

COPY

Vancouver, B. C.,

May 26th, 1908.

The Right Honorable Sir Wilfrid Laurier,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Sir Wilfrid:-

A short time ago when I had the honor of having an interview with you at Ottawa you intimated that you would be pleased if, during my visit to British Columbia, I should look into the Opium Question and report results to you. I beg to report as follows:-

RE MANUFACTURE AND IMPORTATION.

The juice is expressed from the poppy in India. This is boiled down to the consistency of putty and put in skins, each package weighing about four pounds. It is then sent to Hong Kong, which is the distributing centre for the world. In this crude condition it arrives in Canada. The skin is torn off, the opium is broken up, water is poured on, and a boiling process begun, which continues about ten hours, during which two pounds of the crude is reduced to one pound of the refined. The product has the consistency of tar. In this condition it is sold to the user and the retailer. The smoker takes a small quantity of it upon the end of a wire and, deftly twirling it over a lamp, reduces the moisture and rolls it into a ball which is put in the pipe and smoked. Most of these processes I have witnessed.

I interviewed the two manufacturers doing business in Vancouver and was informed by one of them that he "cooked" twenty pounds a day and sold it at \$7.50 per pound. Much of it is shipped East and some of it is smuggled into the

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

Volume 8