REPORT
OF THE
INDIAN HEMP DRUGS COMMISSION.
1893-94.

CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTORY.

1. The Indian Hemp Drugs Commission was appointed under the orders of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council contained in the Resolution of the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 2792-Ex., dated 3rd July 1893. In a despatch No. 36 (Revenue), dated 16th March 1893, Her Majesty's Secretary of State informed the Government of India that in answer to a question* put in the House of Commons he had expressed his willingness to request the Government of India to appoint a Commission to inquire into the cultivation of the hemp plant in Bengal, the preparation of drugs from it, the trade in those drugs, the effect of their consumption upon the social and moral condition of the people, and the desirability of prohibiting the growth of the plant and the sale of ganja and allied drugs. In requesting the Government of India to appoint a Commission for the purposes stated, the Secretary of State desired that such instructions might be issued as would ensure that the inquiry should be thorough and complete. Lord Kimberley was of opinion that the inquiry could hardly be confined to Bengal, but should extend to the whole of India, and that the Commission should ascertain to what extent the existence of the hemp plant all over India affects the practical difficulty of checking or stopping the consumption of ganja as distinguished from other narcotic drugs prepared from the hemp plant, and whether there is ground for the statement that bhang is less injurious than ganja to consumers.

2. The Commission appointed by the Government of India Resolution of 3rd July 1893 consisted of a President and six Members, three of whom were officials and three Native non-official gentlemen. Under subsequent orders, a Secretary to the Commission was appointed.†

* By Mr. W. S. Caine on 2nd March 1893.
† President:
The Hon'ble W. Mackworth Young, M.A., C.S.I., First Financial Commissioner, Punjab.
Members:
1. Mr. H. T. Omanney, Collector, Panch Mahals, Bombay.
2. Mr. A. H. L. Fraser, M.A., Commissioner, Chhattisgarh Division, Central Provinces.
3. Surgeon-Major C. J. H. Warden, Professor of Chemistry, Medical College, and Chemical Examiner to Government, Calcutta; Officiating Medical Storekeeper to Government, Calcutta.
4. Raja Sosh Sikaramwar Roy, of Tahirpur, Bengal.
6. Lala Nihal Chand, of Munsaffarnager, North-Western Provinces.
Secretary:
Mr. H. J. McIntosh, Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial and Municipal Departments.
3. In pursuance of the wishes of the Secretary of State, the following instructions were issued to the Commission:

"His Excellency the Governor-General in Council desires that the inquiry should be thorough and searching, but he leaves to the Commission full discretion to determine the best means of securing that result. Certain instructions are given in the following paragraphs; but these are not intended to be exhaustive, and the Commission have full authority to take up any branch of inquiry which in their opinion is likely to elucidate the subject and to aid the Government of India and the Secretary of State in deciding on the policy to be adopted in regard to hemp drugs.

"It is desirable that the Commission should visit and take evidence in all or most of the provinces of India: there are political objections to their holding sittings in Native States, but any information similar to that required regarding British India which can be obtained regarding Native States should be included in the Report.

"The Commission should ascertain, with as much precision as possible, the extent to which the hemp plant is cultivated in each of the provinces of India in which it is grown. They should collect full information as to the manner in which the plant is cultivated for the production of drugs and the methods of preparing the manufactured drug from the raw product, whether of the wild or the domesticated plant. Little is known at present as to the extent to which the wild plant can be used for the preparation of drugs, whether in the milder or the more noxious forms. This point has an important bearing on the possibility of introducing restrictive measures, and will require careful investigation. Full particulars should be obtained regarding all the different forms of the drug which are commonly used, especially ganja, charas, and bhang; and regarding the classes of the people by whom, and the extent to which, each is used. The physical and other effects of the use of hemp drugs should be thoroughly investigated, each variety of the drug being separately treated, so far as that can be conveniently done. In conducting this branch of the inquiry, the Commissioners should avail themselves freely of the evidence of medical experts. They should endeavour to ascertain what proportion of the population habitually consumes hemp drugs, and should thoroughly examine the testimony in support of the commonly received opinion that the use of hemp drugs is a frequent cause of lunacy. They should ascertain whether, and in what form, the consumption of the drugs is either harmless or even beneficial as has occasionally been maintained.

"Full information should be compiled regarding the administrative arrangements in force in each province for controlling the growth of the plant, the manufacture and sale of the drugs, and their importation from other provinces or from Native States, and for imposing duties on cultivation and sale. It is understood that charas is imported into the Punjab on a considerable scale from foreign territory; and the question of the importation of hemp drugs generally from foreign territory should receive the special attention of the Commission. The various systems.
employed for taxing the drug or the cultivation of the plant should be reviewed with special reference to the comparative incidence of this taxation in different parts of India and to the comparative efficacy of the taxation imposed in restricting consumption, whether by the mere weight of the tax or by the method and stage of imposition. It is known that the rates vary considerably in different provinces, but the precise effect of the variations is not fully understood. In this connection the Commissioners should notice any case in which the proximity of a Native State affects the production or consumption of the drug in British territory.

