumption of opium on the premises.

3. The Government of India requests that the general questions raised may be discussed as far as they affect the Punjab, and in replying to the Government of India it should, I think, be forcibly pointed out that, apart from financial considerations, any attempt to prohibit the sale of opium, except for medicinal purposes, would in this province be most unpopular, and consequently politically inexpedient, while, if the poppy were grown without restriction, and the sale of opium were allowed free, the consumption of opium and its preparations would inevitably increase. Sikhs, Hindus, and Muhamadans alike eat opium, and at present the residents in the Phulkian States are the largest consumers.



The memorialists themselves admit that in malarious tracts opium is useful as a prophylactic, and I think that the opportunity afforded by the presentation of this memorial should be taken to state clearly that the poppy has been cultivated and opium eaten in the Punjab from a period antecedent to British rule; that the drug when taken in this form in moderation is not believed to be necessarily prejudicial; and that although indulgence in the habit may legitimately be restricted by taxation, and thereby made a source of revenue to the State, prohibition and unrestricted consumption are alike out of the question. Opium smoking is another matter. Unlike opium eating, the practice appears to have been of comparatively recent growth in this province, and its evils have already been recognised, and all licenses for the sale of chandu and madak withdrawn.

4. The particular allegation regarding the Punjab contained in the memorial is that the number of shops for the vend of opium and other drugs has risen from 1,164 in 1879-80 to 1,849 in 1888-89. The memorialists appear to think that Lucknow is in the Punjab and Lahore is in the North-Western Provinces, but the figures above given require some explanation.

In paragraph 29 of the Provincial Excise Report for 1889-90 I observed that the number of licenses for the retail vend of opium in the Punjab appeared to be unduly large, and in paragraph 34 I made a similar statement regarding the number of shops for the retail vend of intoxicating drugs. The figures quoted by the memorialists, however, do not, at any rate in the earlier years, represent the number of licensed shops in the province, but the number of licenses, and in some districts leases were in former years shown in the returns as licenses. Thus in 1879-80 I find that in the opium-eating district of Ludhiana the excise returns show one license, and for other districts there are similar entries, -viz., for Bannu, 5 for Kangra, 7 for Rawalpindi, 4 for Jhelum, 3 for Shahpur, &c. The entry in the more recent returns of the number of shops, whether licensed direct by Government or by lessees or farmers, has naturally caused a large increase in the number of licenses, and the memorialists have been misled by this circumstance. At the same time I may repeat that in my opinion the number of existing shops for retail vend both of opium and hemp drugs, but especially the latter, admits of some reduction, and I have for some time been collecting statistics with the intention of addressing Deputy Commissioners on the subject.

5. The request for the closure of shops for the retail sale of opium for consumption on the premises, by which I understand shops for smoking opium and its preparations, does not concern this province, because, as already stated, all licenses for the retail vend of madak and chandu have been withdrawn in the Punjab. The licensed shops at Delhi and Lahore were first closed with effect from April 1885; then at Peshawar from April 1887; and in other districts with effect from April 1889 and April 1890. The publication as a printed selection of the correspondence on this subject would be useful as an illustration of the principles which have actuated and governed excise policy in this province.

The only reference to the Punjab in the extracts referred to in the Appendix to the memorial is in Mr. Frederick Sessions' speech published in July 1890 in the "Friend of China," where he refers briefly to the increased number of licenses granted for opium vend, and this subject has already been sufficiently noticed.

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No. 11.—From H. J. S. COTTON, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Department, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 2,043, dated 21st April 1891.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of the orders of the Government of India, No. 4,938, dated 18th October 1890, forwarding for report a copy of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade and of resolutions adopted by that society on the 3rd June 1890. In reply I am

\* No. 193-B., dated the 21st March 1891. to submit a copy of a report\* from the Board of Revenue on the subject, with its enclosure from the Commissioner of Excise, and to add the following observations which have been recorded by the Lieutenant-Governor.

2. The enclosures now submitted appear to satisfactorily meet most of the considerations put forth in the memorial so far as the Bengal Province is concerned. It is not affirmed that the consumption of opium is on the increase in these provinces. The con-

sumption of opium and the net duty realised thereon during the past ten years is as follows:—

	Maunds of 82 lb. avoirdupois	Net Duty.
		Rs.
1880-81 - - - -	1,763	13,95,083
1881-82 - - - -	1,723	14,47,324
1882-83 - - - -	1,802	15,04,097
1883-84 - - - -	1,918	15,92,416
1884-85 - - - -	1,876	15,60,261
1885-86 - - - -	1,841	15,35,107
1886-87 - - - -	1,887	15,69,842
1887-88 - - - -	1,939	16,08,239
1888-89 - - - -	1,925	15,98,455
1889-90 - - - -	1,965	15,76,121

This shows, as the Board point out, that during the past three years consumption has actually declined, while the total increase in the consumption since 1880 is only 142 maunds, or 8 per cent., which does not more than exceed the general increase in population in the districts where opium is chiefly consumed. The memorial of the society also alludes to the fact that the number of licenses for the sale of opium and other narcotics has been largely reduced in Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governor will therefore follow the Board of Revenue in confining his remarks in this report to the proposal of the memorialists to enforce the closure of all opium saloons, or dens as they are called.

3. On this point I am first to explain that it is not the case, as the memorialists would seem to suppose, that licensed shops for the sale of opium are places where opium is consumed on the premises. On the contrary, the 1,872 shops which are now licensed are places of vend only, and there is no reason for speaking of them as opium dens. The only places to which that expression can be held to apply are the madak and chandu shops, of which 346 and 89 respectively are licensed at present. In these shops opium in its manufactured form is smoked on the premises, and, as Mr. Westmacott observes, scenes of intoxication may be witnessed. That in some cases evil results are produced by these shops is freely admitted, but the Lieutenant-Governor is not satisfied that the results are evil in all cases, or that the worst cases are so numerous as to require that a civilised Government should make a crusade against this class of shops. Even if it be granted that the evil is not exaggerated, still the question remains whether it can be obviated by any remedy which will not be worse than the disease. The Society for the Prevention of the Opium Trade put forward a proposal to prohibit all licensed shops. The answer to this proposal is forcibly stated by the Commissioner of Police, the Commissioner of Excise, and the Board of Revenue. If prohibition were enforced, the smokers of opium, instead of meeting in licensed saloons, would resort to unlicensed dens where it would be impossible to convict them of any offence, unless it could be proved that they had obtained their supplies from an unlicensed vendor. The habit of smoking in unlicensed dens, which is now combated with such difficulty, would soon become unrestricted. The Lieutenant-Governor accepts the view that it would be worse than useless to refuse all licenses for madak and chandu shops.

4. As to the proposal to limit the possession of opium to one tolah instead of five, its effect on the ordinary consumer of opium would be undesirable. A quarter of a tolah is a common, perhaps the commonest, dose taken daily by those who are addicted to the use of opium, and it is within Sir Charles Elliott's personal knowledge and experience that this quantity is taken by innumerable persons in all parts of India, from Rajputana and the Punjab to Assam, without any injury or physical deterioration; that heavy tasks are easily performed under the stimulus it supplies; and that the prevalent belief is that the stimulus is wholesome, even in a dry climate, and is especially beneficial in moist and marshy countries like Eastern Bengal. The consumer of such a dose can now procure his supply for 20 days by one visit to an opium shop; if the limit were reduced to one tolah, he would require to visit the shop every four days—an annoyance which there is no reason for imposing upon him, and the imposition of which would lead to increased smuggling and to breaches of the law.

5. For the rest the Lieutenant-Governor considers it unnecessary to follow the Board in their observations on the proposed prohibition of the retail vend of opium except for medicinal purposes. Such a proposal does not deserve serious consideration. The policy of Government is to discourage and restrict the consumption of intoxicants as far as

possible; not to make foolish and impossible attempts to prohibit their consumption altogether. Mr. Westmacott observes:—"It is my experience that the only way to prevent the illicit and comparatively unrestricted consumption of intoxicating drugs is to control the trade by the issue of a carefully restricted number of licenses, raising the price of the drug artificially by means of duty and license fees as high as is practicable without driving the consumers into smuggling, and making it the interest of every licensed dealer to prevent illicit practices." These principles are followed by the Government of Bengal, and the statistics already quoted in this letter attest the success which has attended their application in regard to Excise opium.

From K. G. GUPTA, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, Financial Department. No. 193-B., dated 21st March 1891.

With advertence to Government order No. E<sup>1-02</sup>, dated 28th November 1890, and enclosures, forwarding for report a memorial from the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, recommending the closing of licensed opium dens throughout India and limiting the sale of opium to what is required for medicinal purposes only, I am directed to submit herewith copy of a report No. 5,896, dated 19th ultimo, from the Commissioner of Excise on the subject, with the following observations.

2. The society's memorial is taken up entirely with the question of excise opium in India; but of the two resolutions passed at their annual meeting, the second refers to the cultivation of provision opium for export to China and other foreign countries, while the first summarizes the recommendations of the society made in the memorial in regard to excise opium.

3. In paragraph 2 of the Government of India's letter No. 4938, dated 18th October 1890, the Local Government is asked to submit remarks on all the papers (including apparently the resolutions), but further on in the same paragraph it is said "that the general questions raised in the memorial should be discussed so far as they affect Bengal." It may be presumed, therefore, that the Government does not desire that the Board should take up again the large and often-discussed subject of the opium manufacture for export to China and the Straits, but that what is required is that the contents of the memorial, so far as they specially affect or refer to excise opium in Bengal, should be noticed.

4. The memorial, it will be observed, has little or nothing to say against the general administration of the Excise Department in Bengal. In paragraph 2 it is observed that the habit of opium smoking is on the increase in India. In paragraph 3 the number of licensed shops for the sale of opium and other drugs in the different provinces is given for the ten years 1879-89. The figures show, as is admitted in paragraph 5 of the memorial, that the number has been largely reduced in these provinces. The practice has, therefore, been in conformity with the accepted principle that the duty should be continually raised and thereby consumption be discouraged so far as is consistent with the prevention of illicit manufacture. The figures given in paragraph 4 of the Excise Commissioner's letter show that, in the ten years 1880-90, the consumption of opium has increased by 142 maunds only, or 8 per cent., which is approximately equal to the general increase of population, if anything rather less than the increase disclosed by the last census in the population of the districts which are the chief consumers of opium; while the receipts from duty have risen by Rs. 1,81,038, or very nearly 13 per cent., showing that the duty has been perceptibly enhanced during this period. It is also noteworthy that the consumption has actually declined since 1887-88. It appears, therefore, that, as far as Bengal is concerned, the report of the Board may be restricted to the specific recommendation with which the memorial concludes, viz., that licensed opium dens should be closed everywhere.

5. As regards this point, the Excise Commissioner's letter goes into the question fully, and very little remains to be said. It appears that the memorialists would include in the term opium dens both madak and chandu shops, of the former of which there are, according to the Excise Report of 1889-90, 346, and of the latter 89 licensed in the whole of the territories under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. Chandu shops, as the extracts annexed to the memorial correctly show, are distinctly places for producing temporary intoxication. The preparation of opium which is called chandu is of Chinese importation. It is smoked in order to bring about a brief period of intoxication, after sleeping off which the consumer usually leaves the shop and goes back to his work. Smoking

madak does not necessarily, or even as a rule, lead to intoxication. Of the chandu shops, 16 are in the Mymensing district, 10 in Gya, and 11 in Calcutta, though the Board are assured that the chandu shops in Calcutta being now in the hands of a single licensee only four are actually open at the present time. Of the madak shops, 31 are in Calcutta, 40 in the 24-Pergunnahs, 29 in Hooghly, and 28 in Maldah, where there is not a single chandu shop. The income derived from these shops was in 1889-90 (as shown by the Excise Commissioner in his letter) Rs. 35,216 from chandu, and Rs. 82,825 from madak shops, besides, of course, the duty on the opium consumed in these shops. If it may be assumed that the opium would not be smoked elsewhere if these shops were shut, the closure would perhaps entail a loss of revenue of 3 lakhs per annum in all Bengal.

6. Seeing the degradation which results from the consumption of these preparations of opium, especially from chandu, it is very natural that the question should be asked whether it would not be far better to close such shops altogether, and the Board are quite prepared to admit that if the evil would be remedied by refusing any chandu or madak licenses, it ought to be done. But though it is very easy to describe in effective language the great demoralization which obtains in the most degraded stratum of society in all large cities, a stratum which, where gin is the prevailing stimulant, is to be found congregated round gin-palaces, where absinthe, round the absinthe shops, where chandu, round the chandu shops, the responsible Government is bound to be satisfied that the anticipated benefits will actually result before the existing machinery is dislocated. These opium dens exist almost exclusively in large centres of population, and whatever may be true of rural tracts, it is certainly not true to fact to represent that in large cities the Government creates the taste for intoxicants by introducing licensed shops. Already the excise administration only stops one stage short of prohibition. The vend of chandu and madak is prohibited everywhere throughout India, save in a few scattered excepted spots, and even there its consumption is deterred by the imposition of a very heavy duty. It is hardly fair to describe the Government as responsible in the ordinary sense of the word for the existence of an evil which it places under such heavy disabilities. But the question is whether, if Government went further, if instead of merely penalising very heavily this practice, it were altogether to prohibit indulgence in it, the result would be successful. The Board will consider this first from the more practical point of view, that is, on the assumption that the general opium excise policy were allowed to remain unaltered, but no chandu or madak licenses were to be granted. Secondly, on the more radical assumption that the vend and possession of opium were also prohibited, except for medicinal purposes.

7. At present opium can only be purchased from licensed vendors, and, save under very exceptional circumstances, no one may possess more than 5 tolahs even if obtained from a licensed vendor. Now what would happen (say) in Calcutta if all the chandu and madak shops were closed? There is no difficulty whatever in drawing the necessary conclusion, because it can safely be inferred from what already goes on. From five to 20 opium smokers would meet together in out-of-the-way and retired rooms, where madak or chandu would be sold to them and smoked by them as at present. If discovered, they would declare that it was their own opium which they had purchased for the occasion. The magistrate would refuse to convict unless evidence could be adduced that the opium or its preparation had been purchased. Such evidence could only be obtained through spies and informers. Now, at the present moment, there are scores of illicit opium dens in Calcutta (in spite of the existence of the licensed shops) that are maintained in this very way, against which war is waged incessantly by the police and excise establishments, but with very indifferent success for the reason above described. If it is now found difficult to convict the owners of these illicit dens, and impossible to extirpate them when the administration is aided by the vigilance of the licensed vendors ever ready to co-operate by every means in their power, as well as by the establishment for detective purposes maintained out of the excise revenue, which can use the licensed shops as their best sources of information, what would the result be if these aids and supports were withdrawn and the licensed vend of chandu and madak stopped? It is in no way exaggerating the case to say that probably the unlicensed shops would so thrive, increase, and multiply that there would be more opium smoking in Calcutta after the prohibition than there is now. The police would be discouraged by the difficulty in procuring convictions, while the auxiliary forces, which now form their best allies, would no longer exist.

Not merely would there be no diminution of the evil habit, but by the very necessities of the case, the dens, being removed from all supervision, would be more unwholesome, more closed to light and air, less well looked after than they are now. The hold which the police have over the criminal classes would be seriously relaxed. The licensed

madak shop is to the Indian detective what the pawnbroker's establishment is to the English detective, the place where he often gets the first clue to the discovery of a dacoity or other grave offence which would otherwise remain undetected. Is it not after all a very appreciable advantage to the community that by the existence of these licensed shops which heavily penalise, but stop short of absolutely prohibiting opium smoking, the criminal classes and inevitable scum of large towns, which would otherwise shun police observation, should to so large an extent be focussed and brought under their direct notice? And would not this advantage be completely lost (probably without any counterbalancing advantage) if the system of licensing chandu and madak shops were given up?

8. It will be seen, however, that the limit of possession of opium might be fixed at one tolah instead of five, and the private manufacture of chandu and madak might be prohibited. The Excise Commissioner recommends these modifications, and is supported by the Commissioner of Police. This is perhaps not the proper occasion to re-open these questions, as what the memorialists ask for is the closing of licensed shops, while the introduction of these proposals would rather serve as valuable aids in diminishing the number of illicit shops. But the Board may remark that in 1885 when the present opium

G. O. No. 3,594, dated 21st October,  
1885.

manufacture of madak and chandu should be altogether prohibited, a proposal which

Bengal Government, No. 1,885, of  
12th August, 1886.

the Bengal Government disapproved of in reporting on the subject to the Government of India. The Board did not propose to lower the limit of the possession of opium below five tolahs, and the Government argued that, if the opium was allowed, the use that might be made of it ought not to be restricted. Should the Government see its way to prohibit the unlicensed manufacture of chandu and madak, this would materially assist in the repression of unlicensed dens, and indirectly, therefore, lead to a reduction of the number of licensed shops.

9. In the second place, what would happen if the Government were to prohibit the retail vend of opium throughout British India, except for medicinal purposes or its possession, save for the same object, or, as the memorialists would probably prefer, were to prohibit the cultivation of the poppy altogether, save within the narrowest limits and its importation into British India. Mr. Westmacott refers to this alternative in paragraph 5 of his excellent report, and the Board have little to add to what he there says. What the Government does endeavour to do is to make opium (which can naturally be produced at Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per seer for the best quality) unobtainable save at prices varying from Rs. 20 to Rs. 35 a seer, and to effect this it has to make all dealing in other than its own excise opium illicit, and to exclude as far as possible foreign opium. What difficulties it meets with are too well known to need many words. Nepal and all other surrounding territories are centres of illicit trade. Every railway, every river, every main artery of traffic is utilised for the transport of illicit opium. Seizures are frequent, but the profits of the trade are such as to minimise their deterrent effect. What then would be the result of total prohibition? Is a very expensive preventive agency to be still maintained from the general taxation of the country? If not illicit traffic would reign supreme. Japan and Corea, part of Java and the Philippine Islands are no fair parallel to such a continent as India. After the treaty of Tilsit, all the resources at the command of Napoleon failed to exclude English manufactures from the Continent of Europe, and what probability is there that a drug so easily concealed as opium could be excluded from British India with its almost limitless land and water frontiers.

10. It must also be remembered that the English system of administration, which is largely engrafted into India, is essentially non-inquisitorial. Hardly any other administration in the world is so handicapped in a policy of prohibition as an administration conducted on English principles. The Board are confident that if the policy advocated by the memorialists were seriously tried it would result in conspicuous failure.

11. The present policy of discouragement as contrasted with total prohibition is, the Board are convinced, the right one, and this is quite consistent with an honest endeavour to improve matters in any particular district or city in which there appears to be room for amendment. The number of chandu or madak shops in such districts as Maldah, Mymensing, Gya, and some others cannot but arrest attention, and it seems quite possible that something may be done with advantage to reduce their number. The Board are satisfied that the Excise Commissioner is fully alive to his duty in this respect and will

do all in his power to minimise the existing evils even though no radical change of system may be considered feasible.

12. Sir H. Harrison is reluctant to refer to the revenue now raised from excise lest it be retorted that this shows that, say what the Government may, it values income more than morality. But still no practical administrator can afford to ignore the question how the 100 lakhs, now raised by excise in the Lower Provinces, would be raised if prohibition were substituted for discouragement? It is fair to take the entire sum of 100 lakhs, because the attacks on the spirit revenue and ganja revenue are as persistent and based on at least as strong grounds of reason and morality as the attacks on the opium revenue. The excise revenue is now readily attacked by many respectable opponents in India, because they feel no sense of responsibility as to how it would have to be replaced, but if the question were put in a definite form, whether the trebling of the income-tax would be accepted as a substitute, how many persons would venture to advise this measure? Or, again, take Calcutta as an example. The excise revenue in Calcutta—not including the customs revenue on wine and spirits, still less the revenue derived from the sale of provision opium—exceeds 20 lakhs—much more than is realised from the house tax at 10 per cent. It is needless to say how heavily the house rate is felt by the owners of house property in Calcutta. Would it be considered a welcome or even a fair proposal to substitute total prohibition of the consumption of spirits, ganja and opium in Calcutta for the present system of licensing, and to raise the house rate to 20 per cent. in order to make up the revenue sacrificed. The question can only be viewed in its true light by asking in what less objectional manner 100 lakhs could be raised in Bengal if the excise were given up, and it is difficult to see how any satisfactory answer could be given to this question.

FROM E. V. WESTMACOTT, Esq., Commissioner of Excise, Bengal, to the SECRETARY to the BOARD OF REVENUE, Lower Provinces. No. 5,896, dated 19th February 1891.

WITH reference to your No. 1828-B. of the 9th December last, and its enclosures, as per margin, I have the honour to submit, for the consideration of the Board, the following remarks.

No. E 1<sup>st</sup> 92, dated 28th November 1890, from the Government of Bengal.

