

CHAPTER VI

THE EFFECT OF MODERATE QUANTITIES OF ALCOHOL ON EFFICIENCY

Introduction—The Influence of Alcohol on Physical Efficiency—
The Influence of Alcohol on Unskilled Work—The Type-
writing Test—The Influence of Alcohol on Reflex Acts—The
Influence of Alcohol on Mental Efficiency—General Con-
clusions.

INTRODUCTION.

FOR the due understanding of the alcohol problem, and for the correct appraisal of the degree of importance to be attached to the various measures which have been suggested for abating the evils connected with it, it is necessary to describe at some length a portion of the very large amount of experimental evidence at our disposal. With much of this evidence I shall not attempt to deal, as it does not relate directly to our particular problem; and, moreover, it is admirably discussed in the book on "Alcohol: Its Action on the Human Organism," which was issued by the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Central Control Board in 1918.*

And firstly, it is necessary to decide if alcoholic liquors, when taken in moderation, have any appreciable effect on the efficiency of the physical and mental work performed in the course of the next few hours. Before discussing the problem it is necessary to define

* Second edition (revised) published in 1924.