There are two points connected with the subject-matter of the inquiry which call for special investigation. The first of these is the danger lest prohibition, or restrictive measures of a stringent character, may give rise to serious discontent, and be resented by the people as an unjustifiable interference with long-established social customs. In some parts of India the use of hemp drugs is, it is believed, common among fakirs and ascetics held in veneration by large classes of the population. In Bengal it has been stated that an infusion of the leaves of the plant is commonly offered to every guest and member of the family on the last day of the Durga Puja: it has no ill effects, and its use is not considered reprehensible in any way. The Governor-General in Council desires that the Commissioners will endeavour to ascertain to what extent these and similar customs prevail in Bengal and other parts of India, and how far the use of hemp drugs forms a part of social, or possibly religious, ceremonial or observance, and they should, if possible, take the evidence of witnesses drawn from the classes among whom the use of hemp drugs is chiefly prevalent. The Commissioners should state their opinion whether the prohibition of the use of hemp drugs or any restrictive measures which they may deem practicable would be likely to give rise to political discontent in any parts of India or among any classes of the population. It is believed that in some parts of the country bhang is, in a special degree, the poor man’s narcotic, and the possible unpopularity of a measure which would deprive the very poorest of the population of the use of a narcotic to which they have always been accustomed should not be overlooked.

Another point to which the attention of the Commissioners should be directed is the probability or possibility that, if the use of hemp drugs is prohibited, those who would otherwise continue to use them may be driven to have recourse to alcohol, or to other stimulants or narcotics which may be more deleterious.

Finally, the Governor-General in Council requests that the Commissioners, if they should be of opinion that the prohibition of the consumption of any hemp drug should not, or could not, be enforced, will indicate, for the consideration of the Government of India, any reforms and improvements which their investigations may lead them to recommend in the existing arrangements of each province for controlling the cultivation of the hemp plant, and the manufacture, sale, and taxation of hemp drugs. In framing their recommendations, regard should, of course, be had to the considerations which have been stated in paragraphs 7 and 8 of this Resolution. Absolute prohibition, or repressive measures of a stringent nature, may involve inquisitorial proceedings of an unpopular character, and
afford opportunities for the levy of blackmail; and in framing regulations for the prohibition or for the restriction of the use of hemp drugs, these considerations should be borne in mind.

“If the Commission should be of opinion that the cultivation of the hemp plant for the production of drugs, or the consumption of any hemp drug, should be absolutely prohibited, it will be their duty to state the regulations which should be adopted for this purpose.”

4. Under the terms of the Resolution appointing the Commission, they were directed to assemble in Calcutta on the 1st August 1893. The first collective meeting of the Commission actually took place on the 3rd August 1893. A series of questions was drawn up by the Commission for distribution to witnesses. The series of questions was prefaced by an explanatory note, in which it was carefully pointed out that they were not to be regarded as exhaustive, but were intended rather to serve as an index to the witnesses as to the subjects to which their attention should be specially directed. The witnesses were requested not to withhold any information merely because it was not indicated by any of the questions. They were invited to give any information which did not appear to fall under any of the questions, either by appending it as a separate note to the chapter under which it seemed naturally to fall, or by recording it at the end of the evidence. At the same time, as the questions were necessarily of wide and general application, it was pointed out that it was not intended that in every case the witness should answer all of them, but should confine himself to those questions which dealt with parts of the subject with which he was more or less acquainted; and, to enable the Commission to estimate the value of the information given, it was requested that the witness should indicate the source of his information and the facts or experiences on which he based his opinions and statements.

5. Previous to issuing their series of questions to Local Governments and Administrations for distribution to witnesses, the Commission had intimated to them that they were anxious to receive evidence from well-informed persons and representative associations, whether philanthropic, religious, or social bodies, who desired to see the preparation and sale of ganja and other hemp drugs further restricted or entirely prohibited, and that it was necessary to give such persons and associations the freest opportunity of coming forward and laying their views before the Commission. To enable these persons and associations to place themselves in communication with the Commission, Local Governments and Administrations were requested to make it widely known through the Press, or in such other manner as might be suitable, that the Commission would be glad to receive written statements of their views, accompanied by an intimation as to whether the writer, or, in the case of an association or public body, a representative, would be willing to appear before the Commission for oral examination. The Commission themselves also addressed direct a number of associations and persons who were likely to be interested in the inquiry, and further communicated to the Press through Local Governments and Administrations a letter setting forth the wishes of the Commission in respect to such persons, and intimating, for the information of the public, their proposed movements and the method of their inquiry.
Selection of witnesses by Local Governments.