No. 4,938, dated 18th October 1890, from the Government of India, and its enclosures.

2. The Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade have addressed the Viceroy on the subject of closing the licensed opium dens throughout India, and limiting the sale of opium to that which is necessary for medical use. My report for the year 1889-90 shows that the greatest number of licenses in force in these provinces during any part of the year for the retail sale of opium was 3,394, while in 1888-89 it had been only 2,374, and during the five years from 1884 to 1889 had averaged 2,415. The increase is due to the issue of an increased number of licenses to druggists for the sale of opium for medical purposes, the number of such licenses in 1889-90 being 1,522, against 453 in 1888-89. Omitting these licenses, the number in 1889-90 was only 1,872, against 1,921 in 1888-89. Any proposal to increase the number in any district is carefully scrutinised by me, and the collectors limit them to what is necessary to prevent unlicensed dealing. To the best of my knowledge and belief no opium is consumed on the premises of any of these 1,872 licensed shops, and there is no reason for speaking of them as opium dens. The places really referred to by the society are shops licensed for the sale of the preparations of opium known as chandu and madak, for smoking, chandu in the Chinese, and madak in the Bengali fashion. In these shops the drug is smoked on the premises, and it is true that sometimes scenes of intoxication may be witnessed. The number of licenses in these provinces for the sale of chandu was 89 in 1888-89 and 88 in 1889-90. For madak the number was—in 1887-88, 367, in 1888-89, 366, and in 1889-90, 346.

3. People are now allowed to manufacture madak for home consumption without license up to a limit of five tolahs—a privilege which covers much unlicensed trade, and while it may reduce the scenes of intoxication in licensed shops, has, in my opinion, led to considerable increase of madak smoking. I am not aware of the reasons which led to this concession to madak smokers, but I think that the results of it have been distinctly mischievous. The greatest number of licensed chandu shops open in Calcutta and the

suburbs, including the towns of Howrah and Bally, was in 1889-90, 11, and of licensed madak shops 31. The number actually open at this present writing is—

Chandu	4
Madak	27

With reference to the feasibility of closing any of these shops, Mr. Lambert, C.I.E., the Commissioner of Police, whom I have consulted upon the subject, writes as follows :—

“ I am of opinion that, so long as opium is cultivated and sold, and so long as the possession of opium up to five tolahs weight, by private individuals for domestic use, is permitted by the law, the existence of chandu and madak shops is a necessary evil.

“ That they are an evil admits to my mind of no doubt, and a visit to the opium dens in this city would show to the inexperienced very forcibly in what way these places exercise a pernicious influence over those who resort to them.

“ Still if the licensed shops were closed, a much larger number of people would be led astray by being tempted to resort to private dens, which would at once spring up in large numbers. This would open out a new field of mischief. New temptations would be offered to officials, and the supply of the drug would still be equal to the demand, and the evil would be in no way abated.

“ The question asked by you, whether the present number of shops in Calcutta might with advantage be decreased or not, may, I think, be best answered as follows :—

“ Unless the vendors are required to provide more airy and spacious premises, I see no object to be gained by diminishing the number of shops; but if the shops and courtyards were properly constructed and reasonably spacious, so as to admit air and light, I think the number of chandu and madak shops might be diminished by one-half.”

I agree with Mr. Lambert at present in thinking that the closure of the licensed shops would lead to an increase in the number of private dens. I do not think there would be any decrease in opium smoking, and there would certainly be a large outcome of all the evils invariably attendant on an illicit trade. The subject of requiring licensees to provide airy and spacious premises is receiving my attention. The idea of promoting tea shops as a counter attraction for opium smokers does not require serious consideration. I am at present of opinion that the vice of opium smoking would be fostered rather than checked by closing licensed shops and driving smokers to secret places to satisfy their terrible craving. Were it otherwise, and could opium smoking be stopped by refusing to issue licenses for chandu and madak shops, I do not think that considerations of revenue should induce us to hesitate. I believe that even in London it has not been found practicable to close the establishments for smoking preparations of opium, and it would certainly be more difficult in Indian towns, where the number of persons who are victims to the habit is, if I am not mistaken very much larger. Under police regulations in Calcutta licensed chandu and madak shops are closed at six in the evening. The consequence of this is that after that hour there is much smoking in unlicensed places, with which my officers are unable to deal, in consequence of the concession which allows any person to possess without a license 5 tolahs weight of the drug. An excise officer enters an unlicensed shop, the dealings of which are notorious, and finds 20 or 30 persons smoking. Each of these persons professes to have purchased his drug, less than 5 tolahs, from a licensed vendor, and unless a trap is laid it cannot be proved that the keeper of the shop has made a sale. In the rare cases in which a conviction for unlicensed sale is obtained, the fine imposed by the magistrate is generally much below the fee which would be levied on a license, and consequently unlicensed dealing is found much more profitable than dealing under a license. I do not think it necessary or desirable to close the licensed shops; on the contrary, I think they should be kept open longer than they are; but I think that a more stringent law is required to enable us to suppress unlicensed shops, and also more vigorous action on the part of magistrates in dealing with convicted offenders. I have more than once brought to the notice of Government the inadequacy of the punishments inflicted. Besides these difficulties in our way, I must observe that our excise and police establishments are not strong in numbers, or in energy or integrity, and it is my experience that the only way to prevent the illicit and comparatively unrestricted consumption of intoxicating drugs is to control the trade by the issue of a carefully restricted number of licenses, raising the price of the drug artificially by means of duty and license fees as high as is practicable without driving the consumers into smuggling, and making it the interest of every licensed dealer to prevent illicit practices. While, however, it is my opinion at present that worse evils would

follow if we did not license places for opium smoking, I shall not cease to consider the matter, and shall be careful to license no more shops than are absolutely necessary to prevent the existence of illicit establishment. It is true that while these places are licensed by Government we leave it open to those who indulge in sensational and irresponsible declamation to accuse the Government of protecting and encouraging them for purposes of revenue, but I have no fear that this accusation will be endorsed by any one who will patiently and dispassionately examine the facts. So far as these provinces are concerned, it is not the case that the limitation of consumption has been subordinated to the consideration of revenue. I feel confident that by reducing the taxation on opium, or any other intoxicating drug, and by increasing the number of licenses for retail sale, I could increase the revenue to an enormous extent, whereas the policy which I am carrying out, in accordance with the wishes of the Bengal Government, is the very opposite of this. We do not reduce taxation, nor do we issue new licenses, except where we are convinced that we cannot otherwise check illicit practices, and the number of licenses issued is steadily decreasing, while the average of fees on licenses is increasing.

4. To speak of the unrestrained consumption of opium and other intoxicating drugs in these provinces under the present system is misleading in the extreme. Taking the case of opium, we find that the cultivator receives at the Opium Agency 5 rupees for every seer of his opium of a certain consistency, and every endeavour is made, though doubtless with only partial success, to prevent his disposing of any portion of his crop except to Government. The opium which he does dispose illicitly is known to be of very inferior quality. The good opium issued from the Opium Agency is sold to licensed retail vendors at fixed prices in each district, ranging from Rs. 16 to Rs. 32, according to the distance from the growing districts in which smuggling is comparatively easy. The quantity so sold, omitting fractions of a maund, and the net duty realised in the aforesaid fixed prices, has been as follows:—

	Maunds of 82 lb. avoirdupois.	Net Duty.
		Rs.
1880-81	1,763	13,95,083
1881-82	1,723	14,47,324
1882-83	1,802	15,04,097
1883-84	1,918	15,92,416
1884-85	1,876	15,60,261
1885-86	1,841	15,35,107
1886-87	1,887	15,69,842
1887-88	1,939	16,08,239
1888-89	1,925	15,98,455
1889-90	1,905	15,76,121

In the year 1889-90 the fees on licences for the retail sale of opium and of chandu and madak amounted to—

	Rs.
Opium	3,83,365
Chandu	35,216
Madak	82,825
Total	5,01,406

Rupees 5,01,406 in license fees and Rs. 15,76,121 give a total taxation on excise opium in Bengal in 1889-90 of Rs. 20,77,527, which on 1,905 maunds 22 seers amounts to an average of more than Rs. 27 per seer; and if I were to omit the more lightly taxed districts in which the plant is grown, but in which the licit consumption of opium is much smaller than elsewhere, the taxation per seer would be shown to be very much heavier. I think these figures are sufficient to show that the consumption of opium is by no means unrestricted:

5. It has been suggested that the supply of opium might be cut off altogether by prohibiting the cultivation of the poppy. That the cultivation in British India could be prevented I believe. Mr. W. Kemble, the Opium Agent of Behar, says—

“As regards your second question, I am of opinion that the cultivation of poppy could be prevented with the greatest ease. The crop is so easily distinguishable that it



can be seen from a great distance. A system of rewards to informers would soon bring illicit cultivation to the notice of the magistrate.

“The sale and consumption of the drug could not be so easily prevented. If cultivation were stopped in British India, the smuggling from Nepal and other independent States would largely increase, and would result in more demoralization than the consumption of the drug.”

Some opium is now smuggled from Nepal, though less than those interested in screening the illicit practices of our own cultivators would lead us to believe, and we know that the plant is cultivated in Independent Tipperah, while there are numerous tracts in India over which we could not prevent the cultivation. The closing of our own agency would lead to the use of smuggled opium of an inferior quality, and we must consider what the effect would be upon our own cultivators. The closing of silk filatures, and consequent cessation of cultivation of mulberry in Midnapore, has been that the “Tootiyas,” hereditary cultivators of mulberry (toot), have become the most troublesome class of professional criminals in that district. They have not taken to other departments of honest agriculture. It is not unreasonable to suppose that our opium cultivators might be similarly affected by the suppression of their industry. We have also to consider the consumers of opium in the malarious alluvial tracts which form a great proportion of the area of these provinces. The use of opium by these people is not so much a vice as a necessity. Their vegetable diet would not keep them alive without stimulants, and I doubt whether it would be for their benefit to stop their opium and drive them to ganja or spirits. On the comparatively dry laterite soil the people are spirit drinkers. On the alluvial mud they either use opium or the far more deleterious ganja. I do not believe that the prevention of the cultivation of the poppy in British India would cut off the supply of a drug which bears so high a value as opium, which the people believe to be so necessary to them, and which from its small bulk is, if the smell is disguised, very easily smuggled. I also doubt whether there is any equally efficient febrifuge within the reach of the people and whether their health would not suffer greatly if they could not procure opium. It does not appear to produce such insanity as ganja does, and, where people are as well fed as the Mahomedan ryots of Eastern Bengal, I am informed that opium smoking does not injure them. It is said to be opium smoking on insufficient food that affects the health.

6. In conclusion, I may say that I believe there has been much exaggeration as to the scenes of intoxication to be witnessed in the chandu and madak shops. As I have already said, there is none in the retail opium shops. I have visited shops in which more than a score of persons have been smoking chandu or madak without seeing any person lying intoxicated, or unable to answer my questions intelligently. I have also, however, seen persons in other shops lying asleep, and presumably intoxicated, but not many. It is, I believe, usual for the smokers of chandu, the Chinese preparation of opium, to sleep, presumably intoxicated, before leaving the premises; but in the madak shops this is by no means always the case, and I have seen many get up and go away quietly from the shop after smoking the drug. They have told me that they have no desire to sleep after it.

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No. 12.—From T. D. MACKENZIE, Esq., Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Revenue Department, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 4,911, dated 18th July 1891.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4,933, dated 18th October 1890, forwarding copies of a letter from the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, enclosing copy of the resolutions adopted by that society on the 3rd June 1890, and of a memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State by the same society, together with a reprint of the passages to which references are made in the appendix to the memorial. In paragraph 2 of the same letter this Government is requested to submit its remarks upon these papers, and to discuss the general questions raised in the memorial so far as they affect the Bombay Presidency, and especially the suggestion in paragraph 18 of the memorial regarding the grant of licenses for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises.

2. In reply I am directed to forward copies of the reports on the subject by the

Letter No. 899, dated 28th February 1891, from the Commissioner, N. D.  
 Letter No. 658, dated 21st February 1891, from the Collector of Ahmedabad, with appendices.  
 Letter No. 1,094, dated 9th March 1891, from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium, and Abkari, with appendices.  
 Letter No. 1,130, dated 14th February 1891, from the Collector of Khandesh.  
 Letter No. C.—950, dated 4th February 1891, from the Collector of Land Revenue, Customs and Opium, Bombay, with appendices.  
 Letter No. 1,825, dated 24th April 1891, from the Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium, and Abkari.  
 Letter No. 1,677, dated 21st May 1891, from the Commissioner in Sind.

officers named in the margin, and to submit for the consideration of the Government of India the following remarks.

3. The points in the memorial with which this Presidency is concerned are those raised in paragraphs 14 and 18. With reference to the former, in which it is stated that “ the revenue returns show that in Bombay the duty on opium consumed in the province, which amounted to Rs. 59,497 in 1879–80, had risen to Rs. 1,25,518 in 1888–89, having more than doubled in a period of nine years,” I am to invite attention to the statistics in paragraph 5 of the report by the Opium Commissioner and in the accompaniments thereto. The quantity of licit opium passed into consumption has risen from 63,028 lbs. in 1879–80 to 148,295 lbs. in 1888–89, while shops have increased as follows :—

	1879-80.	1888-89.
Dry opium - - -	892	1,175
Chandul and madat - - -	70	130
Bhang, ganja, &c. - - -	678	663

The increase in the licit opium sales is due, I am to observe, entirely to the measures taken to check opium smuggling, and to substitute licit opium for the contraband opium which formerly fed the bulk of the consumption. Those measures have extended not only to British territory, but the whole of the Native States within the Presidency have been gradually included within their scope, and the general result is that the retail selling price of opium has been doubled everywhere within the last 14 years, while the clandestine importations of opium from Central India and Rajputana have been materially reduced. The measures referred to were introduced for the first time in a few districts only in 1877–78, and by degrees their operation has been extended to the whole Presidency, including Sind. The progressive growth of licit consumption indicated in the statement attached to Mr. Spence's report is thus accounted for.

The increase in the number of shops licensed for the sale of dry opium results from the same causes, inasmuch as it was necessary to open shops in places where there was a demand for opium, which had previously been met from illicit sources, while the increase in the number of shops licensed for the sale of chandul and madat is in part due to the circumstance that in some districts chandul and madat were sold in 1879–80, and for some years afterwards in the same shops as dry opium, whereas of late the sales have everywhere been separated—and in part to an actual increase in the number of shops in certain localities.

4. So far as opium eating in this Presidency is concerned the Governor in Council believes that the habit is steadily declining, especially among the trading and well-to-do classes, who are still the chief consumers of the drug in the cities and throughout Gujarat and Kathiawar. The practice of giving opium to infants and young children to keep them quiet while their mothers are at work is common throughout the Presidency, and quantities of opium, considerable in the aggregate, are purchased for that purpose. The tendency of the whole action of Government has been in the direction of confining the consumption of opium to licit importations, and of raising the retail selling price. Opium eating is probably less injurious on the whole than liquor drinking, and if the price of opium were raised too high, or if it were placed out of the easy reach of people wanting it, there would be a great risk of inducing opium smuggling or of driving people to the liquor shops.

5. As regards the smoking of chandul and madat referred to in paragraph 18 of the memorial, it must be admitted that the habit is on the increase among the Musalmans and the lower classes of Hindus in several parts of the Presidency. Preparations of opium are smoked in private houses and clubs as well as in licensed shops. It is not, in the opinion of this Government, improbable that the increased resorts to chandul and madat shops, which are frequented only by the lower classes—the practice of opium smoking not being reputable according to the ideas of Indian society—is in a measure the consequence of the general raising of the prices of liquor, which has of late years

taken place. Whatever pleasurable feelings there may be in intoxication or in semi-intoxication can be induced more cheaply now in many localities in a chandul than in a liquor shop.

6. In connexion with the smoking of chandul and madat I am to invite the special attention of the Government of India to the able and careful report of Mr. James Campbell, Collector of Bombay. It will be seen that there is a marked divergence of opinion between him and Mr. James, the Commissioner, Northern Division, and it appears to the Governor in Council that the views of the former are the more to be relied upon, in that he adduces facts to prove his argument that the smoking of opium has not necessarily the vicious results attributed to it by Mr. James. Mr. Campbell proves by figures that in Bombay City at least a large majority of the frequenters of the chandul and madat shops is neither criminal nor unemployed, and, having regard to this and the reports of the other officers consulted, it is, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, difficult to accept Mr. James's sweeping assertion "that 99 out of 100 who practise it (opium smoking) are degraded and worthless, perhaps, criminal persons." As regards the charge made on page 8 of the "reprint of passages referred to in the appendix to the memorial" that the dens are made so attractive as to tempt persons who would not otherwise visit them, it is clear that so far as this Presidency is concerned the charge is without foundation.

7. As regards the closing of opium-smoking dens, although there is some reason to fear that one effect of the step will be to encourage the establishment of opium-smoking clubs, which will not be open to police supervision, as are the "dens," his Excellency in Council proposes to try the experiment of closure in some places and diminution in others.

8. The object of this Government, apart from the moral duty which rests on it to endeavour to encourage the people to detest intemperance, is to prevent the illicit consumption of opium, and any measures compatible with that object which can be shown to be effectual in decreasing the consumption, or checking the spread of the consumption of opium, will most readily be adopted.

9. I am further to mention that the Governor in Council cannot accept the opinions expressed by Mr. Frost, the Acting Collector of Ahmedabad, in paragraph 5 of his report. He was new to the district and had had no practical experience of the subject when he wrote his report, while the Deputy Collector in charge of opium at Ahmedabad has also held that appointment for but a short period. There is no reason to suppose that farmers generally have sold opium for export into foreign territory, and indeed it is difficult to understand how they could make a profit on such traffic in duty-paid opium. In the specific instance mentioned by Mr. Frost there was reason to believe that the farmer had been guilty of malpractices, and his license was therefore revoked.

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From H. E. M. JAMES, Esq., Commissioner, Northern Division, to the UNDER SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, Revenue Department, Bombay. No. 899, dated 28th February 1891.

Referring to your No. 8,069, dated 15th November 1890, I thought it desirable to ask the Collector of Ahmedabad for a plain account of the opium traffic in that district, which is almost surrounded by Native States, with a large population of Rajputs and Mahomedans, both classes addicted to opium, and the town of Ahmedabad is also unusually populous.

2. I enclose the collector's report and enclosures in original.

3. You will perceive that, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, the vice of opium smoking is increasing in the large city of Ahmedabad (130,000 inhabitants), but the revenue from it has fallen from nearly Rs. 3,600 in 1884-85 to Rs. 730 in 1890-91, the number of licensed shops having also been reduced from four to two. The apparent anomaly is easily explained. Under the existing opium rules no person can be prosecuted for being in possession of a "preparation of opium" unless it exceeds 10 tolahs in weight. Ten tolahs of chandul afford smoking for 50 persons. Thus, private smoking amongst respectable classes is spreading. Formerly a man could keep only sufficient chandul for his private wants. Now he can invite large parties, who of course secretly pay him, to his private house, where the vice is indulged in, so that only the lowest persons need go to the public shops.

4. Were the Society for the Suppression of Opium well advised, they would press upon Government an alteration of the rule, so as to render the possession of small

quantities of prepared opium illegal. Then these private parties would be suppressed, for the givers thereof would be liable to prosecution. Some respectable persons might continue to smoke privately by themselves, while the lowest and most degraded would, as now, frequent the shops, but a part of the respectable smokers would stop, or, at any rate, the extension of their numbers would be repressed.

5. In any case the figures which I have given show that Government is not only not making revenue, but losing it by opium smoking under the present rules, also that people cannot smoke to intoxication in the Ahmedabad shops owing to the diluted stuff that is offered to them. I should therefore advise myself a return to the former rule, so as to force all opium smoking to be under control. Opium smoking in India is not, as in 99 cases out of 100 in China, a harmless habit, like cigar smoking amongst Europeans. (I can testify to this from my own observations when travelling in the north of China.) In India it is a degrading vice, the mark of a debauchee, and 99 out of 100 who practise it are degraded and worthless, perhaps criminal, persons. In the ports no doubt respectable, hardworking lascars and others are to be found who indulge in it, but as a rule an opium-smoking native of India, of whatever rank of life he be, is vicious and without any sense of self-respect. The reverse is the case in China.

6. Opium eating and opium drinking are on quite a different footing. The consumption of "kusumba" or liquid opium is common, especially with Rajputs, and is sometimes carried to excess. Opium eating is a healthy practice, especially in feverish districts and in the cold weather, and its abuse is comparatively rare. The revenue from this source has increased in the Ahmedabad District along with a reduction in the number of shops from 205 to 191 and from Rs. 98,000 to Rs. 145,000 in the last ten years. This is almost entirely owing to special measures taken for the repression of smuggling from Native States over the border. The profit to Government in the opium consumed is Rs. 5 a pound or Rs. 700 a chest, which doubles the cost price of the drug, and opium is so portable that smuggling is both easy and profitable. Any increase therefore in the excise rate would only stimulate smuggling. It would not diminish consumption. Part of the increased consumption in this district is undoubtedly due to the spread of teetotalism or abstinence from spirituous liquors consequent on the spread of the tenets of the Swami Narayan sect. Classes who once drank now take opium on the sly, though that is equally prohibited by the sect.

