

the next room, which is very much larger, we find it occupied by six groups, all sitting or reclining on carpets on the floor. In the centre of each group is a little lamp with a bare flame about the size of an ordinary bean. Let us go round and view each group of smokers, and we will find that the *modus operandi* of each smoker is very similar, and pretty much as follows :

Having purchased a small plateful of the poison--it is usually sold in small tin plates, about the size of a silver dollar, in a liquid or treacle state the smoker leaning on his left elbow holds this plate in the left hand ; with his right hand he rolls the end of a long piece of wire in the poison. He now dries what adheres to the wire in the small flame of the lamp. This process is repeated several times till a portion of the opium, about the size of a pea, adheres to the wire. This is pressed into the bowl of a pipe with a very large head, but only one small hole in the head serving for a bowl. Now the smoker stretches eagerly forward to the flame with his pipe. He inhales right into his lungs every particle of smoke from his filling. Now he falls back and allows the smoke to ooze slowly from his nostrils and sometimes his ears. After one, two or three pipes, according to the stage he has reached in the down grade, he falls back into a state of stupor most ghastly in appearance, like a horrible emaciated corpse.

Do you feel sick with the heat of the day and the horrible stench of the smokers ? Well, we will soon leave the place after we have taken a look at some of the individuals composing the groups. The first group consists of two women and three men. One woman is old at any rate seems to be old. The other looks to be about sixteen years of age. The men, although they may be young, all look old, with that horrible opium old-man look--the dried skin drawn tight across the bones of the face, and the eyes glassy as those of a corpse. The groups are arranged with a view to caste--for all castes smoke. Let us hurry out, the vile air of the lane is fresh compared to this.

I am told that this opium habit is spreading with frightful rapidity through India. These dens are all licensed by the British Government. This is a fact that not one of these poor slaves will fail to cast in your teeth if you try to save him from the vile habit.

There are other things that we might see. The drinking habit is also, under British protection, closing its deadly meshes over India's millions. As you pass along you see numbers of these licensed bhang shops. The usual