6. In circulating their questions to Local Governments and Administrations for distribution to suitable witnesses, the Commission took pains to explain that they attached much importance to a due proportion of non-official witnesses being selected, and requested that in the first place copies of the questions should be supplied to the persons or associations advocating restriction who might have availed themselves of the invitation to come forward and lay their views before the Commission. Should such persons or associations have held direct communication with the Commission, steps were taken by the Commission themselves to supply them with copies of the questions. In addition to this class of witnesses, Local Governments and Administrations were asked to place copies of the questions in the hands of official and non-official persons, European and Native, who either had special knowledge of the subject, or special facilities and aptitude for acquiring such knowledge. The classes of persons whose evidence the Commission desired to receive included revenue officers of experience, magisterial officers, police officers, medical officers, officers acquainted with special races of the people, zamindars, employers of labour, and the lower grades of officials, professional men, and missionaries of all denominations. Regarding the latter class, every effort was put forth by the Commission to obtain missionary opinion on the subject of their inquiries, and it is a matter of some regret to them that their efforts have met with but little success. Not only was it announced through Local Governments that the Commission desired to receive communications from religious bodies of all denominations, but the Commission themselves also communicated freely with persons of this class. But the large majority of them declined to come forward as witnesses, and many, including Churchmen, Dissenters, and Roman Catholics, communicated letters either to Government or direct to the Commission excusing themselves on the ground of want of knowledge. As an example of the want of knowledge of the subject or lack of interest in the inquiry evinced by missionaries, it may be observed that in one instance (in the Madras Presidency) the Commission made over 70 copies of their questions to two sects of missionaries professing to represent one-fifth of the whole missionary enterprise of the Madras Presidency. Yet the total number of missionaries in this Presidency who sent in answers or statements to the Commission (though some of them quoted the opinions of others) was only 15, many of whom do not belong to either of the two sects referred to. Special instructions were issued regarding two classes of witnesses. Firstly, in order to secure compliance with the orders of the Government of India that the evidence of medical experts should be freely obtained, it was requested that the questions should be distributed to selected medical officers, both European and Native. Emphasis was laid upon the importance of ascertaining the views of subordinate native medical officers whose duties bring them into contact with the people, and it was suggested that replies should either be obtained separately from competent officers of this class, or that they should be embodied in the replies received from Civil Surgeons. The evidence of private native medical practitioners of repute, especially of those practising after native methods, was also solicited. For the convenience of the medical experts, a separate compilation of the questions dealing only with that part of the subject with which this class of witness would be likely to be acquainted was made, the witnesses being left the option of dealing either with this abbreviated compilation or with the whole series of general ques-
tions as they saw fit. Secondly, attention was drawn to those questions which
deal with the connection, causal or otherwise, of hemp drugs with crime with a
view to the evidence of selected Magistrates and Police officers being obtained
on this subject.

7. In addition to the evidence of witnesses, the Commission availed

Information from official and themselves freely of all information regarding the
other sources.
subject of their inquiry already existing in official
reports and documents as well as in publications of a non-official character.
Local Governments and Administrations were invited to furnish complete lists of
such official reports and publications, printed copies of those of special importance
being submitted. In addition to these, the Commissioner of Excise or Abkari of
each province was asked to present a memorandum setting forth in detail the
system of administration at present in force in respect to hemp drugs, accompanied
by statistics, where available, for the last twenty years in a form drawn up by
the Commission. These memoranda and statistics will be found in Vol. III
Appendices. Information existing in non-official publications came to the notice
of the Commission from many sources, and was utilized when trustworthy or
found to be of value.

8. Shortly after assembling in Calcutta, the Commission were convinced

Preliminary tour: Objects and that the period which had elapsed between the
reasons of—
date of the appointment of the Commission and
the date fixed for their assembling at Calcutta was too short to permit of their
proceeding at once with the examination of witnesses. Sufficient time had not
been allowed to the Commission to become generally acquainted with the system
of administration in respect to hemp drugs prevailing in each province, or with the
objections taken by certain persons or bodies to such systems. More import-
ant still, Local Governments and Administrations required time to enable them to
bring before the Commission a selection of witnesses which would be fairly repre-
sentative of the views and interests involved; and the witnesses themselves, whether
selected by Government or coming forward of their own motion, required time to
consider the conditions of the problem, and to set forth lucidly and in a manner
which would be satisfactory both to themselves and to the Commission the
opinions which they might entertain. Accordingly, with these objects in view,
the Commission before proceeding to the examination of the witnesses made a
preliminary visit to some provinces. The provinces visited, after Bengal, were the
North-Western Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bombay, Madras, and the Pun-
jab. Occasion was taken to study the systems in force in these provinces and
the objections thereto, and, in communication with the Local Governments, to
see that full effect had been given to the wishes of the Commission in the
matter of selecting representative witnesses. The lists of witnesses prepared by
Local Governments, so far as they were ready, were examined, and in many
cases considerable additions were made. These lists were supplemented by
increasing not only the number of witnesses selected from the different classes,
but also the numbers of classes themselves. Every effort was made after local
inquiry and in consultation with Local Governments to secure the representa-
tion of all classes and shades of opinion. In view of the ignorance which the Com-
mision found to prevail generally regarding the use and effects of the drugs, it
was found necessary to have a larger number of witnesses in every province
than was at first anticipated. During this tour this Commission as a whole, or in some cases Sub-Committees of the Commission, visited the headquarters of some of the more important Native States to make arrangements for the collection of information in these States as desired by the Government of India. Opportunity was also taken by the Commission at this period of their inquiries to get at facts and opinions in an informal way; and with this object in view many visits were made by the Commission, or by members of the Commission (generally unexpectedly and under the guidance of private persons as well as of officials), to see cultivation and manufacture of hemp drugs, to warehouses and to shops where these drugs are stored and sold, and to religious places and other places of resort where the drugs are consumed in some form or other. The results of these inquiries were sometimes recorded in notes, and sometimes in the statements of persons who were then added to the list of witnesses. Inquiries were also held at many asylums, as will be explained in the following paragraph, which deals with the special inquiries made by the Commission in this direction.

