

Arriving here, the opium, after being carefully check-weighed, is searched and again classified, first by hand—and the men to do this work can from long experience tell to one degree the consistence of any specimen—and then is classified again on a steam table.

Dr. Manyard, the officiating factory superintendent, thus describes this second examination :

“ These tables are shallow iron chambers, inside of which steam circulates, and on top of which rest white china plates. A specimen of a hundred grains of opium dried to a powder on these shows by its loss in weight the amount of moisture it contained. Thus, if 100 grains result in 80 grains, we say the consistence of that opium is 80°, *i.e.*, it contains 20 per cent. of moisture, and it is on this consistence that the assami is paid. The same weight of opium at 80°, of course, being more valuable than at 50°. Every specimen in addition to the assay is also carefully tested for impurities, and not until a certificate of purity is received back from the laboratory can any single jar of opium be passed into the *malkhana* storing vats, where opium of different classes (each class including 3° of consistence) is stored in different vats. Each class bears a distinctive name, thus *awal* includes opium of consistence, 70°, 71°, and 72°, *darawal*, 73°, 74°, and 75°, and so on. This classification and examination of the opium takes place in April, May, and June—as many as 1,200 and even 1,800 jars (maunds) being disposed of daily. Good opium, as thus received at the factory, is a moist, granular, rich mahogany-brown colored substance, varying in consistence according to the inspissation it has undergone, from that of thick pea-soup to that of putty; the consistence also rising with the amount of *pasewha* present. The color varies with the age of the opium (darkening with age), amount of *pasewha* (darker the more there is), soil on which grown (lighter from high land only recently cultivated), but is never black unless adulteration has occurred. The texture varies from the distinctly granular to the homogeneous, but when the opium is pure is always uniform. Its variations depend upon the amount of *pasewha* present, but more especially upon the manipulation the opium has undergone, the grain being destroyed by prolonged manipulation. The texture is usually determined by taking a specimen in the palm of one hand and spreading it out with the fingers of the other, or with a spatula. Pressed between the finger and thumb, opium is sticky and viscid and draws out in fine threads, which break with a ragged fracture, and by the appearance of these the Chinese in part judge of the nature of the drug. The smell of fresh opium is strong and peculiar, rather agreeable, fruity it has