7. Smoking of ganja or Indian hemp is almost entirely (I can only recollect meeting one or two instances to the contrary) practised by Sadus or religious ascetics, the naked so-called fakirs with matted locks and nude bodies covered with ashes, amongst whom it is almost universal. In the Ahmedabad District thousands of them pass and repass annually on their way to the sacred shrines of Dwarka or Dakor. Practising the vice from childhood, a fakir can at middle age smoke eight or ten pipes a day without inconvenience. Private persons who become addicted to it generally end their days as lunatics. Bhang, which in Gujarat is a potable preparation in hemp, is not nearly so deleterious. The most respectable merchants in Ahmedabad take it regularly in the hot weather as a refrigerant. The persons incorrectly spoken of in Indian histories and tales as "bhanged" are really persons who have smoked, not drunk, the hemp. The shops for the sale of the drug in the Ahmedabad District are 51 in number, being an increase of four in ten years. Ganja-smoking shops do not exist like chandul shops. The drug is smoked at home. The amount of the farm rose from about Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 5,000 in 1882-83 and has been almost stationary since, though in 1889-90 it rose to nearly Rs. 6,000. This increase was, as well as I recollect, due to enmity between two rival competitors for the shop.

8. I do not think that it would be an advantage to suppress all chandul shops. They exist in London, in America in large numbers, and the ostrich-like policy of ignoring the vice would not in my humble opinion answer. I would rather suppress the private opium dens and force persons who do not smoke privately at home to resort to the shops. I would reduce the amount of licit chandul to be retained by an individual to one tolah, and I would hold the master, owner, tenant or occupant of any house responsible for any gathering of two or more persons for indulgence in the vice. So far from the "legality" and publicity of the opium shops making it easier for the respectable classes to enter "them," it is precisely that which keeps them out of the shops in India. A time might of course come when chandul smoking might spread to respectable classes, and comfortable divais such as exist in China might take the place of the squalid dens now licensed. Even then I suspect Government would be helpless. But sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. I have no fear myself that the natural self-respect of natives of India

will ever be so far lost as to permit any general extension of the vice amongst respectable classes, so long as it is kept in the open. Our present policy tends to encourage it in the dark, and that is, as I have said, doing harm.

From C. E. Frost, Esq., Collector of Ahmedabad, to the COMMISSIONER, Northern Division. No. 658, dated 21st February 1891.

With reference to your No. 4,873, dated 17th November last, I have the honour to submit my report on the subject of repressing the opium trade.

2. I append the following statements :—

- A.—Showing the number of opium smoking or chandul shops, and the realisations from license fees from 1878–79 to 1890–91.
- B.—Showing the number of opium shops, the quantity of opium sold, and the duty realised during the past ten years.
- C.—Showing the number of ganja and intoxicating drug shops and the realisations during the past ten years.

#### CHANDUL SHOPS.

3. Chandul smoking appears to be the most pernicious of all uses to which opium is put, and I regret to say the habit is not less prevalent with the lower classes in Ahmedabad than elsewhere. Before the passing of Act I. of 1878 the sale of chandul was not farmed, but on its introduction and the promulgation of rules under the Act the manufacture of chandul without a license was prohibited. From Statement A it will be perceived that there are licensed chandul shops in the Ahmedabad city only. The number established in 1878 was four, and this number continued unchanged till this year (1890–91) they have been reduced to two. The farm started with a revenue of Rs. 1,326 in 1878–79, which rose to Rs. 3,600 in 1884–85; in 1885–86 the farm fetched Rs. 2,795.13.4, which dwindled down to Rs. 566.10.8 in 1888–89; in the next following year the receipts were Rs. 830.

This year (1890–91) they have fallen to Rs. 730, the number of shops being two.

4. The general opinion seems to be that private smoking is on the increase, and with this there is absolutely no means of interfering. The two remaining shops in Ahmedabad might well be closed now. The loss of revenue would be small, and it would make no difference in the amount of smoking, but it would please the so-called philanthropists in England who meddle with these matters.

I attach the opinions of Rao Bahadur Munsukhram Mulji, City Police Inspector, and Rao Saheb Ajitrai Shivdas, Opium Inspector, on the subject of the vice of opium smoking increasing as a vice. Both agree that it is, and they are officers of vast experience in the matter. I asked Messrs. Green and Bahmanji Edalji Modi to visit the chandul shops at an hour when they are most frequented by smokers, and I attach their descriptions of what they saw. Apparently the Ahmedabad smokers do not go to the length of their confrères of Northern India and Burma, but the evil is a great one nevertheless, though I see no remedy for it.

Appendices D and E.

Appendices F and G.

#### OPIMUM SHOPS.

Statement B attached furnishes talukwar statistics of the number of shops, the quantity of opium sold, and the amount realised during the past ten years. I have also added the minimum guaranteed vend for each year. Prior to 1880, opium was sold through licensed vendors, who paid certain sums for the privilege of selling it, obtaining the duty-paid opium from Government. The farm system was introduced in 1880. Under the former system the shopkeepers used to sell large quantities of smuggled opium brought in clandestinely from Native States, but under the present system the farmer guarantees to sell a fixed minimum quantity or to make up the duty on that quantity. From the statement it will be seen that up to 1884–85 the quantities sold were less than the guaranteed minimum, but even these figures must be accepted with caution, as it is suspected that much of the opium shown as sold was really exported into foreign terri-

tory. From 1885-86 the sales are larger than the quantities guaranteed with the exception of 1887-88, and it seems to me that clandestine exportation to Native States accounts for the higher rate of consumption. The "minimum vend" is year by year raised, and the farmer finds it hard to work honestly up to it, so he manipulates his so-called sales in such a way that he will not suffer exporting at cheaper rates into foreign territory all his surplus stock. There is reason to believe that the system by which the farmers effect this clandestine export is being perfected. The Kaira farmer for the past year, to save himself from the fine for not selling what he undertook to sell, attempted to dispose of his surplus by sending it in three gunny bags to foreign territory. While passing through this district the carriers were detected, but instantly threw down their burdens and made good their escape. There was every reason to believe that the farmer was the miscreant, but it could not be judicially proved. His license has, however, been revoked.

The number of shops has been reduced in the ten years from 201 to 195.

With the increase in "sales" of course rose the receipts. In 1880-81 the revenue was Rs. 88,050, in 1889-90 it has expanded to Rs. 145,841.7.0 for this district. This does not, however, seem to me an index of real increased consumption to any great extent. The Deputy Collector in charge of opium attributes it to the following causes:—

1st.—Opium farmers who have bound themselves to pay a certain sum to Government show larger sales at their shops, but in reality pass on the excess opium stealthily into adjoining territory.

2nd.—Better organisation of the opium preventive establishment and increased vigilance in the repression of opium smuggling from foreign territory compelling our people to use the farmer's opium.

On the other hand, it is said that the spread of the Swami Narayan sect has tended to increased consumption of opium owing to their total abstinence from liquor. The eating of opium is undoubtedly a vice, but it appears to be less baneful in its influence over the constitution and the purse than that of drinking.

I can think of no way of checking it except by raising the prices to the highest point it will bear. This has been long the policy of Government, but it makes smuggling a profitable pursuit. We are at present unable to cope successfully with smuggling although every effort is made to do so. The suppression of the local opium trade as desired by several well-meaning people in England would lead at once to an enormous increase in consumption as the price now is an artificial one. Also the people here will have their opium.

#### GANJA, BHANG, &C. SHOPS.

The statement (C) attached furnishes particulars of the increase or decrease in the number of licensed shops and the realisations effected. In the city there has been a decrease of seven shops as compared with the year 1880, and in the Daskroi Taluka an increase of seven, in Dhandhuka of four, and in Dholka of one, while in Sanand the number of shops has fallen from four to two. The realisations, it will be seen, swelled from Rs. 3,053.13.8 in 1880 to Rs. 5,935 in 1889-90, which is the largest income on record.

The habit of smoking ganja appears to be confined chiefly to Sadhus, Gosais, and other religious mendicants, large numbers of whom pass through this district on their way to Dwarka in Kathiawar, and consume by far the greater part of the ganja sold here. Bhang is needed by Brahmans and others chiefly during the hot season. It does not seem to be so injurious as ganja smoking. The use of neither of these drugs appears to have increased to any great extent, and at all events our present system of farming does not induce consumption of them.

#### MEASURES TAKEN FOR PREVENTING SMUGGLING.

The system of farming appears to have been introduced as a prelude to other sterner measures adopted for preventing as far as possible the illicit traffic in opium. A double staff of excise officers was thus available, the farmer's and the Government employés both working in different interests but to the same common end. Smuggling, however, though kept down to a certain extent, yet continues. Several large seizures have been made, and large numbers of offences are annually detected and successfully prosecuted. To concentrate the responsibility for the detection of opium and abkari cases this Depart-

ment was separated from the police in 1831, and the following establishments were sanctioned since that date in this district :—

1 opium inspector, Rs. 35.—Government Resolution, No. 2,863, dated 6th August 1881.

8 constables.—Government Resolution, No. 2,063, dated 2nd June 1883.

The following abkari establishment which assist in preventing opium smuggling was also sanctioned :—

1 inspector, Rs. 75+Rs. 15 horse allowance.

1 sub-inspector, Rs. 40+Rs. 10 horse allowance.

2 head constables, Rs. 12.

8 constables, Rs. 8.

1 sub-inspector, Rs. 40.—Government Resolution, No. 201, dated 17th January 1885.

} Government Resolution,  
No. 4;195, dated 20th  
July 1881.

APPENDIX A.

STATEMENT showing the NUMBER of OPIUM-SMOKING or CHANDUL SHOPS in the AHMEDABAD CITY, and the REALISATION from the LICENSE FEES during the Years 1878-79 to 1890-91.

Name of Place.	1878-79.		1879-80.		1880-81.		1881-82.		1882-83.		1883-84.		1884-85.		1885-86.		1886-87.		1887-88.		1888-89.		1889-90.		1890-91.		Remarks.
	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	No. of Shops.	Amount realised.	
Ahmedabad City	4	Rs. A. P. 1,326 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 1,180 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 1,060 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 1,800 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 3,100 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 2,000 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 3,600 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 2,795 13 4	4	Rs. A. P. 2,360 2 1	4	Rs. A. P. 1,300 0 0	4	Rs. A. P. 526 10 8	4	Rs. A. P. 830 0 0	2	Rs. A. P. 730 0 0	





## APPENDIX C.

STATEMENT showing the number of GANJA and INTOXICATING DRUG SHOPS in the different TALUKAS of the AHMEDABAD DISTRICT and REALISATIONS during the Revenue Years 1880-81 to 1889-90.

Year.	Ahmedabad City.	Daskroi Taluka, exclusive of Ahmedabad City.	Dhandbuka.	Gogha.	Deesa.	Dholka.	Virangam.	Parantij, including Modasa.	Sanand.	Total.	Realisations.	Remarks.	
1880-81	31	1	2	1	—	2	3	3	4	47	Ra. A. P. 3,053 13 8		
1881-82	27	2	3	1	—	2	4	2	3	44	3,685 11 5		
1882-83			Talukwar detail not forthcoming.								45	5,205 0 0	
1883-84										45	5,264 0 0		
1884-85	23	2	8	1	1	3	3	3	2	46	4,109 0 0		
1885-86	21	3	7	1	1	2	3	4	2	44	4,515 0 0		
1886-87	22	4	7	1	1	2	3	4	2	46	5,582 0 0		
1887-88	22	4	7	1	1	3	3	4	2	47	5,525 0 0		
1888-89	22	4	7	1	1	3	3	4	2	47	5,521 0 0		
1889-90	24	8	6	1	1	3	3	3	2	51	5,935 0 0	The increase is due to the want in some villages of Daskroi Taluka as reported by the District Abkari Inspector.	

## APPENDIX D.

OPINION of RAO BAHADUR MUNSUKRAM MULJI, Inspector of Police, Ahmedabad City.

“The vice of smoking opium as a vice is extending in the city of Ahmedabad, while that of smoking ganja and drugs is not on the increase. It is true that the number of licensed shops of smoking opium was formerly four and it has now been reduced to two, but from this it is not to be understood that the number of persons smoking opium is reduced, but on the contrary it has been increased, as each person is permitted to have ten tolas in his possession at a time without any legal restriction, and, consequently, smoking opium in private houses other than the licensed ones is largely on the increase. From my experience of about more than four years of the city of Ahmedabad, and from my personal occasional visits to the chandul shops in the city, I am led to believe that the vice of smoking opium is extending, and is the worst of all the other vices, namely, eating and drinking opium and smoking other drugs, as it does not give much strength at all, but on the contrary it makes the smoker weak and pale. The persons who have got this habit generally belong to the lower classes of the community, and most of them live upon gambling and other offences, such as petty thefts, cheating, &c.”

## APPENDIX E.

OPINION OF RAO SAHEB AJITRAJ SHIVDAS, Opium, Inspector, Ahmedabad.

“ Since the sale of chandul has been farmed out the number of chandul smokers has been on the increase. There is no doubt about it. According to my experience, extending over nine or ten years, more chandul smokers are seen now than before, and among them there are many who smoke privately, because the law allows it, persons smoking privately not being treated as offenders. This has led to the increase in the number of private gatherings of chandul smokers. I think there must be about 1,000 chandul smokers now in the whole city. Such is my surmise. Of these hardly 400 or 500 persons might be smoking at the izardar's chandul shops. The reasons are:—

“ 1. As the izardar has to make his profit to meet the expenses on account of servants, &c., and to pay the amount contracted for, he sells the chandul dear and makes it thin. It therefore does not suit the smokers. Hence all the smokers do not patronise the izardar, but go to other places where chandul is prepared privately and given for smoke.

“ 2. Persons who give chandul secretly for smoke make their chandul rather thick, and as they have no other expense to bear they sell it cheap. Hence smokers are tempted to go to them, because they cannot thereby be offenders against the law, and, consequently, there is no means of preventing them from doing so.

“ 3. There are only two ways of bringing the persons who give chandul secretly within the clutches of the law. They can be convicted on two grounds, viz., selling chandul without a license and possessing chandul in excess of 10 tolas. But both these infractions are not such as can come to the knowledge of Government servants or of persons who do not smoke, because persons who sell chandul secretly are not under the necessity of keeping more than 10 tolas in their possession. If they make half a pound of it from quarter of a pound of opium they may keep half of the preparation at the smoking haunt and the rest at some other place, whence they can draw upon when required. Thus no offence is committed until more than a quarter of a pound is kept in possession. Besides, the smokers are the customers of these people, and therefore they would not say when giving their evidence that chandul was sold to them, for fear of being refused admittance into the shops afterwards, whereby they would be compelled to smoke the dear and greatly diluted chandul of the izardar. It is, therefore, difficult that they can come within the other offence (selling opium).

“ 4. I think that to smoke chandul is the worst habit. The places where it is smoked are likely to cause sickness to a person who visits them when smokers are imbibing; still those who are addicted to it cannot do without it. The habit of smoking chandul can be dropped by eating opium, and also, perforce, if there is no one to give chandul to smoke. Therefore, if the making and giving of chandul for smoke were prohibited by law, people would be saved from ruin, and I think there will be no decrease in opium revenue. Chandul smokers become sluggish, weak, haggard, and lazy, and great miscreants. Many cunning chandul smokers after their conviction for making, smoking, and giving chandul for smoke at their own houses because of their not getting good and cheap chandul from the izardar are carrying on the trade of selling chandul secretly for smoke in such a manner as not to come within the law, but, there being no means available for catching them, such offences are left undetected. I think so.”

## APPENDIX F.

DESCRIPTION by E. F. GREEN, Esq., Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad, of his VISIT to the CHANDUL SHOPS in AHMEDABAD CITY.

“ Formerly there were four chandul shops in Ahmedabad City, viz., at Khasbazar, Pir Mahomedshah, Dariapur, and Panchkua. The latter two have been lately closed at the request of the chandul contractor. The two shops at present licensed open at sunrise and shut at 9 p.m. The daily attendance varies between 75 to 100 at Pir Mahomedshah, and 100 to 150 at Khasbazar, the daily taking in the former shop being

Rs. 4-8 to Rs. 5, and in the latter Rs. 5-8 to Rs. 7. I visited Husemia Baker's, the licensed vendor of chandul at Pir Mahomedshah, about 7 p.m. on the 20th November, and found a couple of small dirty rooms, to get into which I had to climb a steep and narrow flight of steps, occupied by about 12 persons of the lowest and worst class, two of them being prostitutes. The two rooms together could only accommodate 20 to 25 people at one time. The vendor had been about 4½ years in the shop, and he informed me that between 9 and 11 a.m. and 7 and 9 p.m. the attendance was fair, but that the whole business was dwindling away owing to private smoking parties. Turning my attention to the smokers, I found none of them at all intoxicated, and should think they could never get so for two reasons, firstly, on account of the poorness of the chandul; secondly, the want of money to procure a sufficient quantity at one time. One and all of the smokers complained of the poorness of the stuff they got, and inveighed against the private smoking parties. The vendor's excuse for preparing weak chandul was that he had to make good Rs. 730 for license fee, besides house-rent, &c., per annum.

"2. I visited this shop again next evening a little later, and found about the same number of persons, one or two persons being the same as seen by me the previous evening. Both evenings I also visited Ramjan Nathu's shop, which resembles a very dirty coachhouse with a dirty stable-yard, with big doors leading out into the Khasbazar. This man had been in business about 7½ years. The information obtained from the vendor and smokers was the same as above. The first evening there were about 22 persons and the second 27, two or three prostitutes each evening. If the whole yard were occupied, probably 50 people might be accommodated at one time. Both shops are frequented by Mahomedans, Hindus, Lodhas, dyers, goldsmiths, and Marwari prostitutes."

#### APPENDIX G.

DESCRIPTION by KHAN BAHADUR B. E. MODI, District Deputy Collector, Ahmedabad, of the CHANDUL SHOPS in AHMEDABAD CITY visited by him.

"I visited the two shops in the City at 8 o'clock in the night. In the shop near the Hope Market I found 26 persons, one of whom was a woman. They were mostly Mahomedans, but there was a fair number of low caste Hindus. One was a Shrivak Wania. None of them were in anything like complete stupor, but they all lay too close to each other. One dose consists of a quarter tola of chandul, that is, opium mixed with water, and costs one anna and four pies. The people complained that owing to the larger quantity of water they could not obtain sufficient intoxication. The farmer makes about two tolas of liquid chandul from one tola of opium. The price of one tola of opium is about five annas, and for every five annas spent on opium the farmer gets ten annas eight pies. He pays out of these profits the sum for which the farm is given to him. About 100 persons, speaking roughly, smoke daily at this shop, and about 75 at the other shop. At this other shop when I visited there were 16 persons. One was a Bania mukadam of a cotton mill; he had been induced by a Mahomedan mill-hand to taste the pleasures of opium.

"There was a bad smell in the first house owing to the presence of a urinal and on account of the spittings of the people; in the other shop it was not so bad. The atmosphere in both the places was rather heavy on account of the smoking. There are one or two sweetmeat sellers, sometimes sugarcane sellers, in these chandul shops, for people must eat something after the smoke."

From J. K. SPENCE, Esq., Acting Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium, and Abkari, to the CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, Bombay, Revenue Department. No. 1,094, dated 9th March 1891.

I have the honour to offer the following remarks with reference to the papers forwarded with Government endorsement No. 8,070, dated 15th November last. I have taken the liberty of retaining the papers, as copies are probably available in the Secretariat. If not, the papers will be returned on application being made for them.

2. The general questions raised in the papers are the following :—

- (1.) That it is an established fact that the opium vice is spreading throughout India.
- (2.) That licensed opium dens should be closed.
- (3.) That the sale of opium should be limited to that necessary for medical purposes.
- (4.) That serious hindrance is caused to missionary work by the connexion of Government with the opium trade, which is immoral and contrary to the Gospel of Christ.
- (5.) That officials are liable to be careless in acting up to the principle of obtaining the maximum of duty with the minimum of consumption.

3. The points that more especially affect Bombay are :—

- (1.) That the figures regarding the number of shops licensed for the sale of opium and other intoxicating drugs are not available to show whether the number of such licenses has increased or otherwise, but that the increase in revenue bears out the view that it has increased.
- (2.) The description of the shops for the sale of opium, chandul, and madat in the cities of Bombay and Poona.