9. The Commission were especially enjoined to thoroughly examine the testimony in support of the commonly received opinion that the use of hemp drugs is a frequent cause of lunacy, and with this object have made very searching inquiries. In order to make this very important branch of their labours as complete and searching as possible, the procedure adopted in the different asylums of India in classifying and dealing with cases of insanity ascribed to the use of hemp drugs was specially examined, and the connection, whether causal or otherwise, between hemp drugs and insanity was investigated in minute detail. Every asylum in British India was visited either by the Commission or by some members of the Commission, and careful inquiries were conducted on the spot in every case of insanity attributed to the use of hemp drugs for a given period. The period selected for the whole of India was the calendar year 1892, the last year for which statistics were available at the commencement of the Commission’s labours. Every case of insanity ascribed to hemp drugs in the asylums of India during the year 1892 has been specially inquired into in the asylum where the patient was confined, the papers and records of the case have been thoroughly examined, and instructions were issued to have a further local inquiry made by an experienced Magistrate, in consultation with the Civil Surgeon, to ascertain the past personal and family history of the patient and any circumstances likely to throw light on the cause of his insanity. The record of this inquiry, where made, has been submitted to the Commission through the Superintendent of the asylum concerned, who has thus had an opportunity of reconsidering the case with fuller information before him on which to base an opinion as to the cause of the insanity. Further, the statistics of insanity and the method of preparing and compiling these statistics have been subjected to a rigid scrutiny, and no opportunity has been lost of obtaining the evidence of medical experts, including Government officers, private practitioners of all classes, and Superintendents of Lunatic Asylums and their subordinates, as well as of non-professional persons, as to the relation between hemp drugs and insanity. The Commission have endeavoured to investigate and weigh the popular as well as the scientific view of this subject.
10. In regard to the alleged connection between hemp drugs and violent crime, the Commission, in addition to sifting the written and oral evidence, have examined the judicial and other records of cases which have been alluded to by the witnesses as forming the basis, or part of the basis, on which their opinions were framed.

11. As stated above, the Commission were precluded by the orders of the Government of India from holding formal sittings in Native States, but nevertheless they have endeavoured to obtain full and complete information from all the most important Native States in India. In the case of Native States in political relation with the Government of India, the Commission, in some cases in personal communication with the Agent to the Governor-General or the Resident, and in other cases by letter, arranged for the collection of the required information. In some of the larger Agencies and States special officers were appointed, through the courtesy of the Agent to the Governor-General or the Darbar, to collect and compile the available information, and much useful information has thereby been placed at the disposal of the Commission. In the smaller States, and in States under the political control of Local Governments, a memorandum of the system in force, together with statistics so far as available, has generally been furnished by the Political Agent or a responsible officer of the State. Beyond giving the States in question such advice and assistance as they desired in respect to the best methods of conducting their inquiries, indicating clearly the points on which information was desired and supplying lists of questions where required, the Commission did not interfere in any way with the course of these inquiries or select or examine witnesses for themselves.

12. One of the most important questions with which the Commission had to deal was the investigation of the proportion of the population which indulges in the use of hemp drugs, and of the classes among whom the use is prevalent. The Native Army appeared to offer a suitable field for inquiry in regard to this matter, and accordingly, with the permission of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, a series of questions dealing with this and other questions bearing upon the Commission's investigations was issued to all regiments of the British Native Army. The inquiries were made and the answers filled in by the Commanding Officers either with or without the assistance of their medical officers. The results obtained will be found in Chapter VIII.

13. The Commission first assembled at Calcutta on 3rd August 1893, and after agreeing upon their general plan of operations, and concluding their preliminary arrangements, including the distribution of questions to witnesses, started on the preliminary tour described in paragraph 8 above. The provinces visited were the North-Western Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bombay, Madras, and the Punjab. The Commission were in the North-Western Provinces from 22nd August to 1st September, and had their head-quarters at Allahabad, where the principal Revenue officers of Government were assembled to meet them. During this period the asylums at Patna (Bengal), Lucknow, Bareilly, and Lucknow were visited by
various members of the Commission, and one member proceeded to Naini Tal to consult with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on behalf of the Commission.

The Central Provinces were visited from 2nd to 11th September, the Commission's head-quarters being at Jubbulpore. The asylums at Jubbulpore and Nagpur were inspected, and some of the members met the Chief Commissioner at Pachmarhi. Some of the members also proceeded to Indore to consult the Agent to the Governor-General, and the Commission as a body had an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the system of cultivation of the hemp plant for ganja which is centralized at Khandwa. From the Central Provinces the Commission travelled to Poona, where they remained from 12th to 18th September in communication with the Government, and where there was an important asylum to inspect. On the way from Poona to Madras the Resident of Mysore was visited at Bangalore, and inquiries were held at the Dharwar Asylum. At Madras the Commission were occupied from the 22nd to 25th September, after which they broke up into two parties—one proceeding to consult with His Excellency the Governor at Ootacamund, and the other to Hyderabad, where important arrangements had to be made for collecting information from that State. Inquiries were also held at the Madras and Hyderabad Asylums.

