

Exports to the United States of America then began to rise rapidly, increasing from 29,700 oz. in 1917 to 58,000 oz. in 1918, and 219,722 oz. in 1919.\* An arrangement was accordingly made with the United States Government for the introduction of a similar system of Government certificates, and the adoption of this system was immediately followed by a great drop in the exports from the United Kingdom to America, the figures for 1920 being 9,021 oz. It was also thought desirable to introduce a similar system of certificates in respect to Canada, which helped to guard against any illicit entry of morphia into the United States via the Canadian frontier. This arrangement also produced very satisfactory results.

In 1919 a similar arrangement was introduced with regard to exports of morphia to France.

It was obvious, however, that piecemeal arrangements of this kind would only divert and not stop the traffic. At the end of 1919 the Board of Trade, who were then the licensing authority, reported that large quantities of morphia had recently been imported by Switzerland from the United Kingdom, and that sudden rises had also taken place in the exports to Belgium, Denmark, Cuba, and other countries. H.M. Government accordingly decided to approach all foreign Governments with the view to the adoption of similar arrangements. Negotiations for the purpose have been carried on up to the present time, and agreements have been reached with a number of countries.

The progress of these negotiations has not been as rapid as the British Government had hoped, and in the meantime a careful watch has been kept on the quantities proposed to be exported to different countries. They have frequently experienced considerable difficulty, however, in connection with applications for export licenses, in deciding whether the amount applied for could be regarded as being fairly within the legitimate medical requirements of the country concerned. Generally speaking, they have followed what may be described as a rationing system in cases where amounts seemed excessive, and where there was no guarantee from the Government of the importing country that the amount was actually required for medical or scientific purposes. In respect of morphine, which is the drug with which the trade of the United Kingdom is mainly concerned, a ration of  $\frac{1}{4}$  grain per annum per head of population has been taken roughly as the basis. The method, of course, is at the best a very imperfect makeshift. There is no definite guide at present as to what are the legitimate requirements of any country for the drugs, and no means of knowing what quantities are being imported from other countries besides Great Britain.

Isolated action by one country can have no permanent effect on the international traffic while other countries allow free import and export of the drugs. Experience shows that the trade tends to be diverted to the latter countries (see below under Part V). This has been strikingly illustrated recently by the rise of exports of Turkish and Persian opium to the Far East, which has followed on the reduction of exports from India.

### *Part III.—The Treaties of Peace.*

At the end of 1918, with the cessation of hostilities and the opening of peace negotiations, the question of putting into effect the International Opium Convention of 1912 again came to the fore. In a note addressed by the Ambassador of the United States of America to the British Government in August, 1918, it was proposed that the Allied Powers should declare their intention of putting the Convention into force at once. An alternative proposal was made by the British Government that the ratification and enforcement of the Convention should be made one of the terms of the Conditions of Peace. This proposal was eventually adopted, and articles in similar terms were inserted in all the Treaties of Peace, which provided that ratification of the Treaty should be deemed to be equivalent to ratification of the Convention, and that the necessary legislation to give effect to the Convention should be passed within twelve months from the coming into force of the Treaty.

Further, it was agreed in the Treaties that, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of international conventions existing or hereafter to be agreed upon, the League of Nations should be entrusted with the general supervision over the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs.

### *Part IV.—The Enforcement of the Opium Convention.*

In 1920 the British Government passed the legislation necessary to give effect in the United Kingdom to the Opium Convention as required by the Treaties of Peace. This legislation, which is entitled "The Dangerous Drugs Act, 1920," and the regulations and Orders which have been made under it, establish a complete system of control over the drugs to which the Convention applies. No person can lawfully import, export, manufacture, or supply the drugs unless he is licensed or authorized for the purpose, and no person may have such drugs in his possession unless he is so licensed or authorized, or unless they have been prescribed for his use by a duly qualified medical practitioner, dentist, &c. Opium-smoking is absolutely prohibited.

As regards exports of the drugs, a separate license has to be obtained in respect of each consignment proposed to be exported.

The necessary measures for the control of the traffic in accordance with the Convention have also been taken (or in a few cases are about to be taken) in all the colonies, possessions, and protectorates of the British Empire.

In the case of the self-governing Dominions the responsibility for the enforcement of the Convention rests with the Dominion Governments, by whom effective measures are being taken.

### *Part V.—The Work of the Opium Advisory Committee of the League of Nations.*

At the first meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations the question of the arrangements to be made by the League for the execution of the supervisory duties entrusted to it by the Treaties came up for consideration, and it was proposed by Mr. Barnes, one of the delegates of the British

\* These are the amounts *licensed* for export and include exports through the post. In comparing the figures with the Customs returns it must be remembered that the latter do not include exports through the post.