4. If the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade has made up its mind that the spread of the opium vice is an established fact, I fear that there is no use in resorting to any arguments regarding the matter. The first point that arises is whether the taking of opium in moderation in any shape is a vice. If that question is begged and the increase in the number of shops and the amount of licit opium consumed is taken as incontrovertible evidence that the actual consumption has increased, then there is nothing further to be said in the matter. I append statements showing the number of shops for the sale of opium in its various forms and of other intoxicating drugs during the last 10 years in each district in the Presidency. The statement also shows the number of pounds of licit opium that passed into consumption in each year in each district. No accurate statistics are available of the amount of intoxicating drugs other than opium that passed into consumption.

5. The statements show the following facts :—The number of shops for the sale of opium has increased from 872 in 1879–80 to 1,175 in 1888–89. In the same way the number of shops for the sale of chandul and madat has varied from 67 in 1880–81 to 131 in 1887–88. The number of shops for the sale of intoxicating drugs other than opium shows a very small variation from 614 in 1883–84 to 663 in 1888–89. These shops supplied a total population of 16,454,414, so that in 1888–89 there was one opium shop to about 14,000 people; in 1887–88 there was one chandul or madat shop to 125,606 people, and in 1888–89 there was one shop for intoxicating drugs to 24,818 people. The consumption of licit opium for the whole Presidency has risen from 63,028 lbs. in 1879–80 to 150,435 lbs. in 1886–87. The consumption in the latter year was less than 15 oz. per head of population for the whole Presidency. In the Ahmedabad district, where the consumption was higher than anywhere else, the consumption per head of population in 1888–89 was less than 54 oz. It must be remembered that this was for opium in every shape or form, and the census figures are those for 1881, so that nothing has been allowed for increase in population. I hardly dare to hope that even yet the figures show anything like the amount actually consumed.

6. Regarding the point whether opium taken in moderation in certain shapes is an unmixed evil, there is certainly diversity of opinion, but the point is one that must be fought out by medical experts, with a knowledge of Indian conditions and the form and amount in which opium is generally taken by habitual consumers. To show that there is one eminent authority in favour of the moderate consumption of opium, I need only point to Sir W. J. Moore, K.C.I.E., late Surgeon General with the Government of Bombay, who has lately written an article in praise of opium.

7. As to whether the consumption of opium in any form is increasing, I can only say that my own experience as a district officer of many years' service does not bear out the supposition, and in this I am generally borne out by the opinion of the present collectors. I hope it is hardly necessary for me to put down all the commonplace arguments that could be brought forward against the principles enunciated by the society. I will therefore content myself with giving extracts from the reports of officers who have to practically administer the country.

The Collector of Broach writes :—

“The consumption of opium in the ordinary manner is pretty general throughout this district, but the taking of it in excess is the exception, not the rule. I think it far more

probable than not that in a low-lying country like this, with creeks and margins to creeks running in all directions, and continually alternating between wet and damp, the taking of opium in moderation is conducive to the maintenance of health, and that the rate of mortality would increase were the drug prohibited. I think that to those who are exposed to the malarious vapours that exist here over a very large portion of the area of the district for about half the year, the use of either opium or alcohol in some form is desirable, and the use is far more likely to turn into abuse in the case of alcohol than in that of opium.

“The opium consumed in the ordinary way is not usually consumed in the shops where it is sold, but taken away and consumed gradually as required, and to take away from a large portion of the population a drug which they use in moderation and believed to be a necessity of life, would be a serious step.”

The Collector of Kaira writes :—

“It is true that the number of shops licensed for retail sale of opium has increased during the last ten years, but I think they do no more than afford a reasonable facility to the public for purchasing the drug, and in no way tend to increase the aggregate sale or to attract additional customers.

“I have no reason to suppose that the consumption of the drug is in any portion of the district on the increase, although I was here 20 years ago ; and, if Government sells more itself, this is because the public find it more difficult to obtain illicit or smuggled opium.

“My own opinion is that the policy of Government in this district, if anything, checks the consumption of opium.

“There are no shops licensed for the sale of chandul or madat or any other preparation of opium for consumption on the premises only.”

The Collector of Nasik writes :—

“The important question at issue is whether the sale of opium should be forbidden except for medical purposes, and on this point I cannot express my opinion too clearly or too plainly. It would be in the last degree impolitic to stop the opium trade as it exists now, and any wholesale measure which had this end in view would have the most cruel and the most oppressive consequences. It could no more be justified than could an Act to stop the liquor trade in England.

“I do not think that it is necessary that I should criticise the reprint further. My own opinion is—and it is formed after 23 years’ service actually among the people and in nearly every part of the Bombay Presidency and of the Mysore Province—

- “1. That opium smoking or eating as practised by the vast majority of people who use the drug is not carried to excess.
- “2. That the moderate consumption of opium is no more harmful than the moderate consumption of liquor, and in many cases, like the moderate consumption of liquor, is distinctly beneficial.
- “3. That the increased revenue from opium is due (*a*) to the more effectual steps taken to prevent smuggling, (*b*) to the increasing population, and (*c*) to the increasing prosperity of the people which gives them more money to spend on luxuries.
- “4. That the ‘opium sot’ is a much less harmful person to his family and his neighbours and the community generally than the drunkard ; and
- “5. That Government even if it tried could no more prevent the consumption of opium than the consumption of drink. It would be useless to attempt to achieve either end : it would be worse than useless. It would in my opinion be a blunder, for I can see no weight in the reasoning that would prevent the vast bulk of the population indulging moderately in the opium luxury, simply because a very small minority harm themselves by indulging in it to excess.

“As regards those parts of India which I know well, and those alone, it is a gratuitous assumption that opium smoking causes ‘widespread misery and demoralisation,’ and so also is it that ‘the British connexion with the opium trade’ is a ‘serious hindrance to missionary work.’ Apart from the fact that the Government of India has nothing to do with missionary work, I have never once in 23 years heard a single missionary—and I have met dozens—specially refer to or quote the opium trade as interfering with his endeavours. The proposition is true in the abstract, no doubt, but in the same manner that the abstract proposition is true that the existence of public houses in the slums of London interferes with Christian effort there.”

The Collector of Surat writes :—

“Opium in its raw state for eating or drinking is not consumed on the premises at which it is bought, but carried away in small quantities for use at home. It is comparatively productive of little harm, and the remarks of the chairman of the society appear to be directed not so much against it as against the preparations for smoking, which are, as I have shown above, becoming less popular. Even such as it is, its use is certainly not increasing. The number of shops in the district stands at the same figure as 10 years ago, viz., 20. On the whole there is nothing in this district to justify the strictures which have been passed on the policy of Government.”

The Collector of Khandesh has written so temperate and sensible report that I append it *in extenso*.

8. Although the society seems to be opposed to the recognition of opium consumption in any form whatever, its arguments are more specifically directed against the chandul shops, the demoralization and deterioration arising from which are graphically described. Regarding these shops, including those for the sale of madat and other intoxicating drugs, I again quote from the reports of the collectors :—

The Collector of Broach writes :—

“Whether the habit of opium smoking and ganja smoking is increasing in this district I am not able to say with certainty, but I think it is not improbable. In 1888–89 the imports of ganja were 59 Bengal maunds, while in 1889–90 they were 77. The habit is without any doubt injurious, and, though I have no desire to be thought to sympathise with the hysterical sentiments of Exeter Hall, or to accept its very general deductions from a few facts sensationally represented, I should be glad to have the sale of ganja gradually but rapidly abolished, and also the sales of chandul, madat, and other preparations of opium used for smoking. Those who now smoke opium would prepare it in their own houses, but the habit would not spread to other people, at any rate, to the extent that it would now. Ganja smokers might be registered and in taluka towns supplied only from a Government office, and none but registered persons would be allowed to purchase, and those only enough for their own consumption. As they died off, the sale would be absolutely stopped.

“It would be necessary to forbid by law the use of any room or place for smoking ganja or opium except by the owner or occupier of the premises, or the shopkeeper might hire a separate room for the purpose near his shop.

“I see no reason why it should not be forbidden to have opium consumed on the premises at shops where it is sold.”

The Collector of Sholapur writes :—

“I can hardly conceive anyone seriously advocating the continuance of license to sell opium to be consumed on the premises. Such dens are, I believe, happily unknown in the mofussil.

“I am not aware what the provisions of the Pharmacy Act are, but I think that opium should only be sold as a medicine and by medical practitioners with licenses. It should be prohibited in its various forms as an intoxicant. It is chiefly used here by very young children, to whom it is given partly as seporific and partly on the, surely erroneous, presumption that it is good for them.

“As to ganja its growth and sale as an intoxicant should be prohibited.”

The Collector of Poona forwards the following report from the City Magistrate, the Collector being of opinion that the experiment of refusing licenses for chandul and madat shops might be tried :—

“There are three chandul and four madat shops in the city of Poona. They are kept open daily from 6 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., and are frequented by both men and women of bad character at all hours of the day, where they smoke preparations of opium that are prepared for them by the keepers of the shops. The City Magistrate personally inspected some of these shops without previous notice on the morning of the 19th ultimo, and found men and boys, including some high caste but fallen men, smoking to intoxication. These shops though situated in houses, the operations are generally carried on in the innermost and darkest portions thereof, and are dens for bad characters. The smoking of these preparations greatly demoralizes and debilitates persons addicted to the habit. The City Magistrate would strongly recommend that no licenses be granted in future for chandul and madat shops in Poona city.

The Collector of Satara writes :—

“So far as my experience goes the shops licensed for the retail sale of opium are conducted in a proper way, and the opium sold is used chiefly for medical purposes.

Native mothers are much addicted to administering opium pills to their children when they are fretful, and when it is necessary for the mothers to leave the children behind, when they go to their work, but it would be very difficult to interfere with such a practice, although we know it to be deleterious. When the mothers are better educated they will see the danger of the habit, and meanwhile anyone who administers opium to a child in such a way as to endanger its life can be punished for doing a rash and negligent act.

“As regards the suggestion made in paragraph 18 of the memorial to close the opium dens or shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises, I must state that, until I read these papers, I was unaware that such opium dens existed in Bombay. I certainly have not heard of them in any district in which I have served. I am respectfully of opinion that licenses should not be issued for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises. The vice of opium smoking evidently possesses a fearful fascination, when once it is acquired, and its effects are deadly, depriving the victim of all moral resolution. With these facts made palpable it is a serious thing for Government to offer any facility for acquiring the vice, by licensing a shop, where anyone is at liberty to make a trial.

“In the Satara District no license for the sale of chandul and madat has been issued for two years.”

The Collector of Nasik writes :

“Chandul, madat, and majum are used by a very small class only, and I do not think any real hardship would be inflicted if the sale of them were forbidden.

“Bhang and ganja are much more widely consumed, and I am not prepared on the evidence before me to recommend that all bhang and ganja shops should be closed.”

The Collector of Surat writes :—

“The use of chandul and madat is confined in this district to the city of Surat. They were first introduced there 17 or 18 years ago, the former by some Chinese settlers and the latter by a fakir from the Nizam's dominions. At first the shops were kept secret and were under no sort of Government supervision; consequently the use, especially of chandul, increased rapidly. At the same time when the attention of the collector was first drawn to the practice as many as 200 persons had become confirmed smokers of this preparation. Since it has been confined to recognised shops, or, in other words, dragged into the open light of day, the number of devotees has decidedly diminished, and the vice seems in a fair way of being stamped out altogether. The number of chandul shops was five in 1879-80. In 1881-82 it dropped to four, in 1883-84 to three, and in 1885-86 to two, at which it for the present remains. These figures represent a decrease in the actual consumption as the license still holds good for seven, but the farmer does not find it worth his while to open them. The madat shops have numbered two all along. Having personally visited one shop of each class at the most frequented time in the evening, I can testify to their not being overcrowded. About a dozen customers were in each. A still more certain test would be the quantities of opium issued to chandul and madat shops. If they can be procured for the last 10 years they shall be sent hereafter, but at present I am only able to give the figures for two years. They are—

	lbs.
In 1888-89 - - - -	64
In 1889-90 - - - -	28

“All these facts suggest a fair inference that the publicity of recognised shops tends to deter from the practice all except those who are already too far gone to care for public opinion, while the supposed secrecy of an illicit trade tends to attract many less callous customers.

9. The Collector of Bombay has written so full a report regarding the city that I forward it in original, and will only supplement Mr. Campbell's remarks with the results of my own experience. Without notice, I visited one shop for the sale of dry opium, two shops where chandul was smoked on the premises, and one where madat was the intoxicant. There is no doubt the sale at the dry opium shop was very brisk, but the opium was purchased in very small quantities, a great many of the purchasers being women, who openly avowed that the drug was for the purpose of quieting their children. It is well known that this practice is most common, and though there can be little doubt that it is deleterious I do not see how it can be interfered with. If it led to the results indicated by the society, that children dosed in this way were bound to become confirmed opium consumers in after life, there would hardly be an adult in India that would be free from the habit. The practice is given up when children are able to take care of



themselves, and the experience of most officers will tell them at how early an age the native infant among the poorer classes can be left to itself. The chandul shops may not have been in full blast when I saw them about 6 p.m., but I saw about 50 persons in each shop. There were no women and no children. I saw no immodest behaviour, and nothing to attract customers. Everything was quiet and business-like, but sordid and grimy. There was no mental or physical demoralization or deterioration that I could see. Two or three men were evidently sleeping off the effects of the drug, but were easily aroused and answered questions. In both establishments I was asked and advised to close such places, showing that the inmates had clear perceptions that mischief was caused. I had one example to show that the habit is not so strong that it cannot be shaken off. One middle-aged Mahomedan told me that he had been a smoker for 20 years. He showed no signs of deterioration in any way, and was a clean, respectable well-fed man. It appeared that his avocations called him away from Bombay for some months of every year at long intervals. When he thus went away he missed his chandul for some days, but found no difficulty in doing without it, though he always took to it again on his return. Now anyone can get dry opium anywhere and can easily learn to make it into chandul, and if a confirmed smoker was too lazy or too indifferent to supply himself, the habit can hardly have the fatal and ineradicable fascination described by the society. On the whole I should say that a chandul den in the worst quarter of Bombay was a far more respectable and unalluring place than a gin palace in the east end of London. The madat shop struck me as having nothing particular to be said against it.

10. I will therefore sum up the conclusions I have arrived at from my own experience and from the reports I have received as follows:—

- (1.) It has not been shown that the consumption of dry opium in moderation is deleterious, and we should have no more right to interfere with the liberty of the subject and stop its consumption than we should have to stop the consumption of liquor or tobacco.
  - (2.) There is nothing to show that the consumption of opium is spreading; more licit opium is consumed owing to better arrangements for the prevention of the use of illicit opium, to increase of population, and to improvement in the prosperity of the people.
  - (3.) The use of chandul and madat is confined to such a small proportion of the population that it is a question whether it is worth while to keep up licensed shops for the sale and consumption of these preparations on the premises. If, however, the shops were abolished there would be no diminution in the consumption of the drugs, as they would be resorted to in private or in organised clubs, and it would be better that such shops should be under Government supervision and control. If they are released from control, a large preventive establishment will be necessary, and there will be an increased number of prosecutions causing discontent and dissatisfaction at interference with private rights.
  - (4.) The same remarks apply to intoxicating drugs other than those prepared from opium. The revenue derived from the sale of such drugs is hardly worth consideration, but a certain number of people will use them, and it is better that the use should be under supervision and control.
  - (5.) The religious question should not be introduced into any discussion of this kind.
  - (6.) It has not been shown that officials in any part of the Presidency have been fostering the sale and consumption of opium in any shape or form with a view of increasing the revenue. There can be little doubt that in spite of all efforts illicit opium is still largely consumed, and the Government returns show nothing like the actual consumption, nor does Government realise the full revenue that it ought to.
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STATEMENT showing the CONSUMPTION of LICIT OPIUM in each of the under-mentioned Districts of the BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, including SIND, during the Revenue Years from 1879-80 to 1888-89.

Districts.	Popu-lation.	1879-80.	1880-81.	1881-82.	1882-83.	1883-84.	1884-85.	1885-86.	1886-87.	1887-88.	1888-89.	Remarks.
		lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	
Bombay	775,196	9,246	11,125	10,760	11,791	11,537	12,015	15,532	17,088	16,003	21,792	
Ahmedabad	856,324	10,139	20,465	17,017	22,040	23,760	25,327	27,783	26,087	25,541	28,976	
Kaira	804,800	8,282	10,063	9,290	11,765	11,658	10,994	13,136	10,310	12,375	13,750	
Panch Mahals	256,479	3,170	3,780	2,700	2,020	2,718	2,700	2,596	2,251	2,471	2,340	
Broach	320,036	6,440	9,879	8,807	10,463	11,739	12,333	13,507	11,799	13,054	9,805	
Surat	614,198	2,326	3,406	3,531	3,920	3,820	3,692	4,693	3,975	4,335	3,659	
Thana	807,367	692	1,103	1,299	1,589	1,636	1,337	1,688	1,764	1,400	1,312	
Nasik	781,206	1,385	1,923	2,104	3,474	4,498	5,805	5,557	5,084	5,040	5,516	
Khandesh	1,237,231	1,576	2,771	6,093	6,115	9,588	10,282	11,246	11,301	11,672	11,460	
Amednagar	761,288	974	1,070	2,499	5,404	6,782	7,707	8,687	10,503	10,414	10,175	
Poona	900,621	1,305	5,199	5,852	7,206	8,550	8,960	9,332	11,104	9,509	8,676	
Sholapur	582,487	762	1,187	2,063	4,196	5,220	6,942	8,140	8,777	6,360	6,553	
Satara	1,062,350	907	1,252	1,207	1,815	2,177	2,806	4,023	4,248	4,538	4,519	
Belgaum	804,014	748	652	730	840	720	718	1,271	943	709	675	
Dharwar	882,997	280	331	330	424	408	533	660	604	686	703	
Bijapur	638,463	124	140	190	420	335	312	378	398	444	399	
Kanara	421,840	106	103	113	116	137	130	170	192	161	121	
Ratnagiri	997,000	101	173	161	181	190	190	216	218	207	238	
Kolaba	482,830	244	261	320	320	337	679	657	607	676	696	
Karachi	478,638	2,216	2,290	2,599	2,633	3,426	3,578	4,723	4,863	3,353	4,503	
Hyderabad	937,068	4,009	4,537	5,634	7,100	6,051	7,185	8,273	9,137	10,034	9,824	Includes figures for Thar and Parkar.
Shikarpur	977,167	1,158	1,003	1,592	2,031	2,103	2,312	2,633	2,010	2,459	2,633	Includes figures for Upper Sind Frontier.
Total	16,454,414	63,923	83,078	87,263	108,533	117,440	127,871	145,170	150,434	142,324	148,295	

NOTE.—The figures given in this statement include opium manufactured into chandul and madat.

J. K. SPENCE,  
Acting Commissioner of Customs,  
Salt, Opium, and Abkari.

STATEMENT showing separately the NUMBER of SHOPS licensed for the SALE of OPIUM and CHANDUL and MADAT in the under-mentioned Districts of the BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, including SIND, during the Revenue Years from 1879-80 to 1888-89.

Districts.	1879-80.		1880-81.		1881-82.		1882-83.		1883-84.		1884-85.		1885-86.		1886-87.		1887-88.		1888-89.		Remarks.
	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	
Bombay	9	*18	10	*18	10	*20	10	*20	10	*20	11	*20	11	*20	11	*20	11	*20	11	*20	* Equal number of chandul and madat shops, which are sold in Bombay separately. † No shops. Sales managed departmentally. ‡ Chandul and madat were sold at opium shops during these years. § Information not available.  Information regarding opium and chandul shops will be supplied when received.
Ahmedabad	312	4	201	4	162	4	206	4	165	4	176	4	179	4	175	4	186	4	200	4	
Kaira	†	—	112	—	108	—	118	—	134	—	127	—	137	—	141	—	154	—	156	—	
Panch Mahala	42	—	41	—	41	—	41	—	45	—	37	—	37	—	34	—	32	—	33	—	
Brosch	21	—	21	—	47	—	49	—	59	1	49	—	50	—	49	—	50	1	51	1	
Surat	20	7	20	7	20	6	20	6	21	5	21	5	21	4	19	4	20	4	20	4	
Thana	11	3	14	3	15	3	15	3	15	5	15	7	15	7	17	6	18	6	18	6	
Nasik	36	2	31	1	31	5	35	4	40	4	40	7	41	7	41	7	41	8	40	8	
Khandesh	65	25	61	24	60	23	63	24	65	25	67	29	68	31	68	34	67	38	71	37	
Ahmednagar	24	4	24	4	24	4	30	4	30	4	33	4	41	4	44	4	46	4	46	3	
Poona	43	†	39	†	41	†	41	†	44	8	44	8	46	8	47	19	50	15	49	14	
Sholapur	8	†	18	†	19	†	19	†	36	§	38	2	42	3	43	4	42	4	42	6	
Satara	27	2	28	2	28	2	28	2	28	2	30	2	30	2	36	3	36	4	36	4	
Belgaum	6	6	6	1	6	—	6	2	7	3	7	3	12	3	12	4	13	4	16	5	
Dharwar	9	§	14	§	17	§	18	§	18	§	20	§	23	§	23	2	23	2	25	2	
Bijapur	8	2	8	2	8	2	9	2	9	8	12	4	14	3	14	3	15	3	16	3	
Kanara	7	—	7	—	7	—	7	—	9	1	9	—	10	—	10	—	10	—	10	—	
Ratnagiri	5	—	7	—	7	—	7	—	7	—	9	—	8	—	8	—	8	—	8	—	
Kolaba	8	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	9	1	
Karachi	89	†	90	†	90	†	90	†	90	4	90	4	90	4	90	4	90	4	90	4	
Hyderabad	92	†	99	†	99	†	96	†	98	3	98	3	95	3	96	3	96	3	105	3	
Shikarpur	50	†	66	†	70	†	61	†	64	6	65	6	65	6	74	6	62	6	62	6	
Thar and Parkar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	46	—	46	—	46	—	46	—	46	—	46	—	
Upper Sind Frontier	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19	—	16	—	22	—	15	—	14	—	15	—	
<b>Total</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>919</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1,068</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>1,112</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>1,175</b>	<b>130</b>	

J. K. SPENCE,

Acting Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium, and Abkari.

