

tween England and China. In 1891, the House of Commons decided by a good majority that "the system by which the Indian opium revenue is raised is morally indefensible." And yet, I will venture to believe that to most of my readers, British as well as American, the bald statement that the British Indian government actually manufactures opium on a huge scale in its own factories to suit the Chinese taste comes with the force of a shock. It is not the sort of a thing we like to think of as among the activities of an Anglo-Saxon government. It would seem to be government ownership with a vengeance.

Now, to get down to cases, just what this Government Opium Monopoly is, and just how does it work? An excerpt from the rather ponderous blue book will tell us. It may be dry, but it is official and unassailable. It is also short.

"The opium revenue"—thus the blue book—"is partly raised by a monopoly of the production of the drug in Bengal and the United Provinces, and partly by the levy of a duty on all opium imported from native states. . . . In these two provinces, the crop is grown under the control of a government department, which arranges the total area which is to be placed under the