

When the drunkards were classified according to the nature of the liquid consumed, it was found that on an average the beer drinkers survived for 21.7 years after they began their intemperate habits, whilst the spirit drinkers survived 16.7 years, and those who drank beer and spirits indiscriminately, 16.1 years.

Pearl considers that we may accept Neison's main result at practically its full face value, though another distinguished statistician, Professor Harold Westergaard,\* has pointed out that Neison's methods are unreliable. In any case, the result accords well with common experience, though the exact numerical effect of excessive drinking is doubtful; and, of course, it is always bound to be doubtful in so far as it applies to individual persons.

Other evidence concerning the influence of over-indulgence in alcoholic liquors on mortality is afforded by the statistics published by the Registrar-General. The latest available figures relate to the years 1910-12, and of the 505,936 deaths experienced by males aged fifteen and upwards in these years, 1,451 are attributed to "alcoholism." Another 6,000 deaths are attributed to "cirrhosis of the liver," a condition due, in the majority of cases, to chronic alcoholism. These two causes of death together account for 1.5 per cent. of the deaths from all causes, or if we assume that only two-thirds of the "cirrhosis" deaths were due to alcohol, they account for 1.1 per cent. of the deaths. There can be no doubt, however, that alcohol is responsible for many more deaths than it is credited with on death certificates. These certificates are seen by the

\* H. Westergaard, "Lehre von der Mortalität und Morbidität," 1882. "Internat. Rev. Alc.," 1924, p. 27.