The two parties rejoined at Bombay on the 30th September, and then proceeded to Simla, where the head-quarters of the Punjab Government were located. On the journey one part of the Commission stopped at Baroda and Mount Abu to arrange for the collection of information in Baroda and the Rajputana States, while another party held inquiries at the asylums at Colaba, Ahmedabad, and Delhi. At Simla the Commission had their head-quarters from 7th to 24th October, during which interval two members paid flying visits to Lahore, Hyderabad (Sind), and Karachi to inspect the asylums at the two former places and to complete the arrangements made in Sind for the proper selection of witnesses.

The second tour, which was mainly devoted to the examination of witnesses, lasted from 25th October to 25th April. The various provinces were visited in the following order, and witnesses were examined at the centres named on the dates mentioned against each:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Dates on which witnesses were examined.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Provinces</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khandwa</td>
<td>27th October.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nagpur</td>
<td>30th and 31st October and 2nd November.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Raipur</td>
<td>4th and 6th November.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jubbulpore</td>
<td>9th, 10th, 11th, and 13th November.</td>
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<tr>
<td>North-Western Provinces</td>
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<tr>
<td>and Oudh</td>
<td>Meerut</td>
<td>16th, 17th, 20th, and 21st November.</td>
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<td>Agra</td>
<td>22nd, 23rd, and 25th November.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lucknow</td>
<td>27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th November and 1st December.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allahabad</td>
<td>4th, 5th, and 6th December.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Besides examining witnesses, the Commission continued to prosecute their inquiries in asylums during this tour, visiting all asylums which had not been seen during the preliminary tour. The centres chosen for the examination of witnesses were generally selected with a view to the convenience of the majority of the witnesses summoned; but other circumstances, such as the presence of a lunatic asylum or exceptional growth or use of hemp drugs, had some influence on the decision of the Commission in this matter.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Dates on which witnesses were examined</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>9th, 11th, 12th, and 13th December.</td>
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<td>Poona</td>
<td>14th, 15th, and 16th December.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>18th, 19th, and 20th December.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ratnagiri</td>
<td>22nd December.</td>
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<td>Madras</td>
<td>Calicut</td>
<td>28th and 29th December.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trichinopoly</td>
<td>1st January.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Madura</td>
<td>2nd January.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Visagapatam</td>
<td>9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th January.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 22nd January.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>30th and 31st January.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rangoon</td>
<td>6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th February.</td>
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<td>Bengal</td>
<td>Dacca</td>
<td>19th and 20th February.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Calcutta</td>
<td>22nd and 23rd February.</td>
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<td>Cuttack</td>
<td>26th and 27th February.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Puri</td>
<td>1st March.</td>
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<td>Assam</td>
<td>Dhubri</td>
<td>9th and 10th March.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gauhati</td>
<td>12th March.</td>
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<td>Tezpur</td>
<td>14th, 15th, and 16th March.</td>
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<td>Bengal</td>
<td>Bhagalpur</td>
<td>21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th March.</td>
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<td>Berhampur</td>
<td>26th March.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Calcutta</td>
<td>28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st March, and 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th April.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>12th, 13th, 14th, 16th, 17th, and 18th April.</td>
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</table>
14. The following statement shows the attendance of the members of the Commission during the period occupied in inquiry (3rd August 1893 to 25th April 1894):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Period of attendance with the Commission</th>
<th>Number of meetings for examination of witnesses attended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>(a) During the first tour: 83 days</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) During the second tour: 183 days</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Ommanney</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Fraser</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Warden</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raja Soshi Sikhareswar Roy</td>
<td>From 3rd August to 15th September, 44 days</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From 30th October to 24th January, from 14th to 16th February, from 22nd to 24th February, and from 7th to 25th March, 112 days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanwar Harnam Singh</td>
<td>83 days</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From 13th November to 3rd January, 22nd February to 2nd April, and from 12th to 25th April, 78 days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lala Nihal Chand</td>
<td>3rd August to 20th September, 49 days</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From 30th October to 18th November and from 17th to 25th April, 29 days.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attendance of Raja Soshi Sikhareswar Roy was broken by occasional absence caused by ill-health and other reasons. The absence of Kanwar Harnam Singh during two short periods was due to ill-health. The prolonged absence of Lala Nihal Chand was due to the fact that he suffered from continued ill-health, and was able to be with the Commission only at Calcutta at the first; then for some part of their preliminary tour, and at a few meetings for the examination of witnesses during the second tour. All the members were present at Simla during the preparation of the report.

15. The witnesses whose evidence has been received by the Commission may be practically divided into three classes:

1. Official witnesses able to give information regarding hemp drugs, based on their official and local experience.

2. Non-official witnesses of all ranks able to give information regarding the drugs generally or in connection with certain classes of the people.

