

an amount might not produce much loss of efficiency if spread evenly over the week, and especially if it were drunk after the evening meal when the day's work was over, but we have seen that there is a tendency to increase the drinking at week-ends, and consequently to diminish the drinking in the middle of the week. Excessive drinking not only causes an immediate reduction of manual efficiency, but it lowers the "will to work" so much that the workman stops away altogether for a day or even more. Though admittedly there is no exact evidence available, it seems probable that, taking industry all through, the total reduction in efficiency produced by the consumption of alcohol is something like 10 per cent. Even if it is only half this figure, such a reduction might mean all the difference between success and failure when competing for world markets against a country which had adopted prohibition.