STATEMENT showing the NUMBER of SHOPS licensed for the SALE of INTOXICATING DRUGS in each of the under-mentioned Districts of the BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, excluding SIND and ADEN, during the Revenue Years from 1879-80.

Districts.	Population.	1879-80.	1880-81.	1881-82.	1882-83.	1883-84.	1884-85.	1885-86.	1886-87.	1887-88.	1888-89.
Bombay	773,196	168	137	137	100	84	84	79	73	76	79
Ahmedabad	856,324	51	48	44	46	46	46	44	47	47	47
Kaira	804,800	14	9	10	11	11	11	11	12	10	10
Panch Mahals	255,479	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	3	4	3
Broach	326,930	7	8	6	8	9	8	8	8	8	12
Surat	614,198	26	26	24	25	24	23	26	26	26	26
Thana	807,367	21	20	18	18	18	17	18	18	20	22
Nasik	781,206	30	43	39	39	40	43	43	43	44	44
Khandesh	1,237,231	87	83	101	108	104	106	106	106	110	108
Ahmednagar	761,288	23	19	22	29	29	29	32	33	34	38
Poona	900,621	41	39	41	40	40	40	40	49	47	47
Sholapur	582,487	32	24	29	23	28	32	37	44	37	36
Satara	1,062,350	35	38	40	34	38	33	35	49	31	31
Belgaum	864,014	40	40	39	39	40	43	38	37	42	42
Dharwar	882,907	36	36	40	41	39	39	40	45	45	44
Bijapur	633,498	35	35	30	35	32	32	33	33	33	36
Kanara	421,840	15	15	15	15	15	17	19	19	19	17
Ratnagiri	997,090	15	8	5	9	8	10	15	14	8	11
Kolaba	482,880	12	7	8	8	10	10	10	10	10	10
Total	14,040,650	678	639	651	632	614	628	637	659	651	663

From W. W. LOCH, Esq., Collector of Khandesh, to the COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, SALT, OPIUM, and ABKARI. No. 1,130, dated 14th February 1891.

With reference to your memorandum No. 7,040 of the 8th December last, forwarding for report a correspondence on the subject of the increased use of opium and intoxicating drugs in this country, I have the honour to state that it is very difficult for an official to ascertain whether the use of these things is really on the increase. I know that the number of opium and chandul shops has increased, and that the amount of opium licitly sold is much larger than it was; but I also know that much more attention has been paid of late years to the repression of opium smuggling than was the case formerly, and I have no means of gauging how far the difference in licit consumption is due to these precautions and how far to opium being really more freely used. Again, I am aware that the opium smuggling trade is by no means stopped, but I have naturally no way of ascertaining how much opium is smuggled into the district.

2. That the consumption of opium is having any bad effects on the people of agricultural districts like this, I do not believe. I have served for more than six years in Khandesh, and it is more than 19 years since I first came to the district, and I think that, if the habit of taking opium was largely on the increase, I must have noticed it. I have mixed with people of every-caste from every part of the district, and I do not think opium eaters, that is, persons who take opium to excess, will be found in any numbers except among the Musalmans, and a few of the north country castes.

3. I have asked several of the native officers who know Khandesh well and several private gentlemen for their opinions. (1) as to the increase in the use of opium, and (2) as to its being more frequently given to children, and (3) as to its increased use as chandul and madat. The general result of their views on the first point is that there is an increased use of opium among the Musalmans and Wanjaras and two or three castes from North India. Some of those asked, however, do not consider that the use has increased.

4. On the second point there is rather more difference of opinion, some gentlemen considering that opium is not more frequently given to infants than before. The majority, however, think that it is more frequently given, especially among the Kunbis, and one answer attributes this fact to the greater number of women employed all day away from home at cotton-ginning factories. I think that it is probable that the employment of women at factories may tend to increase the habit of giving opium to infants whom their mothers wish to keep quiet while they are away or are at work.

5. As to the third point, it appears to be universally believed that chandul and madat smoking has become more common among Musalmans and some of the lower castes.

6. The returns prepared in my office show that in the 10 years preceding the introduction of the minimum guaranteed vend system, i.e., between 1879-80 and 1888-89, the number of opium shops rose from 65 to 71, and the amounts bid for the right to sell

from Rs. 14,423 to Rs. 46,526. I cannot give the amounts of opium issued to the shops. There are now 103 opium shops, the number having recently been increased in order to try and check smuggling at the weekly bazars. The contractor has bound himself to sell 16,872 lbs. a year, but he does not sell so much.

7. As to madat and chandul shops, the number in the past 11 years has varied between 25 and 37, and the sums bid have varied from Rs. 2,761 in 1880-81 to Rs. 9,620 in 1888-89. I think that these figures will show that the practice of chandul and madat smoking has not got a serious hold of this district.

8. The number of bhang and ganja shops has varied in the last five years from 101 to 104, the former being the number in 1889-90. The sums bid have risen from Rs. 4,275 to Rs. 5,944, notwithstanding the decrease in the number of shops. There were also 14 majum shops last year for which Rs. 227 were bid.

9. It is with some hesitation that I turn to the question of the possibility of making alterations in our excise system to check the use of opium and intoxicating drugs. Reading the extracts printed in the selections forwarded by the Government of India, it strikes me that the gentlemen who penned the highly coloured accounts of opium dens must have been shown the worst haunts in large towns, and that they and those who think with them inveigh against the use of opium much as teetotallers at home attack the use of spirits and beer and wine because of the evils of the gin palaces of our great cities. I am not prepared to admit that the use of opium in moderation is more harmful than the use of whisky. Every one who has served in Gujarat must have seen many sturdy Rajputs who took their opium regularly and were none the worse for it. That opium taken in excess is injurious I am willing to admit, but unless it can be shown that the abuse of opium is increasing I do not see that Government are called on to take any steps in the matter; besides, the question is a very difficult one. Thousands of people in Malwa and other parts of India look to the opium crop for their support, and the cultivation of the poppy cannot be stopped without causing very serious distress. As long as it is cultivated it will be used. Allowing that Government can give up its opium revenue, the only result of the remission of the duty and the withdrawal of Government supervision would be a great increase in the consumption, which would not benefit the people nor, I presume, satisfy the Anti-opium Society. Again, if Government increase the duty on opium and diminish the number of licensed shops, the licit sale will no doubt decrease, but illicit sale would become more vigorous, and no one who has not seen something of the methods of smuggling can have any idea how hard it is to check.

10. I do not think that there is anything to be said in favour of chandul and madat smoking, or the use of bhang and ganja. As I have already stated, I do not think that the former habit has a serious hold of this district; the income derived from the shops is not large, and if they were all closed no great inconvenience would be caused. There would of course be the chance of illicit shops being set up, but the number of these would not be great, nor would they be largely attended.

11. Ganja is grown in this district, and I believe in other Deccan districts, and if Government consider that its use should be stopped the cultivation of the plant would have to be forbidden by law, and the shops could then be closed. Small quantities would no doubt be smuggled from native States, but the consumption would not be large, for bhang is a rather bulky article, and not so easy to carry as opium.

FROM J. M. CAMPBELL, Esq., C.S., C.I.E., Acting Collector of Land Revenue, Customs, and Opium, Bombay, to the COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, SALT, OPIUM, and ABEKARI, Bombay. No. C-950, dated 4th February 1891.

I have the honour to submit the report on the alleged increase use of opium and on the management of the opium-smoking houses in Bombay called for in your letters No. 6,781,\* dated 27th November 1890, and No. 99, dated 16th January 1891.

2. At paragraph 14 of the memorial which accompanied your letter of the 27th November, the memorialists notice the increase in the Bombay opium revenue during the last nine years, and express the fear that the growth of the revenue points to a great increase in the facilities for opium eating and for opium smoking.

3. It is true that during the nine years ending 1889-90 the use of licit opium in Bombay City has greatly increased. The accompanying statement (Appendix B.) shows a rise in sales from 10,730 lbs. in 1881-82 to 20,477 lbs. in 1889-90. At

the same time it does not follow that, because more illicit opium is used, the practice either of eating or of smoking opium has spread. During the nine years in question the accompanying return (Appendix A.) shows that no addition has been made to the number of opium shops or smoking houses. The dry opium shops have increased from 10 to 11, the chandul-smoking houses have remained unchanged at 10, the madat-smoking houses have fallen from 10 to 9. During these years the Government duty on opium has remained unchanged. No changes have been made with the object of cheapening licit opium or pushing its sale.

4. How often, it may be asked, has the use of licit opium so greatly increased? The answer is mainly by reducing the consumption of illicit opium. The details (in Appendix B.) of the use of licit opium during the nine years ending 1889-90 show the addition of 9,747 pounds to be almost entirely due to two large items, an increase of 5,000 lbs. between 1884 and 1886, and an increase of 4,000 lbs. between 1888 and 1890. The licit increase of about 5,000 lbs. between 1884 and 1886 was due to the introduction of the Central Opium Warehouse system in 1885-86. The Opium Administration Reports for 1884-85 and 1885-86 show so notable a decline in opium wastage since the opening of the Central Warehouse as to prove that under the former practice of storage in scattered private godowns 16,800 lbs. of opium, on an average, passed yearly into illicit use. There is no reason to doubt that the bulk of this illicit opium was used in Bombay City. Even supposing only two thirds of the illicit opium was used in Bombay, the quantity would be 11,200 lbs. a year, that is, more than the total average licit consumption during the five years (1880-85) preceding the opening of the Central Warehouse. The returns show during the five years ending 1884-85 an average consumption of 11,005 lbs. of licit opium, of which, on an average, 7,880 lbs. were used dry, 2,566 lbs. were smoked as chandul, and 560 lbs. were smoked as madat. In the five years since the opening of the Central Warehouse the average licit consumption compared with the licit consumption in the five preceding years has risen from 11,005 to 18,288 lbs. Of the whole increase the rise in the use of licit dry opium has been from 7,880 to 14,065 lbs.; in the use of licit chandul from 2,564 to 3,475 lbs.; and in the use of licit madat, from 560 to 747 lbs. Though the increase in the use of licit opium is large, it does not amount to two thirds of the quantity which before the introduction of the Central Warehouse system found its way into illicit use.

5. Again, as explained in paragraph 45 of the 1889 Opium Administration Report, the increase in the use of licit opium from 16,903 lbs. in 1887-88 to 20,477 lbs. in 1889-90 is due not to any pushing of opium sales by lowering prices or opening shops. It is mainly due to a change from yearly to three-year farms, and to the consequent greatly increased power of the contractor to bring to light and secure the punishment of opium smuggling.

6. Further, it is to be remembered that during the past nine years Bombay has grown greatly in size and in wealth. I see no reason to suppose that any increase in the use of licit opium which is not due to the lessening of the use of illicit opium is greater than what would naturally accompany the increased size and wealth of the city. Much opium is still smuggled into Bombay. A special establishment will be required to ascertain the extent and the character of this smuggling. Until the existing system of smuggling is known and is suppressed, any rules further restricting the use of licit opium will prove most hurtful. No lessening of the use of opium will follow. The use of smuggled opium will increase; the use of licit opium will decrease.

7. As regards the dry opium shops, the estimate in the papers under the report of the number of daily customers at the 11 shops at 11,000 a day seems excessive. A special enumeration by the Chief Inspector from opening to closing gives 7,215, which the addition of customers who purchase three or four days' supply at a time may raise to about 8,000.

8. As regards the Bombay opium smoking-houses, on which a special report is required, the papers under review estimate their number at 40. The correct number is 19, of which 10 are chandul and nine are madat houses. Since 1881-82 the number of chandul houses has remained unchanged; the number of madat houses has been reduced by one. The additional smoking house referred to at page 10 of the reprint was found not to be wanted and was closed soon after it was opened.

9. The attendance at the licensed smoking houses was, as shown in Appendix C., tested morning and evening during six days in December 1890. Almost all who smoke in the morning also smoke in the evening. The evening attendance when almost all

smokers are present, shows in chandul houses 574, and in madat houses 189, that is, 763 in all. Of the 189 madat smokers all but four women and one lad are men; of the 574 chandul-smokers all but eight women and 10 lads are men. Of the smokers about 88 per cent. are Musalmans and 12 per cent. Hindus. There are also 10 to 12 Chinamen and four or five Parsis.

10. Two of the papers under review assert that opium-smoking houses are licensed because of the profit they bring to Government. It is true the opium consumed in the licensed smoking houses yields Government a large yearly revenue, the chandul opium Rs. 18,000, the madat opium Rs. 3,000, that is, Rs. 21,000 in all. At the same time it is not less true that, if the smoking of chandul and madat was stopped, the smokers would use an equal amount of equally duty-paying dry opium, so that, except so far as the withdrawal of smoking licenses would foster smuggling, the Government revenue would not suffer from the prohibition of opium smoking. In addition to the duty on the opium smoked, Government make from the smoking house licenses Rs. 420 a year, Rs. 300 from the chandul and Rs. 120 from the madat contract. Against this Rs. 420 is to be set an outlay of Rs. 954, the cost of the Assistant Inspector and peon employed in preventing irregular practices at the smoking houses. Clearly the reason for licensing opium-smoking houses is not the profit they bring to Government.

11. Certain of the articles under report give the impression that, to push the sale of opium and add to the revenue, care is taken in the choice and management of the smoking houses to make them tempting and attractive. In no Bombay smoking house is any attempt made to attract customers in the way described in the marginal extracts. The Bombay smoking houses are almost all in side streets, not to be found except by searching. All are entirely without any form of outer attraction. Small dingy wooden doors give entrance to all. The inside is even less attractive; squalid grime is their unvarying characteristic. To no customers allured either by pictures or by prostitutes.

12. One passage gives the impression that heavy penalties force the Bombay opium contractor to increase his sales. The statement in the margin is incorrect. The penalty for short sales of licit opium is Rs. 5 a pound; this fine is refunded if the contractor sells over the minimum. The necessity for enforcing a minimum sale is evident. No equally effective check on the use of illicit opium by the contractor can be devised.

13. In my judgment the pictures which these accounts give of the opium smokers is overdrawn and misleading. The statement that in Bombay houses children smoke is supported by so much precision and detail as to make it difficult to suppose the writer was mistaken. At the same time cases of allowing children to smoke must be extremely rare. I have never seen a child smoking, or who had smoked, or who was intended to smoke. I have never seen a child in a smoking house except the child of one of the shopmen, who professed to be and was, I believe, aghast at the idea of allowing his child to smoke. I have not heard either from inspectors or smokers of a case of a child being allowed to smoke. On the contrary, after special inquiry, the Chief Inspector assures me that such cases are unknown.

14. As to the men smokers, and the effect of smoking on their character, appearance and health, the descriptions under review seems to me misleading. I have no fault to find with the general description of a Bombay chandul house given at page 9 of the reprint:—

“A dirty, dilapidated, nondescript shop with its shutters up . . . Raised platforms with some hundred recumbent and semi-recumbent figures, all men, except three women and a few young lads . . . Groups of smokers, some-half lying, half sitting, others curled up or reclining at full length.”

Except that, so far as I have seen or can learn, no youths under 18 attend these smoking houses, this description seems to me accurate. The Poona description is also moderate:—

“A low-roofed room, with 25 to 30 persons in groups of five or six round each lamp, most of them intent on their pipes, a few in a semi-conscious state.”

On the other hand, I have seen nothing to justify the following passages :—

Reprint, page 2.

“ Human swine of both sexes . . . most immodest attitudes . . . handsome young women sprawling on the senseless bodies of men.”

Such sights, I believe, are not to be found in Bombay smoking houses. In a room of 40 or 50 smokers all but three or four are awake. The bulk of them have done a hard day's work. They are tired and indolent. In opium-smoking houses assaults or acts of violence are almost unknown. Of the smokers very few are unable to answer questions clearly and readily. Even those asleep awake when lightly shaken. Even when suddenly aroused they can at once tell their name and calling. “ If you had to go out now and work, could you go ? ” Almost always the answer is “ Yes, we could.”

15. Again, as to the effect of opium smoking on character. It is true a share of the smokers are beggars and a share of them are bad characters. It is true the houses are watched by the police,

Reprint, page 5.

for thieves meet in them and scheme crimes. Still, are all or nearly all the smokers ne'er-do-wells? Not nearly all. So far as I have seen, a Bombay opium-smoking house is much like Dr. Morison's description of a Bengal smoking house :—

“ Almost all the smokers are of the labouring classes, tailors, day labourers, and one or two shopkeepers.”

So far as I could judge by questioning the smokers in Bombay smoking houses, about two thirds are regular working craftsmen and labourers. I asked the Assistant Collector to frame a separate estimate. His estimate was :—

“ At the fewest 70 per cent. regular craftsmen and labourers ; at the most 20 per cent. beggars, and 10 per cent. bad characters.”

I made a further personal test in three houses taken at random. The result was—

In one house of 11 smokers all were craftsmen in regular work ; in a second house of 25 smokers all were craftsmen in work ; in a third house of 47 smokers one was a woman, nine were beggars, the rest were craftsmen and labourers.

I have made the chief inspector take a similar test in 14 more houses. The result is, of 227 smokers 188 are workers, 38 are beggars, and one is a thief. It is probable that some among the workers are bad characters. Still care was taken to ascertain that in most cases the smokers are actually employed on the work they named. The estimate that two thirds of the whole smokers are able to do and do regular work as labourers, weavers, embroiderers, sailors, drivers, cartmen, blacksmiths, mill hands, fitters, barbers, and also as small traders and shopkeepers, sellers of firewood, fish, tea, coffee, tobacco, and cloth, seems well within the mark :—

#### MADAT and CHANDUL SMOKERS.

				Workers.	Beggars.	Total.
MADAT HOUSE.						
I.	-	-	-	11	2	13
III.	-	-	-	14	2	16
IV.	-	-	-	5	1	6
VI.	-	-	-	7	3	10
VII.	-	-	-	11	4	15
VIII.	-	-	-	4	2	6
IX.	-	-	-	7	3	10
CHANDUL HOUSE.						
I.	-	-	-	21	3	24
II.	-	-	-	10	-	10
III.	-	-	-	22	5	27
IV.	-	-	-	6	1	7
VII.	-	-	-	12	1	13
VIII.	-	-	-	30	7*	37
IX.	-	-	-	28	5	33
				188	39	227

\* One a thief.



16. Similarly, as regards the effect of the smoking on the health and the appearance of the smokers, the descriptions seem to me overdrawn and misleading. "Of horrible destructions of God's image more terrible than delirium tremens, idiocy, or lunacy," I have seen none. Of the starved and emaciated shrivelled warnings I have seen surprisingly few. The bulk of the men, I should say over two thirds, though smokers of 8, 12, 20, and in one case of 40 years' standing, were in body and face to look at well nourished and healthy. To many of them I, in surprise, asked the question which Dr. Morison asked in Bengal:—

Reprint, page 2.

Reprint, pages 3, 5, 8, 9, 11.

Reprint, page 6.

You have smoked four or five years and are stout and strong. How is this?

The explanation in Bombay is the same as the explanation in Bengal:—

Smoking does not injure those who are well fed as it injured the starving.

17. On the point of appearance and harm to health I checked my first impression by my assistant's experience. His answer was:—

Almost none, except the old and the beggars, not more than 10 per cent. in all are emaciated.

