

A British Blue Book

The Annual Report of Births, Marriages and Deaths in England would be regarded as far from interesting reading by the average man. But the present Registrar-General for the beautiful isle of the sea has not only succeeded in making his book valuable to those interested in life insurance; but some of his tables, notably the following, are full of information for every thoughtful man:—

Mean Annual Mortality of Males per 1000 engaged in different occupations in the three years 1890-91-92 at successive periods of life:—

Occupation.	Age 25-35.	Age 35-45.	Age 45-55.	Age 55-65.	Age 65 and upwards.
All Males	7.67	13.01	21.37	39.01	103.56
All Occupied Males	7.29	12.43	20.66	36.66	102.32
Clergyman, priest, minister	4.23	5.18	10.52	25.35	83.60
Barriester, solicitor	5.32	10.67	17.72	34.50	111.74
Physician, surgeon, etc.	6.69	14.92	21.04	34.16	112.40
Architect, sculptor, etc.	5.60	8.61	19.28	30.53	90.23
Locksmith, bellhanger, gasfitter	6.52	12.93	22.22	33.88	90.79
Iron and steel manufacturer	8.81	15.81	28.50	53.30	157.04
Copper, tin, zinc, lead, brass, etc., worker and dealer	7.43	13.98	24.55	46.02	119.22
Lead worker	12.14	22.78	37.62	75.32	281.25
Bricklayer, mason, builder	6.55	13.45	22.04	40.23	107.71
Carpenter, joiner	5.78	9.36	17.19	32.15	102.20
Slater, tiler	11.01	17.17	27.53	50.28	128.21
Plasterer, whitewasher, paperhanger	6.93	13.77	22.17	48.57	89.71
Plumber, painter, glazier	7.04	14.70	25.13	45.58	107.10
Cabinet-maker, etc.	6.94	13.08	21.11	38.72	101.16
Sawyer	4.84	9.54	15.44	35.32	126.65
Stone, slate—quarrier	7.43	14.49	25.29	51.65	144.84
Brick, tile—maker, burner	4.92	8.02	15.98	34.15	112.01
General labourer	9.64	16.85	27.70	42.43	116.03

In the study of these calculations of the death rates for certain successive periods of life, we are confronted with the tendency of any quiet pursuit, occupation, or trade to prolong life. Dr. Southey is credited with saying, "live as long as you may, the first twenty years are the longest half of your life." They certainly appear so when one is at school,—when looking backward they seem to have been so, and they occupy more space in our memory than all the suc-

ceeding years. But this table prepared by a reliable British statistician indicates that the "shortest half" of one's life may also be prolonged by the exercise of judicious care in the choice of occupation. The costermonger in Punch who remarked to his pal as a be-gaitered, well-fed cleric passed along, "Well, Bill, for a nice, clean, easy, genteel sort of a job, make me a bishop," may have been lacking in reverence for the cloth and certainly under-estimated the work of the clergy; but Dr. Tatham's table, published herewith, illustrates better than mere words that a contented mind is the greatest blessing a man can enjoy in the present world, and many great thinkers affirm there never was any system to compare with Christianity for producing in the mind of man this virtue of contentment. There can be little question that piety produces contentment and thereby prolongs life.

Further study of the table serves to show that, in the next choice of occupation, the man who desires to be referred to in the papers as "one of our oldest inhabitants" should decline to be a leadworker, or to engage in the manufacture of iron and steel, choosing rather the peaceful occupation of a plasterer or white-washer. We admit that a prolonged stay on earth in such monotonous employment may be distasteful to the healthy man of the period. To such an one, this table from a British Blue Book would recommend as next in order for longevity the profession of the sculptor who, during life (if not at his death), makes faces and busts. However, nothing we can say will diminish the usefulness of Dr. Tatham's table for purposes of comparison by those engaged in the great business of insurance.

Some Hidden Perils.

Captain Marryat and modern writers of sea stories have informed those who are given to singing, with much commiseration for the exposure of the sailor to hurricane and tempest, the hymn with a storm-like accompaniment and a last line to each verse asking protection

"For those in peril on the sea."

that Jack, when at sea, is also given to regarding with pity poor folks ashore exposed in a gale of wind to the dangers of falling chimney pots. But the sympathetic sailor, excited by the distresses of the landsmen, will have his feelings of compassion and sympathy stirred still further when he learns of the unseen dangers, the hidden perils of the landlubber now that he has electricity, aloft and aloft, to contend with when it breaks loose.

Late English papers record a frightful explosion at Oldham, on the night of the 11th inst. At the scene of the accident beneath the pavement was an electric wire main, into which gas had escaped. When the street lamps, electrically lighted, were extinguished, a terrific explosion occurred. The pavement was torn up for a distance stated at 150 feet, and several persons were thrown into the roadway and seriously injured. The accumulation of gas becoming fused, is assigned as the cause of this accident. However, we can find no comfort in knowing the cause of any calamity which might leave very little of a good citizen except a memory and his insurance policy.