3. Other persons or associations having facts or holding opinions which they desired to communicate to the Commission.

The particular selection of individual witnesses of the first and second classes was in the first place left to Local Governments and Administrations acting upon the principles laid down by the Commission that the evidence should be of as
representative a nature as possible, and that all classes interested should be ade-
quately represented. But, as has already been explained, the action of the Local
Governments and Administrations was in almost all cases supplemented by the
Commission, who held themselves free to invite the evidence of persons or asso-
ciations whose acquaintance with the subject was brought to their notice, or
who seemed on any ground to be able to throw any light on the subject.

Witnesses of the third class were of course not selected, but were invited in
the most public way, as has been already explained, to come forward and lay
their views before the Commission, should they desire to do so.

The following table shows the number of witnesses in each province whose
evidence was received by the Commission:

**Witnesses in British Provinces whose evidence was received by the Commission.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>OFFICIAL</th>
<th>MEDICAL OFFICERS</th>
<th>NON-OFFICIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPERIOR</td>
<td>SUBORDINATE</td>
<td>PRACTICING after European methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.-W. P. and Oudh</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Provinces</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajmere-Merwara</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coorg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This list comprises all the persons and associations in British provinces
whose evidence came before the Commission, whether they were examined orally
or not, and whether they were specially summoned or invited to give evidence or
volunteered their evidence. A nominal list of the witnesses in each province
prefaces the volumes of evidence appended to the report. The evidence of all these witnesses is contained in the appendices.

The number of persons or associations who submitted written statements of their views in response to the Commission's invitation was extremely limited. In most cases their names appeared in the list of witnesses selected by Local Governments and Administrations, and they submitted detailed answers to the Commission's questions in which their views were fully set forth. In their cases the preliminary written statements, which were not intended to be treated as evidence, but were meant, as it were, to serve as an introduction to the Commission, have not been published, and only the written answers to the questions and the oral examination (if any) has been published. These will be found incorporated in the appendices containing the evidence. In the few cases in which answers to the questions were not furnished, the statements themselves have been treated as evidence, and have been published with the oral examination when such was made.

16. The Commission have given a liberal interpretation to the term "evidence," and have not required that the persons giving evidence should of necessity actually appear before them. To facilitate the collection of information, a series of 70 questions framed by the Commission was placed in the hands of the witnesses, or of the majority of them, and the written answers to these questions form the bulk of the evidence before the Commission. Also, as explained above, written statements, whether following the general line of the questions or not, which were from time to time submitted by persons or by associations who either did not care to answer the questions in detail or had no opportunity of doing so, have been accepted and treated as evidence.

In admitting to the record these answers to questions and written statements, the Commission have not held it necessary that the writers should come before them. The system followed was to summon, or request the attendance of, only those persons whom, after a perusal of their written papers, the Commission thought it desirable to examine orally. The papers of those whom it was not considered necessary to examine orally were at once admitted to the record. In summoning certain witnesses the Commission were generally influenced by the fact that their papers contained statements as to facts or expressed opinions which would be further elucidated if the witness had an opportunity of explaining them verbally before the Commission. It was not considered necessary to summon every witness whose evidence seemed to require to be tested or elucidated by oral examination: where several witnesses gave evidence of precisely the same character, it was deemed sufficient to select only some as representatives to be summoned. It was obviously impossible within reasonable time to cross-examine all witnesses. Other witnesses were summoned, not because their papers expressed any views which themselves required sifting, but because the Commission had reason to believe that these witnesses might, either from their position or from any other cause, be able to give further information than that contained in their papers. In orally examining the witnesses, the Commission did not take them through the whole range of their inquiries. The oral examination was almost entirely confined to those points in the written paper which required further elucidation, or to the subjects on which
the Commission thought the witness could give further information than that con­tained in his paper. In every case, however, the witness was permitted, if he chose to do so, to supplement his written paper by offering any further evidence relevant to the inquiry not already given by him. When a witness was orally exa­mined, his evidence was taken down by a member of the Commission. It was not recorded in the form of question and answer, as this would have involved loss of time, but in the form of a narrative as nearly as might be in the words used by the witness. When the evidence was completed, it was read over to him, and (after any necessary correction) was admitted by him to be correct. This evid­ence, as thus accepted by the witness in each case, is published immediately beneath his written evidence, to which it is supplementary, and in connection with which it requires to be considered.

In almost every province some witnesses were examined orally who had not previously submitted written papers. These were either persons who, although they had not answered the questions, appeared to the Commission to be in a position to afford information, and were invited by the Commission when they arrived in the province to appear before them, or they were persons who volun­teered to give evidence while the Commission were actually holding their sittings in the province.

In the case of officials who were summoned to appear, but who were unable to do so, and of non-official witnesses who were invited to appear, but failed to do so, the Commission have not excluded their papers from the record. Their written papers are published, but a note is added to the effect that they did not appear before the Commission for oral examination although summoned or invited to attend, as the case may be.

In the lists of witnesses prefacing the volumes of evidence appended to this report distinguishing marks are given to indicate those who were examined orally in addition to furnishing written papers, those who gave oral evidence only, and those who failed to attend although summoned or invited to appear.
CHAPTER II.