I made a personal test in three houses. In one of 11 smokers all seemed healthy and well nourished; in a second of 25 smokers, one old man was emaciated; in a third of 47, though the beggars looked dissipated, none were notably withered or broken. In the 14 houses specially tested by the chief inspector, 10 were found emaciated or slightly withered. In almost every case the emaciated and withered were over 50 years of age. So far as I can judge, the assistant collector's estimate is correct, that, except some of the old and some of the beggars, very few opium smokers are notably withered or emaciated.

18. A point noted in two of the papers under consideration is that the opium smokers are themselves anxious to see all smoking houses closed.

Reprint, pages 4 and 5.

Reprint, page 4.

Reprint, page 5.

In Allahabad every opium smoker would sign a memorial to have the smoking houses closed. Dr. Morison, describing a Bengal smoking room, states, "All the men

"implored me to do what I could to have the smoking room closed." Only apparently they added, "Let us die first." The writers on the Bombay smoking rooms do not notice any petitions for closing the houses. It is not uncommon in talking to opium smokers in Bombay to be interrupted by some man praying that the smoking room may be closed. So far as I have seen in Bombay, such petitioners are not many, perhaps 10 to 12 per cent. I doubted the good faith of such petitions. It seemed to me probable that the petitioners hoped if the licensed houses were closed the chance of cheaper opium at unlicensed houses would be better. My assistant does not agree with this view. He believes such petitions are made in good faith. Granting the good faith, it seems to me unlikely that men who cannot withstand the drawing of a licensed house will be able to resist the temptation of a cheaper smoke at an unlicensed house or at a private club. All smokers seem to agree in this. If our opium smoking is stopped we shall eat as much dry opium as we at present smoke.

19. The last point noticed in these papers is the smoking of opium by educated lads and men of good position. Dr. Morison notices school teachers as opium smokers. Canon Wilberforce says

Reprint, page 6.

Reprint, page 13.

Reprint, page 9.

many of the upper classes smoke in their own houses in secret; the describer of the Bombay houses found among the smokers a graduate with honours of the Elphinstone College; probably the writer meant of the Bombay University. Dr. Morison may be correct in stating that among

Reprint, page 7.

the men connected with his mission in Bengal opium smoking is almost universal. I do not believe that any such statement can be correctly made regarding the missions in Western India. At least among the Catholics and the Salvationists discipline is not so slack as to allow opium smoking. As regards the city of Bombay as a whole, any statement that opium

Reprint, page 7.

smoking is "almost universal and is rapidly spreading" is singularly wide of the truth. Of the 600,000 to 700,000 middle and poor classes in Bombay, according to information recorded at a census-taken at all the opium-smoking houses during seven consecutive days, only 763 persons regularly resort to licensed smoking houses. Among the middle and lower classes opium smoking except in the licensed houses is almost unknown. The Bombay middle and lower class opium smokers may therefore be calculated at 1,000 or at 1,500 as an outside estimate; that is, among the middle and lower classes in Bombay not more than one in 5,000 is an opium smoker. And of the smokers not more than one in three

is a sot unfit for work ; that is, in the middle and lower classes the proportion of opium wrecks is about one in 15,000.

20. As regards the upper classes several keepers of licensed smoking houses have assured me that many of the rich smoke secretly in their own houses. This statement has the support of Canon Wilberforce. The truth is difficult to ascertain. I find there are in all about nine

Reprint, page 13.

private clubs with five to twenty members where opium is smoked. Of three of these the members are Chinamen ; of the rest the bulk of the members are Musalmans. None of these clubs are of recent institution. Except in these clubs the statement that opium smoking is common among the well-to-do in Bombay has little foundation in fact. I think it probable that the proportion of opium smokers among the upper classes is less than among the poor ; that is, not one in 5,000 of the rich and upper middle classes smokes opium. For the occasional ruin of an educated and upper class man wrecked by unrestrained opium smoking Government arrangements seem to me in no way to blame. In the matter of liquor drinking it is known that by raising prices and putting down smuggling Government have to a remarkable degree lessened the drunkenness of the middle and lower classes in the city of Bombay and in the neighbouring districts. That drunkenness has increased (if it has increased) among the higher classes is in no way due to any temptations thrown in the way of the young by the number of licensed liquor shops. Drinkers of the educated and upper classes rarely enter a common public-house or liquor shop. Some go to hotels. As a rule they drink in private houses and in clubs. The causes of the spread of drunkenness (if drunkenness has spread) among the upper classes is not the increase of liquor shops, but the decay of social and religious restraints, a result of the unthinking adoption of false notions of freedom. No Government arrangements can prevent drunkenness among the rich. The cure of the evil is either the renewing of old or the forging of new social and religious restraints. Similarly, opium smoking, if, which would seem not to be the case, the practice is spreading among the upper classes, especially among lads at high schools and colleges, can be checked only by discipline and the enforcement of neglected restraints. To say that the existing smoking houses are in any way an incitement or temptation to school or college lads is to say what is not the fact. I believe that no upper class lad has ever learned or ever will learn to smoke opium in the licensed houses. If educated wrecks are found among the smokers (which, so far as my information goes, is not the case), they learned to smoke in private lodgings or in private clubs and places of amusement. They have not come to the smoking houses till unrestrained indulgence has ruined their lives. So far as I can ascertain, all Bombay does not at present supply one case of an educated man so lost to shame as to smoke opium in a common licensed house.

21. Though the description under review may be overdrawn and misleading, the practice of smoking opium is evil and wasteful. It would be well if it did not exist. So far as I can judge, Government do nothing to increase opium smoking, and beyond the determination to keep the practice at a minimum by preventing the use of illicit opium and by maintaining the high price of licit opium, Government can do nothing to stop it.

22. What would be the result of closing the licensed houses ? The answer depends on the question, How far is the preparation of chandul and madat so difficult that if the licensed shops were closed the smokers unable to make the preparation would content themselves with dry opium ? For easy reference a description of the making and smoking of chandul and madat is appended (Appendix D.). I am not prepared to admit either chandul and madat is hard to make. It may be true that in the license shops the smokers are critical and refuse any chandul or madat but what is made by trained hands. Still, if they had no licensed houses the smokers would content themselves with something less choice. The boiling of the chandul and the mixing of the madat with pulse ashes take time and patience. Still the operation is easy and simple. A clever man can master the art in a day or two. I see no reason to suppose that to close the licensed smoking houses would be to stop the supply of smokable chandul and madat. If the licensed houses were closed the better-off smokers might prepare their opium in their houses. The rest would be more likely to form clubs and employ the chandul and madat makers of the present licensed houses as club cooks.

23. There would be nothing illegal or even irregular in forming opium-smoking clubs. Already, as has been noticed, about nine small opium-smoking clubs are in existence. Each member can get his 10 tolas of dry opium, take them to the club and have them prepared by a trained cook. So long as no chandul or madat is sold at these clubs the smoking is in no way illegal. The evil of having such clubs scattered over the town, the certain increase in the use of smuggled opium, the probable increase to the facilities

for bad characters plotting crimes are serious evils. I see no element of good to set against these evils.

24. One other change may be suggested. The smoking of chandul and madat should be forbidden. To such a proposal the answer seems to be the enforcing of any rule forbidding the use of chandul and madat would cause unbearable interference with private life. Any such rule must remain a dead letter.

25. To sum up:—

- (1.) I see no reason to suppose that during the last 10 years opium smoking has increased in Bombay out of proportion to the city's growth in size and wealth.
- (2.) I do not see that any part of the existing arrangements is open to the objection that it in any way encourages the smoking of opium.
- (3.) I do not see that the closing of licensed houses would lessen opium smoking.
- (4.) On the contrary, the result of closing licensed smoking houses would be—
  - (a) to increase the number of smoking clubs;
  - (b) to increase the use of illicit opium.

26. For these reasons I am unable to admit that any change in the existing system of licensed opium-smoking houses is either necessary or advisable.

#### APPENDIX A.

##### OPIMUM SHOPS and SMOKING HOUSES, 1881-82 to 1899-90.

Year.	Opium Shops.	Chandul Houses.	Madat Houses.	Remarks.
1881-82 - -	10	10	10	
1882-83 - -	10	10	10	
1883-84 - -	10	10	10	
1884-85 - -	From Aug. to March. } 10 April to July. } 11	10	10	
1885-86 - -	11	10	10	
1886-87 - -	11	10	10	
1887-88 - -	11	10	10	
1888-89 - -	11	10	10*	
1889-90 - -	11	10	9	* One madat house has since been closed.

#### APPENDIX B.

##### LICENSED OPIUM SALES, 1881-82 to 1899-90.

Year.	Dry Opium, lbs. of 40 Tolas.	Chandul, lbs. of 40 Tolas.	Madat, lbs. of 40 Tolas.	Total, lbs. of 40 Tolas.	Remarks.
1881-82 - -	7,832	2,347	551	10,730	
1882-83 - -	7,488	2,949	661	11,058	
1883-84 - -	7,621	2,988	644	11,253	
1884-85 - -	9,025	2,627	519	12,171	
1885-86 - -	11,290	3,134	792	15,216	11,290 lbs. include 128 lbs. sold to medical practitioners by the opium farmer during the year.
1886-87 - -	12,854	3,421	778	17,053	12,854 lbs. include 228 lbs. sold to medical practitioners by the opium farmer during the year.
1887-88 - -	13,130	3,150	623	16,903	13,130 lbs. include 355 lbs. sold to medical practitioners by the opium farmer during the year.
1888-89 - -	17,176	3,847	768	21,791	17,176 lbs. include 309½ lbs. sold to medical practitioners by the opium farmer during the year.
1889-90 - -	15,875	3,826	776	20,477	15,875 lbs. include 275 lbs. sold to medical practitioners by the opium farmer during the year.

## APPENDIX C.

CHANDUL and MADAT SMOKERS, December 1st to 7th, 1890.

MADAT HOUSES.							CHANDUL HOUSES.							Re- marks.
Number.	Men.		Women.		Lads.		Number.	Men.		Women.		Lads.		
	Morning.	Evening.	Morning.	Evening.	Morning.	Evening.		Morning.	Evening.	Morning.	Evening.	Morning.	Evening.	
I.	13	21	—	—	—	—	I.	16	39	1	2	—	—	
II.	10	14	—	—	—	—	II.	35	71	—	—	2	1	
III.	20	16	—	—	—	—	III.	37	70	—	—	1	1	
IV.	7	10	1	—	—	—	IV.	20	38	—	1	—	—	
V.	—	—	Closed	—	—	—	V.	37	71	1	—	—	—	
VI.	19	30	—	—	—	—	VI.	31	49	—	—	—	—	
VII.	30	32	3	—	—	—	VII.	27	37	—	—	—	—	
VIII.	10	14	—	—	—	—	VIII.	60	76	—	4	—	—	
IX.	21	35	—	—	—	1	IX.	70	84	4	1	—	—	
X.	17	17	—	—	—	—	X.	21	31	—	—	—	—	

  

	Abstract.	Morning.	Evening.
Chandul	—	363	574
Madat	—	152	189
		515	763

## APPENDIX D.

The MAKING and the SMOKING of CHANDUL and MADAT.

*Chandul Making.*—A pound of crude opium and a half pound of the refuse scraped from the chandul pipes after they have been smoked are dissolved in about five pounds of water. The mixture is then boiled and strained through a piece of cotton stuff and again boiled until the water has all evaporated. The residue is made into a cake at the bottom of the vessel used in the boiling process, and the oil remaining in it consumed by the vessel being inverted over a glowing fire. The cake is next re-dissolved in about four pounds of water and boiled until the liquid is reduced to about one half. The preparation is known as chandul. 1 lb. crude opium equals 2 lbs. chandul.

*Chandul Smoking.*—The smoker takes a quarter or half tola of chandul in a small chinaware cup, and by means of a piece of wire about six inches in length flattened at one end lifts a small quantity of the liquid and dries it over a lamp-flame, repeating the process until he has obtained on the end of the wire a piece of the solidified preparation of the size of a pea. This is placed above the hole in the chandul pipe, and the smoker, reclining on a wooden bench or mat with his head supported by pillows or bolsters, applies a flame to the pipe and inhales the smoke through the pipe stem.

*Madat Making.*—An ounce of crude opium is dissolved in four ounces of water and boiled after being strained through a piece of cotton stuff and the liquid reduced to about half its original bulk by being again boiled, a quantity of the charred husk of mung is then thrown into it and saturated in the liquid extract. The husk so saturated is next made into balls of the size of small marbles and is known as madat. 1 lb. crude opium equals 2 lbs. madat.

*Madat Smoking.*—The consumer takes one of the balls and makes it into several pills. He then places one of these in the bowl of the hooka used and applies a flame to it, at the same time taking a whiff when the pill is reduced to an ash. This process is repeated with a fresh pill, and so on.

From A. D. CAREY, Esq., Acting Commissioner of Customs, Salt, Opium, and Abkari, to the CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY. No. 1,825, dated 24th April 1891.

I have the honour to return herewith a statement showing the number of shops licensed for the sale of opium and chandul and madat in the districts of Upper Sind frontier and Thar and Parkar, the opium shops for the years from 1879-80 to 1882-83, and the chandul and madat shops for the years from 1879-80 to 1888-89, as promised in a note in the remark column of the statement submitted with this office No. 1,094, dated the 9th ultimo.

STATEMENT showing the Number of Shops licensed for the Sale of Opium and Chandul and Madat in the Districts of Upper Sind Frontier, and Thar and Parkur Opium Shops during the Years from 1879-80 to 1882-83 and Chandul and Madat Shops during the Years from 1879-80 to 1888-89.

Years.	Upper Sind Frontier.		Thar and Parkar.		Remarks.
	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	
1879-80	17	(a)	48	No shops have ever been licensed for the sale of chandul and madat, nor have they been sold at opium shops.	(a) During these years chandul and madat were allowed to be sold at the opium shops.
1880-81	59		48		
1881-82	48		46		
1882-83	31		46		
1883-84	—	1	—		
1884-85	—	1	—		
1885-86	—	1	—		
1886-87	—	1	—		
1887-88	—	1	—		
1888-89	—	1	—		

From A. C. TREVOR, Esq., C.S., Commissioner in Sind, to His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR and PRESIDENT IN COUNCIL, Bombay. No. 1677, dated 21st May 1891.

I have the honour to submit the following remarks on the memorial of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, received under Government endorsement No. 8,269 of 15th November 1890.

2. It is unnecessary for me to remark on those portions of the memorial which animadvert on the general policy of Government in regard to opium administration. The same general criticism to which the Opium Department is now subjected has been made before and has been before answered fully and frequently, and I need only say, speaking for this province, that the repeatedly declared wishes of Government have been kept steadily in view.

3. The society assumes that the consumption of opium, even in a moderate degree, is detrimental to man both physically and mentally. It is far from certain, however, that this assumption is correct, and we have the evidence afforded by whole tribes who have habitually from generation to generation taken opium. As instances may be taken the Rajputs and Bhils. Their energy, endurance, and bravery cannot be said to have been affected by their addiction to opium. Throughout the country one meets with people who take opium in moderation and for much the same purpose and with much the same result as the English gentleman of the present day takes his wine.

4. It would be impossible for Government to prohibit the cultivation of the poppy in native states where it is now largely grown. It would be even more impossible to prohibit its consumption by the large class of persons to whom it is a necessary of life, and it is to be borne in mind that in the Bombay Presidency the revenue derived from the drug is confined to the levy of a heavy import duty, a limited number of licenses being granted free of any direct fee simply in order that the control necessary to check smuggling may be maintained.

5. So far, however, as the society concerns itself with the abuse and not the mere use of opium, I am in accord with it. That opium is sometimes taken in excess, particularly

in the form of chandul and madat, and that the existence of opium dens under which name chandul and madat shops are probably referred to is a temptation in this direction is true. It would, I believe, be no great hardship if the grant of licenses for the sale of these preparations were discontinued. Those who cannot do without them could always buy the opium and prepare them at home. The loss of revenue would be insignificant, and the gain to the public decency and morality would be appreciable.

No. 13.—From T. D. MACKENZIE, Esq., Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Revenue Department, to the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department. No. 5,975, dated 1st September 1891.

With reference to your telegram dated the 1st ultimo, I am directed to forward herewith for submission to the Government of India the accompanying statements showing (1) the consumption of licit opium in each of the districts of the Bombay Presidency, including Sind, during the revenue year 1889-90, and (2) the number of shops licensed for the sale of opium and chandul and madat in each of the districts of the Bombay Presidency, including Sind, during the same year; and to state that the shops licensed for the sale of intoxicating drugs are quite distinct from those licensed for the sale of opium.

STATEMENT showing the Consumption of Licit Opium in each of the Districts of the Bombay Presidency, including Sind, during the Revenue Year 1889-90.

Districts.	Lbs.	Remarks.
Bombay -	20,785	
Ahmedabad -	29,254	
Kaira -	17,898	
Panch Mahals -	2,895	
Broach -	11,772	
Surat -	4,090	
Thana -	1,258	
Khandesh -	14,301	
Nasik -	5,134	
Ahmednagar -	10,365	
Poona -	8,898	
Sholapur -	7,895	
Satara -	4,434	
Belgaum -	620	
Dharwar -	696	
Bijapur -	418	
Kanara -	133	
Ratnagiri -	259	
Kolaba -	621	
Karachi -	5,020	
Hyderabad -	10,698	
Shikarpur -	3,213	
Total	160,657	

STATEMENT showing the Number of Shops licensed for the Sale of Opium and Chandul and Madat in each of the Districts of the Bombay Presidency, including Sind, during the Revenue Year 1889-90.

Districts.	Opium Shops.	Chandul and Madat Shops.	Remarks.
Bombay	11	19	10 chandul and 9 madat. (These preparations are separately farmed in Bombay.)
Ahmedabad	195	4	
Kaira	157	—	
Panch Mahals	35	—	
Broach	51	1	
Surat	21	4	
Thana	18	6	
Nasik	40	8	
Khandesh	69	33	
Ahmednagar	51	2	
Poona	50	14	
Sholapur	43	6	
Satara	39	—	
Belgaum	14	2	
Dharwar	24	2	
Bijapur	18	2	
Kanara	7	—	
Ratnagiri	8	—	
Kolaba	—	—	
Karachi	87	4	
Shikarpur	62	6	
Hyderabad	97	3	
Thar and Parkar	46	—	
Upper Sind Frontier	12	1	
Total	1,164	117	

No. 14.—From the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department, to the CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF BURMA. No. 3,166, dated the 29th July 1891.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1—10-E., dated 2nd February 1891, written in reply to my letter No. 4,938, dated the 18th October 1890, with which were forwarded certain representations made by the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade regarding the consumption of opium in India.

2. You give statistics of the number of licensed shops, and of the quantity of opium issued to them for sale since 1878-79. You state that there is no reason to believe that the increase in consumption in the past few years indicates any serious extension of the practice of opium eating and smoking among the Burmese, or that it is greatly disproportionate to the growth of the non-Burman population, while some part of the increase is certainly due to improved checks upon illicit consumption. You also say that the total quantity of opium consumed may be larger than the amount indicated by the figures for the licensed shops, as, in spite of the efforts which have been made to put a stop to smuggling, much illicit traffic in opium is still carried on. Your conclusion from the reports and evidence before you is that "the use of opium among the Burmese is increasing, though not as yet to any very serious extent, save in special tracts, such as Arrakan, the seaport towns and the delta of the Irrawaddy."

3. With reference to the question whether the Government can take effectual measures to check the increase in the consumption of opium, you state that a reduction in the number of licensed shops would have little effect, as such a reduction is found to be accompanied by an increase in the average quantity of opium sold by each shop; and that if all the shops were closed, it is certain that illicit trade would be carried on to a great extent.

4. As another obstacle in the way of checking the use of opium in Burma you mention the presence in the province of a considerable non-Burman population consisting of Shans, Chinese, and others, "who are accustomed to the moderate use of opium and

“ who consume it without ill-effects or even with beneficial results.” You are not prepared to advise the absolute prohibition of the possession or sale of opium in the case of persons of non-Burman descent, as you consider that “ such a step would be an unjustifiable interference with the habits of a large section of the population and “ would be quite impossible to enforce.”

5. In view, however, of the unanimous opinion of respectable Burmans, and of official and non-official Europeans in the province, that the use of opium by Burmans is deleterious and harmful in a very special degree, you propose to prohibit the sale of opium to, and the possession of opium by, Burmans throughout Burma.

6. This measure has already been adopted in Upper Burma. The doubt which you express, whether the possession of opium by Burmans is illegal in Upper Burma, has been removed by the issue of the Revised Opium Rules which were forwarded with your letter No. 852—8-E., dated 20th October 1890, and approved in my letter No. 748, dated 20th February 1891. The effect of Rules 39 (1) and 10 of those Rules is to prohibit distinctly both sale to, and possession by, Burmans in Upper Burma.

