

Next morning the harvesters return and scrape off the crude opium this they smear on to the palms of their hands, and when they have got together a good collection, they put it into earthenware dishes. This collecting is done with blunt knives like bits of hoop iron. Each set of incisions in a capsule yields about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  grains of crude opium, and the scarifications are repeated several times—until the juice ceases to flow. As thus collected, opium is a granular, rose-red liquid containing 49-51 per cent. of moisture. The poppy plant now rapidly fades and is soon cut down and broken up, and is sent in to be used for packing opium cakes. The seeds are pressed for poppy oil, or are kept for the next year's sowing. After pressing, the residue is used as food for cattle. The land is at once cultivated again and probably indigo is sown—what strikes one specially in Indian agriculture being that the soil is given no rest, one crop following another in constant succession.

The opium trade of India is a government monopoly, and is worked by a department of Europeans, assisted by a great number of minor native officials. These grant licenses to the cultivators, without which they are not allowed to grow the poppy. They also advance money to enable the cultivators to meet the expenses of preparing the land, etc. They measure all the land after it has been sown with poppy, and thus check any cheating, in that a native cannot get an advance on a greater piece of land than he actually cultivates. All the opium that is collected must be taken by the natives to the government go-downs (or warehouses), where it is weighed and carefully examined to see that it has not been adulterated. In spite of this barrier, adulteration is a common thing and the substances used for this purpose are very numerous, of which gum acacia, bael, betel, the juice of several milk-yielding trees, raw sugar, ghee (branded butter), flour, linseed, brick dust, and even cow dung may be mentioned.

The examiners at the warehouses become very skilful in detecting adulteration by the senses of sight, touch and smell, and use no chemical tests there.

All the opium is, at the warehouse, roughly divided into three qualities, according to its consistence—the most solid being the best—and the value is placed to the credit of the grower, and he is paid that amount in cash, less the advance, which he received earlier in the season. The officials then put the opium into great earthenware jars, each containing eighty pounds, and these are carefully sealed, and then sent by boat or train to headquarters at Patna under a guard of police.