IMPORTANT POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE HEMP PLANT (CANNABIS SATIVA).

17. The subject with which the Commission have to deal is surrounded in many of its aspects with a mist of uncertainty and conjecture. It is the business of the Commission to remove these doubts as far as possible, and for this end it is incumbent on them to proceed on a basis of ascertained fact and established opinion as regards each branch of the subject. This principle must be applied to the natural history of the plant equally with the other matters on which they have to report.

18. In regard to the identification and idiosyncracies of the hemp plant, those points only will be noticed which have a direct bearing on the control of the narcotic in its various forms. These points appear to be—

(a) Whether the plant is indigenous to the British Indian possessions.
(b) Whether the narcotic-yielding plant is identical with the fibre-yielding plant.
(c) Whether, though systematically identical in the botanical sense, there exist in India distinct races yielding fibre and the different forms of the narcotic.
(d) Whether the fibre-yielding plant does as a matter of fact yield the narcotic in any form.
(e) Whether the narcotic-yielding plant does as a matter of fact yield fibre.

Points (d) and (e) are of course subsidiary to, and illustrative of, point (c).

19. Point (a) may be of importance in connection with the question of controlling the wild or spontaneous growth. In his "Report on the cultivation and use of ganja" which was issued when the Commission began their inquiries, Dr. Prain has discussed this question fully at pages 39 to 44. He is clearly of opinion that the hemp plant is not indigenous to India, but that "having reached India as a fibre-yielding species, the plant developed the narcotic property for which it is now chiefly celebrated there." Dr. Watt in his article on "Hemp or Cannabis sativa" is not quite so decided as the above authority in excluding the whole of India from the area of indigenous growth. He writes as follows: "It has been found wild to the south of the Caspian Sea, in Siberia, and in the desert of Kirghiz. It is also referred to as wild in Central and Southern Russia and to the south of the Caucasus. The plant has been known since the sixth century B.C. in China, and is possibly indigenous on the lower mountain tracts. Bossier mentions it as almost wild in Persia, and it appears to be quite wild on the Western Himalayas and Kashmir, and it is acclimatised on the plains of India generally. Indeed, the intimate relation of its various Asiatic names to the Sanskrit *bhdnga* would seem to fix the ancestral home of the plant somewhere in Central Asia. On the
other hand, the Latin and Greek *Cannabis* is apparently derived from the Arabic *kinnab*. De Candolle says that ‘the species has been found wild beyond a doubt to the south of the Caspian Sea, in Siberia, near the Irtysh in the deserts of the Kirghiz, beyond lake Baikal, and in Dahuria.’ He is doubtful of its being a native of Southern and Central Russia, but suspects that its area may have extended into China, and is not sure about the plant being indigenous to Persia.” The only part of India included by Dr. Watt and his authorities in the area of indigenous growth is therefore the Western Himalayas and Kashmir, and that only in doubtful language. Dr. King, Director, Botanic Survey of India, has no hesitation in pronouncing the so-called wild growth of India to be an escape from cultivation; and when it is remembered that Kashmir is on the main line of trade between Central Asia and Hindustan, the wild growth in that country and its neighbourhood may fairly be attributed to accidental importation by the hand of man from the recognized habitat, if not to escape from cultivation carried on at one time or other in the country itself. The evidence of botanists, therefore, may be taken to exclude India from the area of indigenous growth, and it will be seen that the direct inquiries of the Commission tend to confirm this view.

20. The specific identity of the fibre-yielding and narcotic-yielding plants, point (b), and the points which follow, are important as involving the possibility that the restriction of the production of the narcotic by limiting the cultivation may affect a product and an industry which are above suspicion. On the question of identity there is now no difference of scientific opinion. The researches of Dr. Watt are thus summarized: “*Cannabis indica* has been reduced to *Cannabis sativa*, the Indian plant being viewed as but an Asiatic condition of that species......The reduction became the more necessary when it was fully understood that, according to climate and soil, the Indian plant varied in as marked a degree as it differed from the European.........With *Cannabis indica* differing in so marked a degree according to the climate, soil, and mode of cultivation, it was rightly concluded that its separation from the hemp plant of Europe could not be maintained"; and he compares the hemp plant to the potato, the tobacco, and the poppy, all of which “seem to have the power of growing with equal luxuriance under almost any climatic condition, changing or modifying some important function as if to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances.” Dr. Prain, after personal examination of the plant, has recorded his opinion in the following words: “There are no botanical characters to separate the Indian plant from *Cannabis sativa*, and they do not differ as regards the structure of stem, leaves, flowers, or fruit..............Hemp, therefore, as a fibre-yielding plant in no way differs from hemp as a narcotic-producing one.” These are the most recent scientific views, and coming from Indian botanists they carry special authority. It may be noted that Dr. W. C. Mackenzie, in an article on *Hashish* in the “Chemist and Druggist” of 9th July 1893, mentions certain differences between the seeds of *Cannabis indica* and those of common hemp. In using the name *Cannabis indica*, and pointing out this difference, is indicated a belief that the two plants are distinct varieties.