The question which has now to be considered is therefore the expediency of applying the same measure to Lower Burma.

7. I am directed to say that, notwithstanding the very serious interference with the personal liberty of the Burmans which the adoption of the measure would involve, the Governor-General in Council would be prepared to sanction your proposal if he were satisfied—

- (1.) that the evil to be removed is as great as you depict it;
- (2.) that it would be practicable to enforce the prohibition; and
- (3.) that the enforcement of the prohibition would not entail, and be accompanied by, evils as great as that which it is desired to remove.

Without fuller information on these points the Governor-General in Council is unable to sanction the very stringent measure which you propose.

8. In regard to the first of these three points there is no doubt that the voluminous papers in which the opium question in Burma has been discussed in past years show that there is a practical unanimity of opinion—(a) that the use of opium by the non-Burman population of Burma has no harmful effect, but is on the contrary often beneficial, and (b) that the use of opium by the Burmese themselves is very deleterious to them. The opinion of the respectable Burmese and of the Europeans who are acquainted with the country is entitled to great weight; and the Governor-General in Council has not failed to observe that you have yourself accepted it as beyond a doubt that opium is to people of Burman race an absolute poison, destroying their morals, and degrading them in every way. But his Excellency feels that in a matter of such importance he is not justified in adopting measures of extreme stringency on the strength of public opinion unless that opinion is supported by unquestioned facts, and he considers that in justice to the large population whose liberty it is proposed to restrict, he should, before the consumption of opium by Burmans is absolutely prohibited, have more conclusive proof of the correctness of the general opinion on the subject. The papers on the subject, while they contain numerous statements of opinion, do not contain many facts in support of the opinion. I am therefore to request that you will test the correctness of the generally adopted view as to the difference of the effect of the use of opium on non-Burmans and Burmans respectively by the collection of statistics, facts, and figures bearing on the question. One easily practicable method of testing the effect of opium on the Burmese will be to ascertain the proportion of Burmese criminals in the jails who are addicted to the use of opium, and the proportion of such Burmese opium-eating criminals who appear to have suffered physically or mentally from the habit. You will probably be able to arrange for the collection of similar, though necessarily less complete, statistics in regard to the general Burmese population in a sufficient number of representative places.

I am to request that in submitting the report required by this paragraph regarding the effects of the use of opium, a distinction may, if possible, be drawn between opium eating and opium smoking, and that you will state which of the two is the common form of the consumption of opium in Burma. -

9. I am also directed to request that you will further consider and report on the question whether it will be possible to enforce the proposed prohibition. The difficulties in the way of enforcing against the Burmese portion of the population the absolute prohibition of the use of opium appear to be very great. The province contains a considerable non-Burman population, to which the prohibitory rule is not to be applied; arrangements for the supply of opium to that population will be necessary, and there seems little doubt that the non-Burmans would be only too ready to engage



in the profitable trade of illicitly supplying opium to the Burmans who desire it. The physical configuration of the country offers great facilities for smuggling. And supplies of the drug could be obtained from several sources, namely, from the licensed shops in Burma, which even now are understood to engage in a considerable illicit traffic, from India, from the Straits Settlements, and from Yunan, in which province opium cultivation has largely increased in recent years. Given these conditions, and a commodity desired with eagerness by the consumer, and of a bulk so small that it can be easily concealed, it seems probable that a much more efficient preventive force than is available in Burma would be required in order to make the proposed prohibition effectual.

10. There are now in Lower Burma 20 licensed opium shops, the population of the province being over  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions and the area 87,220 square miles. The sale of opium anywhere, except from this small number of shops, is illegal. Yet it is notorious that the preventive agency has been unable to enforce this condition, and the evidence on the subject goes to show that opium is procurable nearly everywhere. The effect of the reduction in the number of shops, instead of being, as was hoped, the practical stamping out of the use of opium in the villages and districts for which shops were not considered to be necessary, has been the establishment in many districts of a regular system of illicit traffic in opium. The prevention of that illicit traffic ought to be a matter of much less difficulty than the enforcement of an absolute prohibition of possession by Burmans. The illicit sales must be made by a comparatively small number of persons, and to carry on the traffic the persons engaged in it must always be in possession of more than three tolas of opium, the maximum quantity of which the possession is legal. It must apparently be an easier task to watch the small number of persons engaged in the traffic, and to obtain convictions against them for possession of an illegal quantity of opium, than to watch the enormously larger body of Burmese who consume opium and to prosecute them for illegal possession.

The preventive agency in Burma has, however, failed to prevent the illicit traffic, and the Governor-General in Council thinks that, before undertaking the much more formidable duty of enforcing the prohibition of possession of opium by Burmese, you should consider whether the agency at your disposal is likely to be able to discharge the duty with any approach to completeness.

11. In considering the practicability of enforcing the proposed prohibition, the experience of working of the similar measure in Upper Burma may be of use, though possibly the defect in the drafting of the rules to which reference is made in paragraph 6 of this letter may have interfered with the success of the measure there, and rendered the experiment, in so far as it has yet been tried, inconclusive. I am to request that with your reply you will forward reports showing how far the prohibition of the use of opium by Burmans in Upper Burma has been, or promises to be, effectual.

12. In the next place, I am directed to invite your attention to a serious evil which would almost certainly arise in the attempt to enforce the prohibition of the possession of opium by Burmans. The agency for the enforcement of the prohibition would be the police. To enable the police force to discharge this duty it would be necessary to entrust to its members considerable powers, including the power of search when there was reason to suspect the possession of opium by Burmans. His Excellency in Council fears that there would be much danger of those powers being abused, and of the detective force becoming an engine of oppression and extortion more formidable to the innocent than to those who offended against the law. The regulation proposed would, it is anticipated, provide a weapon which the police would be only too ready to use for the purpose of extorting blackmail from all Burmans, whether addicted to the use of opium or not; and there would be a great risk of numerous false prosecutions being threatened and instituted. His Excellency is also apprehensive that another evil result would be the wholesale corruption of the police by the licensed vendors, who, having paid less than formerly for their licenses, would be disposed to spend the money so saved in bribing the police to overlook sales to Burmans in contravention of the law.

13. I am to request that you will carefully consider the aspect of the question noticed in the preceding paragraph, and report whether, in your opinion, there is not a serious danger of the prohibition you propose resulting in a system of espionage and exaction and in a kind of oppression likely to render our rule in the province odious and unpopular.

14. The measure which you suggest in paragraph 5 of your letter for the exemption from the prohibition of Burmans of the present generation who are too old to break themselves of the habit of opium eating all at once with safety does not commend itself to his Excellency in Council. I am to request that, if you consider that the objections and difficulties mentioned in the preceding paragraphs can be overcome, you will further

consider the means of alleviating the hardship of the proposed prohibition in the case of Burmans who have become accustomed to the use of opium.

15. The preceding paragraphs relate to the main and important recommendation made by you. With reference to the minor alternative proposal in paragraph 6 of your letter, namely, the closing of opium taverns to men of Burmese race, I am to suggest for your consideration whether it would not be preferable to adopt the proposal made in paragraph 12 of Mr. Fryer's memorandum which accompanied your letter, and to prohibit altogether the consumption of opium on the premises of the licensed shops. The arguments stated by you in paragraph 6 of your letter appear to point to the adoption of this measure, and the Governor-General in Council is prepared, if you concur, to approve of a condition being inserted in all licenses forbidding consumption on the premises, pending the further consideration of the more important measure which you have proposed.

16. In conclusion, I am to say that any possible loss of revenue involved in the adoption of the measures discussed in this letter need not be taken into account in deciding whether the measures should be adopted. If the measures are shown to be desirable on general grounds and to be of a practicable nature, the loss of revenue will not be allowed to stand in the way of their adoption.

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No. 15.—From the SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department, to the CHIEF SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY, Revenue Department. No. 4,120, dated the 1st October 1891.

SIR,

In his Despatch No. 10 (Revenue), dated the 30th July 1891, and addressed to his Excellency the Governor in Council, Bombay, the Secretary of State has said that he would be glad to learn the views of the Bombay Government as to the practical effect of the system of guaranteed minimum vend in the case of licenses for the sale of opium, and the advisability of maintaining or changing that system.

2. The question involved has been recently considered by the Government of India, in connexion with the facts brought to notice in your letter No. 4,911, dated the 18th July 1891. In paragraph 3 of that letter it was explained that the continuous increase in the amount of licit opium consumed in the Presidency during the last ten years was entirely due to the measures taken to check opium smuggling, and to substitute licit opium for the contraband opium which formerly formed the bulk of the consumption. The measures referred to were introduced for the first time in a few districts in 1877-78, and by degrees their operation has been extended to the whole Presidency, including Sind.

3. I am now directed to request you to lay before his Excellency the Governor in Council the views of the Government of India upon this question. The Secretary of State and the Government of India are aware that the measures adopted by the Bombay Government have had their origin in a desire to restrict consumption and at the same time to prevent illicit dealings in the drug. Before the passing of the Opium Act I. of 1878 it was the practice to auction the licenses for retail sale for periods of one year at a time, the license being granted to the person who offered the highest price for it. The licensee was bound to purchase the opium required by him from the public depôt, but it was found that in fact very little opium was so taken by him, his requirements being supplied for the most part by illicit importations. The total amount of duty-paid opium sold in the Presidency at the time was less than 40,000 lbs. a year, while the license fees realised upwards of Rs. 1,30,000. In some cases the disproportion between the amount paid for the license and the amount of licit opium sold was so glaring as to show conclusively that the license was in reality only intended to cover the licensee's transactions in smuggled or illicit opium. There was consequently a large loss of public revenue, while the consumption of opium was being encouraged owing to a great portion of the opium consumed in the province escaping taxation. The arrangements were, moreover, open to very strong objection on the grounds that no efficient control could be exercised over the opium shops; that the real amount of opium consumed could not be known, and that there was no proper security against undue encouragement of a taste for the drug among the people.

4. To meet these difficulties the Bombay Government gradually, from the 1st June 1878, introduced a system under which tenders were invited for opium licenses on a

new system, the special object of which was to discourage illicit sales and ascertain the true vend of the various shops, the taxation on the drug being intended to be levied rather in the shape of duty on opium consumed than of fees for licenses to open shops. The method by which it was sought to secure these objects was to give preference to the tenderers who undertook to sell the largest quantity of opium per month on pain of forfeiture of a money deposit proportionate to the amount of vend stipulated for, the licensees being authorised to provide themselves with opium direct from the wholesale dealers instead of from public depôts, subject to a condition that the opium purchased by them should be duty-paid opium. Under this system the temptation to use the license as a cloak for the sale of smuggled opium practically disappeared, because the duty must in any case be paid whether the licensee sold smuggled or duty-paid opium, and, as a consequence, the amount of licit opium consumed increased largely year by year, as the system was gradually extended, until, now that it is in force in all but five districts of the Presidency, the total amount of pass duty realised is more than four times as great as in 1878-79. The Government of India accept the conclusion that this result has been hitherto attained mainly by repression of opium smuggling, and that the minimum guarantee system has produced satisfactory results in so far as under it consumption is discouraged by levying a heavy tax on all opium consumed:

5. The system of guaranteed minimum vend is, however, open to misconstruction by persons not fully acquainted with the facts and can be made the subject of plausible misrepresentation. It can hardly be disputed that, to those who are unaware of the difficulties in consequence of which the present system was introduced, the practice of requiring opium farmers to guarantee the sale of an amount of opium large in itself, and in some cases above the reported sales of previous years, is on the face of it open to objection. The amount guaranteed has not on the whole increased much during the last six years, and it may be anticipated that the orders contained in the Bombay Government Resolution, No. 4,857, dated 8th July 1889, will have already effected a substantial decrease during the current year. Nevertheless the fact remains that the system appears to afford justification to some extent for the accusation that the Government is directly encouraging the consumption of the drug, and it is in this view that the Government of India now desire to press for the abolition of the system and a return to the ordinary licensing system which is generally in force in other provinces, or the adoption of such other system as the Government of Bombay may consider calculated to ensure the full taxation of all opium consumed.

6. The Governor-General in Council has the less hesitation in suggesting this change, as there is some reason to believe that the object with which the present system was introduced has already been attained. The natural level of consumption, including both illicit and duty-paid opium, has been ascertained with, at any rate, approximate accuracy, and competitors for a license are now ready to guarantee a larger vend than they have any expectation of realising. The privilege of exclusive vend is so valuable that they can afford to pay a large sum out of their profits to make up deficient pass duty, and the amount which they calculate on having to make good in this way represents the value of the exclusive privilege of sale over and above the license fee and the duty on opium actually sold. In other words, the contractors are now practically paying under another name what ought properly to be charged to them as license fees, and the Government is exposed to the charge of stimulating consumption without obtaining any actual benefit, if, as appears probable, the taxation of opium might be maintained as high as it now is by levying additional license fees equal in amount to the pass duty paid on deficient sales.

7. The statistics of opium revenue and consumption for the last ten years, the remarks on the subject contained in paragraph 5 of the Government Resolution on the report for 1887-88, and the circumstances detailed in the confidential memorandum forwarded with your letter No. 7,232, dated the 11th October 1890, appear to support the view stated in the last paragraph, and it is observed that the Government of Bombay has already, in its Resolution of the 8th July 1889, prescribed that the amount of the minimum guarantee should no longer be fixed by competition. The experiment is being tried of leaving the Commissioner to determine the amount of the guarantee in each district at his own discretion. The Commissioner is instructed to be careful not to overburden farmers, and to fix the guaranteed minimum vend rather below than above his own estimate of the normal demand, and, having fixed the amount, he is to call for applications on those terms and give the farms to the persons whom he may consider most likely to conduct the business satisfactorily. While fully admitting that this modification of the system renders it less open to objection and misconstruction, the Government of India believe that his Excellency the Governor in Council will recognise

that it is inadvisable to adopt any half measures of the kind as the basis of a permanent policy. The objections which can be stated against the system lose little of their apparent force even when a very moderate estimate is made of the amount to be guaranteed, and it is the apparent rather than the real force of these objections which renders it necessary to modify the existing system. The ordinary demands of the districts has now been ascertained; the preventive establishments are much stronger than they were 13 years ago, and it is hoped that they may be able to prevent smuggling and illicit practices without the aid of the guaranteed minimum system.

8. Under these circumstances the Government of India trust that the Government of Bombay will see their way to try the experiment of abolishing the system of a minimum guarantee for opium vend on the earliest possible opportunity. The system has been of value during the past 13 years, and has made control over the consumption of opium an easier task than it was in 1878-79. Much experience has been gained and smuggling has been successfully combated. The Governor-General in Council hopes that the officers of the Opium Department will now be able to introduce a system which does not involve a minimum guarantee, and to work it successfully without serious risk of a revival of the difficulties met with in earlier years, and he desires that steps may be taken at once to consider the question in time to enable the proposed change to be carried out from the beginning of the next revenue year.

No. 16.—RESOLUTION by the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Finance and Commerce Department.  
No. 4,033, dated the 25th September 1891.

RESOLUTION.—The evils connected with the smoking of opium and its preparations on the premises of licensed shops have for many years attracted the attention of the Government of India and the Local Governments; and endeavours have been made to prevent or minimise those evils. It has been recognised that it would be impossible, even if it were expedient, absolutely to prohibit the smoking of opium in India; and the Government has therefore refrained from attempting the absolute prevention of opium smoking, and has had to decide whether it is preferable (a) that those who are addicted to the habit should indulge in it in shops licensed for the purpose where police regulations can be fully enforced and all the opium smoked would certainly be licit opium on which the duty had been paid and which would therefore be enhanced in price by the amount of the duty; or (b) that the smokers should be driven to smoke in their private houses or in other unlicensed places where police regulations could not be enforced, and where there would be much risk of the opium consumed being illicit opium and therefore unduly cheap.

2. The decision of most of the Local Governments has been that the evils connected with the smoking of opium in licensed shops are on the whole less than those which would arise under the system of refusing licenses for such shops. And the policy in most provinces has been gradually to reduce the number of licenses. The number of such shops has in recent years been reduced in all provinces, and in some very considerably.

3. In two provinces, however, the policy has been different. In the Punjab the Government between the years 1885 and 1890 gradually closed all the shops licensed for the sale of the preparations of opium used for smoking, and there is not now in that province any shop at which maḍak or chandu can be licitly sold. It is believed that this measure has caused a decrease in the practice of opium smoking, though in some districts it is already reported that private and illicit shops have to some extent taken the place of the licensed shops.

4. In the Central Provinces also the Chief Commissioner in 1890 directed the stoppage of all licenses for the consumption on the premises of opium and other drugs. Licenses for the sale of the preparations of opium which are smoked are still granted in the Central Provinces, but the number of them has been much reduced.

5. His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has now given very careful consideration to the question discussed in the preceding paragraphs and has come to the conclusion that it is expedient to try the experiment of inserting in the licenses in all provinces clauses prohibiting the smoking, or the consumption of opium and its preparations in any other form, on the premises.

6. His Excellency in Council is aware that the adoption of this measure involves the risk of unlicensed places being established for the smoking of opium or its preparations, and that dealings in illicit opium would be likely to occur in such places. It is also

probable, especially in large towns, that the change may have the effect of increasing the difficulty of enforcing police regulations for the maintenance of order. But after careful consideration of the evils, which must be faced, whichever of the two courses be adopted, he has decided that it is better to run the risk involved, and to trust to Local Governments to adopt the preventive measures best calculated to minimise it.

7. One such measure would be to reduce the quantity of the preparations of opium used for smoking of which the possession is legal, and in provinces in which licenses are issued for the sale of those preparations notwithstanding the prohibition of consumption on the premises, the amount which may be sold to one person. In most provinces the amount of the preparations of opium which may be legally possessed is the same as the amount of unprepared opium, the quantity varying from three to ten tolas. Five or ten tolas of madak or chandu furnish sufficient material for a considerable number of smokers, and the congregation of smokers in private houses, payment being secretly made to the owner of the house, is difficult to prevent, if the possession of those quantities is allowed. It is possible that if the limit of amount of prepared opium which private persons are allowed to possess were to be reduced, say, to one tola, the establishment of opium smoking dens in private houses might be more easily prevented. The Governor-General in Council will be prepared to consider favourably any alterations of the opium rules in this direction which Local Governments may propose.

8. For the reasons stated in this Resolution the Government of India now directs that, when the term for which any existing licenses are in force expires, in any licenses which may be renewed a clause should be inserted, prohibiting the consumption of opium on the premises in any form. If a Local Government considers that in any particular locality, such, for example, as the Presidency towns, it will be impossible to enforce this condition immediately, his Excellency the Governor-General in Council will be prepared to consider any representation for temporary exemption of the locality from these orders. But he desires that, as a general rule, the orders should be brought into force everywhere on the first opportunity.

ORDER.—Ordered, that this Resolution be forwarded to all Local Governments and Administrations.

Despatch from the SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO HIS EXCELLENCY the MOST HONOURABLE the GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

MY LORD MARQUIS, (Revenue, No. 94) dated 17th December 1891.

I HAVE considered in Council your Excellency's letter No. 289, dated the 14th October 1891, with enclosures, regarding the consumption of opium in India, and the arrangements under which an excise revenue of about Rx. 800,000 is levied on that consumption.

2. The information contained in these papers is precise and interesting. Among other matters they show—

(1.) that the number of licensed opium shops in British India has decreased by 9 per cent. during the past 10 years, while the population has increased 9 per cent. There were in—

1880, 11,113 licensed opium shops in British India.

1890, 10,100

These figures, I understand, include every individual authorised shop, whether it is separately licensed, or whether it is included with other shops in one license;

(2.) that the quantity of licit opium consumed in British India, though it has fluctuated, has not increased greatly during the last 10 years; while it is claimed that in some provinces, especially in Bombay and Madras, the increase is largely due to the substitution of licit for illicit opium. The figures of actual consumption are—

	Seers.	Chests.
1880	444,833	= 6,639
1881	399,753	= 5,966
1890	455,114	= 6,752

(3.) that licenses for smoking opium, or its preparations on the premises (*i.e.*, for opium dens, as they have been called), are no longer granted in the Punjab or

in the Central Provinces; and you have given orders for the gradual withdrawal of all such licenses elsewhere;

- (4.) that the Government of Bombay have been requested to stop the practice of requiring licensed opium vendors to sell yearly a guaranteed-minimum quantity of licit opium; though you consider that the practice has, in the past, operated to check illicit opium dealings;
- (5.) that it is a mistake to regard opium consumption as a new thing in the Madras Presidency; the truth being that, whereas such consumption was uncontrolled in the past, it is now controlled and checked by being made to pay a heavy duty;
- (6.) that one effective measure for checking the spread of opium consumption has been to enhance the duty upon, or price of opium; and this price has during the last 10 years been raised in Assam from Rs. 26 to Rs. 37 per seer, and in Burma from Rs. 24 to Rs. 32 per seer; while in Bombay, during the past 14 years, it has been raised from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 per seer;
- (7.) that it is not practicable to close all opium shops and to stop opium consumption, so long as opium is grown in British India and in Native States. Such a measure might create serious discontent, especially in the Punjab, which is the nursery of our Indian troops, where opium is largely consumed, and where the average physique of the people is excellent;
- (8.) that in Burma the Local Government has proposed arrangements for stopping the sale of opium to Burmans in the lower, as has already been done in the upper, province. You have intimated your readiness to sanction this proposal, provided certain facts are made clear; and you have told the Chief Commissioner that "any possible loss of revenue involved in" measures for checking the opium habit among Burmans "need not be taken into account";
- (9.) that the total licit consumption of opium in British India would suffice to furnish a moderate daily dole of a quarter tola of opium (one tenth of an ounce) to about 400,000 people, that is, to two persons in every thousand of the population.

3. I approve the orders which you have issued on the several points noticed; and I shall be glad to receive a special report when effect shall have been given everywhere to your orders on points (3) and (4), and to learn how far you may find it possible to carry further, and into other provinces, the policy of increasing the duty on or selling price of opium (point (6) above). I recognise fully that it is the wish and the policy of your Government to check and limit the habit of consuming licit opium among Indian populations, as far as is possible without driving them to smuggling or to the use of more harmful narcotic drugs.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) CROSS.

Despatch from SECRETARY OF STATE for INDIA to HIS EXCELLENCY the MOST HON. the GOVERNOR-GENERAL of INDIA in COUNCIL.

MY LORD MARQUIS,

Revenue, No. 68, dated 28th August, 1890.

I FORWARD, for the information of your Excellency's Government, a copy of a memorial presented to me on the 30th July by an influential deputation on the subject of the consumption of opium and other drugs in India.

2. I informed the deputation that their memorial would be forwarded for the consideration of your Government, and I remarked that the number and character of the names appended to the memorial added weight to their representations. At the same time I said that the Government of India were, like myself, fully alive to the evil attendant upon the unrestrained consumption of opium and other intoxicating drugs.

I shall be glad to receive, at your convenience, any observations you may see fit to offer respecting this memorial.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) CROSS.

THE HUMBLE MEMORIAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE OPIUM TRADE,  
To the Right Hon. Viscount Cross, G.C.B., Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State  
for India.

My Lord,

Dated July 30, 1890.

1. On behalf of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, we desire to present to your Lordship the following considerations with regard to the consumption of opium and other drugs in British India.

2. During the last two years the Society has received from different quarters information tending to show that in various parts of India the habit of opium smoking is on the increase, and in particular that houses licensed by Government in many of the towns of India, for smoking opium and its products on the premises, were causes of great demoralization. We have also received information of a similar character with regard to other narcotic drugs, of the sale of which the Indian Government has a monopoly under the Abkari Act.

The information thus received by the Society is derived mainly from papers which have from time to time been reprinted in its quarterly organ, the "Friend of China," and a reference to which will be found in the Appendix to this Memorial.

3. Recently the Society has obtained, through a return furnished by Sir John Gorst to Mr. Mark J. Stewart, M.P., information as to the number of shops for the last ten years in several Provinces of India.

The numbers are as follows:—

NUMBER of LICENSED SHOPS for OPIUM, GANJA, and KINDRED DRUGS in each PROVINCE for the past TEN YEARS, so far as the REPORTS show.

Years.	Madras.	Bombay.	Bengal.			N.W. Provinces and Oudh.		Panjab.		Burma.		Central Provinces.		Assam.		Berar.
			Opium.	Ganja.	Hemp, &c.	Opium.	Ganja, Hemp, &c.	Opium.	Ganja, Hemp, &c.	Opium.	Ganja, Hemp, &c.	Opium.	Ganja, Hemp, &c.	Opium.	Ganja, Hemp, &c.	
1870-80	—	—	3205	3210	372	792	2064	1164	980	67	None.	Figures not obtainable.		1463	267	332
1880-81	—	—	3308	3411	426	874	2878	1470	945	67	"	1850	1288	1463	267	560
1881-82	—	—	2893	3438	415	902	4284	1468	945	28	"	1733	1014	1404	280	555
1882-83	—	—	2849	3271	370	1024	4300	1481	959	17	"	1481	959	1373	204	570
1883-84	—	—	2843	3293	372	1078	4700	1515	980	18	"	1515	980	1373	204	580
1884-85	—	—	2742	3190	358	1103	4807	1453	984	18	"	1433	984	1343	310	585
1885-86	—	—	2626	3033	349	1056	4785	1418	989	17	"	1236	975	1329	314	594
1886-87	—	—	2543	3064	351	905	3757	1439	1107	17	"	1237	1045	1295	317	601
1887-88	1167	1296*	2381	2940	330	1086	3857	1717	1783	16	"	1228	1070	1110	327	603
1888-89	1173	—	2367	2926	338	1084	3878	1840	1700	30‡	"	1295	1121	1030	328	604

Madras and Bombay.—The excise reports for years before 1887-88 do not give the number of licensed shops for opium and ganja; so only two years' figures can be given. For Bombay, too, the earliest report giving these particulars is that for 1837-38. The report for the following year has not yet come. So for Bombay only one year's figures can be given. In both Madras and Bombay shop licenses for opium and drugs are shown together.

\* This figure differs from that previously given, namely, 631, because the smaller figure was for Bombay alone, and did not include Sind.

† These figures differ from those previously given. The present figures include the opium shops licensed to sell other drugs. The previous figures, 397 and 722, showed only the shops separately licensed for sale of ganja, bharg, &c.

‡ In this year the 14 shops in Upper Burma were reckoned for the first time.

§ In Berar the shops for the different drugs are not distinguished.

4. With regard to the general question of the Abkari revenue from drugs, the Society is well aware that the avowed policy of the Indian Government, as repeatedly expressed in the reports on the "Progress and Condition of India," is "to obtain a maximum of duty with a minimum of consumption." To quote the language employed in the Report for 1882-3, which contains a review for the preceding 10 years, "The rates of duty are raised from time to time to the highest point that will not encourage illicit manufacture or illicit importation." That report states that, "In the case of opium and ganja, the most deleterious drugs in popular use, the consumption is being steadily reduced by successive augmentations in the rate of duty." Whilst we are by no means able to accept this principle as satisfactory, yet even if we could so accept it, we should still feel it our duty to call attention to the need of greater stringency, especially in some of the provinces of India, in order to carry it out loyally. We would call attention to the inevitable danger under such a rule, lest the effort to reduce consumption be subordinated to the consideration of "maximum revenue"; and we would urge the importance of clear instructions being given on this point to the local officials, since there is ground to fear that they have in some instances looked upon the revenue as the first consideration, and the limitation of consumption as quite secondary.

5. With regard to Bengal, the Central Provinces, and Assam, the Society notice with pleasure that the number of licenses for the sale of opium and other narcotics has been largely reduced during the 10 years covered by the table given above. In the Central Provinces, however, we observe that the year 1888-9 shows an increase, as compared with the three previous years, of the number of licenses for the sale of opium; and, with regard to ganja and other drugs, that there has been a steady growth in the number of licenses from 1882-3, when the licenses numbered 959, to 1888-9, when the licenses were 1,121. We suggest the desirability of calling the attention of the Chief Commissioner to this increase, and of inquiring whether it would not be possible further to restrict the number of licenses.

6. The Society is also very glad to learn from the Report for 1888-9, as from similar statements in earlier reports, that in Assam the measures taken by the Government of that province in limiting the number of licenses and raising the price of the drug have greatly affected for the better the habit of consuming opium, especially in the valley of the Brahmaputra. We observe that the Chief Commissioner's resolution on the Report for 1888-9 suggests "That the time has come to raise the question whether the price at the Treasury, which has been for some years at its present figure, might not now be raised." We hope that effect will promptly be given to this suggestion, and the number of licenses be further reduced at the same time. We regret to note that in Assam the number of licenses for other narcotic drugs has been steadily rising during the 10 years from 267 in 1879-80 to 328 in 1888-9.

7. The remaining provinces of India do not present similarly encouraging features. In the North-West Provinces and Oudh, the number of licenses for opium has increased from 792 to 1,084, about 36 per cent. in the 10 years, whilst the licenses for other drugs have risen from 2,964 in 1879-80 to 3,878 in 1888-9. We regard this increase as a very serious matter, and trust that the attention of the Commissioner will be called to the subject. We are glad to see that in 1886-7 the whole of the chandu shops were closed, and that the Provincial Government was then promoting tea shops as a counter-attraction. We are gratified to learn that the peremptory closing of all the opium dens in Lahore was ordered to take effect from the 1st of April last. We trust that the same measure may be extended to other parts of these provinces. The subject of providing substitutes for these demoralising practices has not been mentioned again in the reports on the "Progress and Condition of India," but we hope that it has not been lost sight of; and we would suggest that similar counter-attractions might be suitably encouraged by the Governments of other provinces. It is well known that in this country the increased supply of attractive and comfortable coffee and cocoa shops and temperance restaurants has had a powerful influence in diminishing intemperance.

8. In the Punjab the increase of opium licenses is still more startling, there being 685, or 63 per cent. more in 1888-9 than in 1879-80. There can, we feel assured, be no adequate justification for such an increase. Recent information is to the effect that the opium dens in Lucknow were to be closed, with the exception of three; we rejoice at the closing of so many, but cannot admit the necessity for any exception.

9. In Berar the increase in licenses for all drugs is 72, or 12 per cent. We have not been furnished with returns for Coorg and Ajmere, but in the latter province the "Progress and Condition" report for 1887-8 shows an increase of licenses from spirits and drugs from 205 to 210, and in both provinces the revenue from opium appears to have steadily increased.

10. The facts as to Lower Burma have frequently been brought by the Society before your Lordship's predecessors. We venture here to refer to the memorial presented to Lord Kimberley on the 4th March, 1886, in which, whilst expressing our approval of the reduction of licenses in 1881 and following years from 68 to 18 shops, we urged that the remaining licenses should be also withdrawn. We would here repeat the arguments which were put before your Lordship's predecessor, and whilst we are glad that two more shops have since then been closed, we cannot regard this as by any means a satisfactory rate of progress in the diminution of temptations and vice.

This partial success in checking the spread of an evil which, in Sir C. U. Aitchison's words, "affects the very life of this young and otherwise prosperous province," should inspire the Indian Government to proceed farther in the same direction, having as their goal the entire suppression of the trade. In support of this view we quote the report of Mr. Hodgkinson, Commissioner of the Irrawaddy district:—\*

"Opium, drink, and gambling are the three curses of the country, and to cope with these evils the present machinery is utterly inadequate."

\* Excise Reports, 1883-84.



"The terrible growth of opium eating and smoking, and the evil effects which have made themselves felt wherever the drug permeates, have been dwelt upon again and again, yet nothing has been done which really tends to check the evil, except in the Kyaukpyu district of the Arakan division, where opium shops have been entirely abolished with the most beneficial result. In this division, it is true, the number of shops has been greatly reduced, and the selling price of the drug somewhat raised; but the only effect of the change has been an enormous increase in smuggling and law-breaking (which the high value and small bulk of the drug make it most difficult to effectually check), in order to disseminate opium throughout the country without reducing the consumption in the very least. A large revenue is secured to the Government by the present system, but it is secured by sapping the very heart's blood of the people, the better classes of whom most bitterly reproach us, and in my opinion very justly, for our apathy and mis-government in this matter."

We also refer your Lordship to the important report by the Burmese Excise Commissioner, Mr. Copleston, who evidently is of opinion that total prohibition would be practicable, except at the seaports, and that the only real objection to this course is the consequent loss of revenue. Mr. Copleston says:—

"The real question seems to be first, whether it is to be accepted as an admitted fact—and there can be no doubt that a vast majority of officers do consider it to be so—that opium eating and smoking are most injurious to the well-being both of individuals and of Society in British Burma; and secondly, whether, the evil is to be stopped at all hazards, and regardless of the loss of revenue which must be incurred."

And again—"The chief practical objection to the present system is that it is framed on the belief that opium is bad for the Burmese, and yet it does not go far enough, and falls far short of its intended efficiency. If opium is still believed to be a serious evil, and likely to cause deterioration—physical, mental, and moral—of the Burman, and if the revenue difficulty can be got over, then I would say, let us have shops at the seaports, and penalise its possession outside these towns."

A most important argument in favour of total prohibition is that it, and it alone, will satisfy the moral convictions of the people of Burmah. Commissioner Aitchison reported:—"Native opinion is unanimous in favour of stopping the supply altogether, and no measure we could adopt would be so popular with all the respectable and law-abiding class of the population."

More than once, natives of Burma have petitioned for the total prohibition, and they have even gone so far as to suggest to Government to impose an extra land-tax in order to make up the deficit which would be occasioned by the loss of the opium revenue. We would respectfully submit to your Lordship that it is the duty as well as the wisdom of the British rulers of India not to attempt to govern the vast realm committed to their charge altogether in accordance with the ideas and practices prevalent in Great Britain, but to give patient attention and generous consideration to the reasonable wishes, and especially to the higher moral sentiments of the people of India. In the particular case before us, if it can be proved—and it seems to us to be abundantly established on the testimony of British officials—that the Burmese are all but unanimous in desiring total prohibition of a noxious drug, then no considerations of revenue should be allowed to delay compliance with their so reasonable demand.

11. To the foregoing arguments we have one more to add. It is stated in one of the appendices to the Despatch on Abkari Administration from the Government of India, addressed to your Lordship in 1887, that "licenses were issued for the sale of ganja," in Lower Burma, "up to the year 1872, since which the cultivation, sale, or possession of that drug has been absolutely prohibited." What reason can there be, except that of the revenue involved, why the same policy should not be adopted with regard to opium?

12. With regard to Upper Burma, the Society urged in the memorial just referred to that no licenses for opium should be granted. Here again we cannot do better than repeat the arguments presented in 1886.

"Granted, for the sake of argument, that the entire extirpation of the habit is beyond the powers of Government—although it is no compliment to the integrity and ability of British officials to place them in this respect on a level with the agents of a sovereign like Theebaw—even so, we submit that the legalization of opium consumption would be a fatal mistake. The legal prohibition of the vice which has existed for generations in Burma, Siam, and China, and which has been encouraged and supported by the British

Government in Corea and Japan, cannot owe its origin to the mere caprice of absolute monarchs, who might rather be expected to catch at so fair an opportunity of obtaining money from their subjects, but must be due to their perception of what the moral and religious sense of their people requires of them. The Oriental populations do not think it right and wise that each individual should be left to his own individual responsibility, with an opium-shop within sight, which he is free to enter or avoid at his pleasure. Knowing their own weakness, and in their anxiety for their children, they crave of their rulers that these pitfalls shall not be suffered in their midst. Even though no Asiatic government, perhaps not all the vigour and honesty of British rule, can ever entirely prevent the illicit sale and consumption of the drug, still we believe that the imperfect operation of a prohibitory law is far less harmful than would be the introduction of licensed sale. In the first place, it must be remembered that the regulated Government sale by no means avails to exclude illegal traffic, as is evident from the case of Lower Burma.

“ But the main objections to the licensing system are two: the greater facility for the spread of the vice, and the injurious influence of Government patronage. While the sale and consumption are illegal, they must, under a Government of any vigour, necessarily hide away in the dark. The consequence is that it will be chiefly persons of low moral character, profligates, gamblers, and criminals, who will resort to these secret haunts of a forbidden indulgence. This state of things naturally tends to confine the indulgence chiefly to these classes, and to warn off all others. But if the Government throws the shield of its protection over the haunts of vice by licensing and deriving revenue from them, on the one hand the legality and publicity of the opium shops makes it easier for the more respectable classes to enter them, and on the other the Government loses in reputation in the eyes of the people. A further and weighty argument is to be found in the teaching of experience that the licensing of opium consumption opens the door to smuggling and illegal consumption. So long as the sale is licensed it is not always easy to tell whether opium found on the person or in the dwelling of a Burman be part of what has been legally introduced. If altogether prohibited, it would be contraband wherever found. In this way prohibition is much easier than regulation.”

13. We regret that this view has not commended itself to the Government of India, and that 14 licensed shops for the sale of opium have been opened in the province, though an attempt was made to restrict the sale to the Chinese and Shan population. The following communication, taken from “Regions Beyond,” a missionary publication, for May last, shows how completely our predictions have been verified. We venture again to press the necessity of complete prohibition as the only effective mode of protecting the population of this recently-acquired province from the evil habit which has wrought such havoc in Lower Burmah.

It is with bitter shame for our country and its character abroad that we read such words as the following, received lately from Mr. Stevens, of the C.J.M., who is stationed in Bhamo, Upper Burmah, which has recently become part of our great Eastern empire. He says:—

“ The English Government at first published a proclamation (of which I prepared the official Chinese translation) to the effect that the Queen Empress would never derive a revenue from the sale and use of opium in Upper Burmah. In a very few months after that explicit declaration preparations were made for licensing opium dens, and deriving a revenue from it in every possible way. Licenses to buy and sell wholesale, taxes upon the drug, licenses of opium monopolies, &c., all go now to increase the revenue; and opium-smoking goes on as before, the only advantage gained being that by taxation the price of the drug is raised; hence poor men who cannot earn enough to keep themselves supplied with it will either go back to China, or take to thieving to compass this end. Property is less secure from ‘sneak thieves’ than it was in the Burmah days.”

14. With regard to the provinces of Bombay and Madras, the figures supplied do not enable us to judge of the increase of licenses; but the revenue returns show that in Bombay the duty on opium consumed in the province, which amounted to Rx. 59, 497 in 1879–80, had risen to Rx. 121, 518 in 1888–89, having more than doubled in a period of nine years. We do not find any mention of an increase of price to account for this rapid growth of the revenue, and we fear it points to a great increase in the facilities for opium eating and opium smoking. Your Lordship will observe that much of the evidence that has reached us as to the demoralising effects of the opium dens relates specifically to the city of Bombay; and it is under a grave sense of responsibility for the

of our fellow subjects in that important city, and in the province of which it is the centre, that we implore your Lordship at once to take steps to stay the spread of the plague amongst them.

15. In Madras, the return of opium licenses shows a comparatively small increase of shops from 1887-88 to 1888-89, but it gives us no information as to how far this is part of a steady process. The revenue returns, however, tell us that there has been an even greater proportionate increase in the amount derived from internal consumption of opium than in Bombay, the figure for 1879-80 being R. 25,383, against R. 60,858 in 1888-89. The evidence of Sir T. Pycroft and Mr. E. D. Harrison before the House of Commons Committee of 1871 was to the effect that there was practically no consumption of opium in the province (Evidence 1871, Qq. 3238-9 and 3961-3; 1872, Qq. 3955-6). Since that time, however, measures appear to have been taken to spread the habit of opium smoking. Thus in the "Progress and Condition" Report for 1884-85 we are told that "the licences conveying the monopoly to particular dealers have generally been put up to auction, but in some of the Hill tracts they have been disposed of free of charge." The only excuse for this would appear to be that hinted at in the Report for 1887-88, which states that "in the feverish Hill tracts of the northern divisions (of Madras) the people obtain opium at a lower price than elsewhere." We would earnestly deprecate so cruel a kindness as that of teaching the people to rely on opium as a febrifuge. Without denying that it is capable of being used for this purpose, we are confident that the highest medical authorities will confirm us in stating that much more effective and less dangerous febrifuges may be found, and that in very many cases reliance on opium proves the remedy to be far worse than the disease.

16. In conclusion, we desire to impress upon your Lordship the serious danger lest the opium habit, which has proved so fatal already in the Chinese Empire and in the Dutch Colonies of Java and Sumatra, should in like manner spread throughout Her Majesty's dominions in India. That it is specially fascinating, and therefore specially dangerous to Eastern populations, is shown by the above-named instances, whilst the practicability of entire prohibition has been proved by the examples of Japan, of Corea, of certain limited districts in Java, and, we believe, of the Philippine Islands.

17. That opium, when used under proper medical advice, may be, and often is, a most valuable drug, we readily admit, but it is surely within the power of the British Government of India to devise and carry out proper provisions for its sale only for these purposes, analogous in their purpose, though necessarily different in machinery, to those contained in the Pharmacy Act, 1868, under which the retail sale of opium is regulated in this country.

18. Especially do we entreat that steps be at once taken throughout British India to close the opium dens or shops for the retail sale of opium to be consumed on the premises, which we cannot but regard as a disgrace to the British Government of India. If such establishments must exist, better far that they should be illegitimate to be suppressed by the police, and driven to hide themselves in holes and corners, than that they should flaunt themselves in open day, parading the license of the Queen Empress, and carrying the sanction of the Supreme Government of India.

We are, with great respect,

Your Lordship's obedient servants,

(Signed on behalf of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.)