21. At pages 38-39 of his report Dr. Prain has described the hemp plant. There are only two points on which the Commission from their own observations and inquiries feel
GANJA PLANT ALMOST READY TO CUT, NAOGAON.
16th February 1894.
justified in correcting that description. Dr. Prain has omitted to notice the
fact that the plant varies in the colour of its stem. The dark variety may
be, and probably is, an accidental difference merely. But it will be found that
the replies to the Commission's questions from Nepal and the memorandum from
the Special Assistant Excise Commissioner in Mysore, Mr. McDonnell (para. IIIa),
lay stress on the difference, and attribute to the darker variety stronger narcotic
properties. The fact is also noticed by witnesses in different parts of India, and
the Commission have themselves observed the variety of colour in the plants. And,
secondly, in describing the male plant, Dr. Prain writes that there is no trace
of even a rudimentary female flower. The Commission found at Khandwa hemp
plants having the general appearance of males, but containing a few female
flowers or seeds. These were quite distinct from the female plants with abnor-
mal male flowers, which were also present in the Khandwa cultivation, and which
are mentioned in Dr. Prain's description. The cultivators of Khandwa appeared
also to recognize at least one variety of the pure male plant to which they gave
a name of its own (Sheoria); but it has not been possible to detect any essential
difference between it and the ordinary male plant, though specimens were for-
warded to Dr. King. On this subject reference is invited to the description of
the cultivation in the Central Provinces and Bombay.

22. The third point (c) is raised in Dr. Watt's letter (Vol. III Appendices).
The function of the Commission is to test by the
information they have collected the views therein
expressed regarding the probable existence of races capable of yielding as a
speciality the different products—fibre, ganja, charas, and bhang. The only differ-
ences recognized in the plant by the people are between the wild and the culti-
vated plant, the male and the female, and the varieties of the male and female
plant already referred to. The inherent potentiality of the seed to develop a
plant closely resembling the parents must be admitted, but there is no evidence of
racial speciality or differentiation of the decided sort suggested by the examples
quoted by Dr. Watt.

23. The question is capable of being handled more definitely in the forms in
which points (d) and (e) are stated. First, it has to
be seen whether the plant cultivated for fibre
yields the narcotic. The evidence on this point is positive and unmistak-
able. The female plant cultivated for fibre in Kumaon yields a very considerable
amount of charas, and its flower heads, after being handled to collect the charas,
can be, and sometimes are, smoked as ganja. The fact that it is the female plant
which yields the drug seems to be very strong evidence that the functional pro-
cess by which the narcotic is secreted in the fibre plant is the same as that by
which ganja is produced in the plant cultivated for that product. There is also
a considerable body of evidence that the wild plant not only yields the narcotic
as held in its leaves, but is also capable of yielding, and does yield to treatment
during growth and manipulation on maturity, the products charas and ganja.

24. There is no evidence that the hemp plant is cultivated for fibre anywhere
except at a considerable elevation on the Hima-
layas; and as regards point (e), Sind appears
to be the only place where the plant cultivated for the narcotic yields fibre.
There the object of the cultivation is bhang, and the extraction of the fibre
is described as a process so difficult and laborious that very little of it is prepared. It may be noted that selected flower heads from the bhang cultivation of Sind are used as ganja (ghundi), though it is of inferior quality. The production of charas is not mentioned; but from the account of the cultivation for ganja in Bombay and Gwalior, it would appear that the production of that form of the drug (charas) depends on the quantity of resin secreted in the flower head and the economy of extracting it rather than on any quality inherent in the resin.

Dr. Watt's impression that Cannabis is cultivated for hemp in the Godavari districts seems to arise out of the confusion which has always existed in Madras reports on the subject of the hemp drugs, and from which the subject is not yet quite clear in that Presidency. Other fibre plants, such as Crotalaria juncea and Hibiscus cannabinus, whose products go under the name of hemp, have been confounded with the true hemp. It is now definitely stated in paragraph 7 of the letter from the Board of Revenue, Madras, to the Commission, No. 1839, dated 1st May 1894, on the authority of the Deputy Director, Agricultural Branch of the Board of Revenue, that "Cannabis sativa is never grown in this Presidency for fibre." Attention may in this connection be drawn to pages 3 to 5 of Dr. Royle's work on the "Fibrous Plants of India." He explains the effect of the Indian method of cultivating hemp and flax, involving free exposure of the individual plants to light, heat, and air, in causing the fibre to become woody and brittle instead of flexible and strong. He contrasts the European method of cultivation by thick sowing, which, with a temperate climate inducing slow growth, conduces to height and suppleness in the plant and its fibres. He admits that the Indian climate with its comparatively short seasons, great alternations of dryness and of moisture, and considerable extremes of temperature is not the best suited to the production of good flax and hemp. But he suggests that it might be possible by modifications of culture and the selection of suitable sites to grow both these plants within the limits of India so as to yield useful fibre. In the Himalayas only are to be found climate and mode of cultivation of the hemp plant resembling those of Europe.
A GROUP OF PLANTS IN THE SPONTANEOUS GROWTH OF BHANG AT AMRITSAR.

23RD APRIL 1894.