VITAL STATISTICS:  
A Memorial Volume of Selections  
from the Reports and Writings of  
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With an Introduction by  
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mortality deduced from the ages at death alone, that 74,210 of 345,847 children die in their first year. Nothing can be more erroneous; the deaths occurred out of a number certainly not less, and probably more, than 512,000; for though the births have not been registered, the births of 212,158 children were registered in the year 1841, and 592,303 in 1840. The error is as striking when the deaths under 5 years of age are compared with the total deaths, instead of the births, in the preceding 3 years.

If the reasoning upon "the mean age at death" be employed to determine the relative subordinacy of towns and professions as well as of different classes of the community, the nature of the results may be readily divined. The mean age at death is 20 years in England, 29 years in the Metropolis, 34 years in Victoria; the true mean durations of life being nearly 41, 37, and 45 years, so that the errors by this method amount to 12 years, 8 years, and 11 years: The rate of increase of the duration of life is the increase of population, the emigration, the relative numbers of children and adults, the mean age of the living—upon all of which the "mean age at death" depends—differ in town and in country, in agricultural and manufacturing districts, to an extent which renders any application of the method to the construction of local life tables, or to the calculation of the relative duration of life, difficult and deceitful, if the proper corrections be not made; absurd and misleading, if the "mean age at death" be taken to represent the expectation of life.

The numbers following different professions fluctuate more than the general population; the relative proportion of young and aged persons varies from year to year; certain professions, stations, and ranks are only attained by persons advanced in years; and some occupations are only followed in youth; hence it requires no great amount of sagacity to perceive that "the mean age at death," or the age at which the greatest number of deaths occurs, cannot be depended upon in investigating the influence of occupation, rank, and profession upon health and longevity. It was found, upon an inquiry into the health of the officers of the army, that "tenants" was 22 years; of "Lessee" tenants 29 years; of "Captains" 37 years; of "Majors" 44 years; of "Lieutenant Colonels" 48 years; of general Officers, age still further advanced—and that the ages of Curates, Rectors, and Bishops, of Barristers of seven years' standing, leading Counsel and venerable Judges—differed to an equal or greater extent, a strong case may no doubt be made out on behalf of those young, but easily-dying, Cornets, furthered—and that the ages of Curates, Rectors, and Bishops, of Barristers of seven years' standing, leading Counsel and venerable Judges—differed to an equal or greater extent, a strong case may no doubt be made out on behalf of those young, but easily-dying, Cornets, furthered—and that the ages of Curates, Rectors, and Bishops, of Barristers of seven years' standing, leading Counsel and venerable Judges—differed to an equal or greater extent, a strong case may no doubt be made out on behalf of those young, but easily-dying, Cornets, furthered—and that the ages of Curates, Rectors, and Bishops, of Barristers of seven years' standing, leading Counsel and venerable Judges—differed to an equal or greater extent, a strong case may no doubt be made out on behalf of those young, but easily-dying, Cornets,
after they marry they are not often designated by that title in the register. This source of error and the increase of population will be found to affect the estimate of the relative mortality of different occupations. That the lives of dress-makers are very much shortened by the severe hardships and ignorant mistreatment to which they are exposed cannot be doubted; but false arguments suffice instead of aiding their cause.

In a thriving commercial country like England there is a general movement, such as has been noticed in the armament of the liberal professions—from the lower into the higher ranks of society. The servant becomes a master; shopboys grow into merchants or aldermen; the tradesman retires and is classed either as "independent," or as "local circumstances," or as "gentleman," as the Census, and in the necessary registers. But these promotions as a general rule are slow; and those only attain the higher positions who live long. If the mean age, at which masters and servants, the wealthy and indigent die, were noted and made the basis of any reasoning respecting the relative health and longevity of the lower and upper classes, the differences would evidently be exaggerated. The exaggeration is increased in another way: many poor people are reduced to seek an asylum at advanced ages in the workhouses, and are not often designated by the occupations which they followed in youth, but by the general name "paupers"; the ages of those who die in the ranks of their respective trades and professions are thus reduced to the same extent as the ages of the paupers who die in workhouses are raised above the average. In 1831 the mean age of 45,567 persons who died in London was 29 years; the mortality was 1 in 46; in the same year 4292 persons died in the London workhouses at the advanced age of 49 years, which they must have nearly attained before they entered those establishments. From the mortality there appears to have been about 25 per cent., or 1 in 4 annually. Controversial, the "mean age at death," of paupers in the workhouses, with other statements, which make the "mean age at death" of the same or similar classes of persons 20 years.

One in 110 of the boys in Christ's Hospital died annually, in the 12 years 1831-42; the mean age of the boys who died was 11 years. The "mean age at death" and the mortality were both low. This illustration, taken from an extreme instance, shows why, while the mortality is lower, the mean age at death is less in England than in some other countries. The English population contains more young persons, more of the age of the Christ's Hospital boys, than the foreign populations.

The life table affords the most satisfactory measure of the relative duration of life, either of classes or of different communities. The mortality obtained by dividing the deaths by the living at each age, is also an unapproachable test; it is the preliminary to the construction of a true life table. The ratio of the total deaths to the total population affects the next best test that can be employed, if the populations compared be of the same age, their relative mortality will be correctly given by this method; if the ages and the rate of increase differ, the "mean duration of life will be less than the number of at which see "less naturally, but the difference will be small by the increasing proportion."

The "mean age at death," or pretended life tables constructed from the deaths, without reference to the ages of the living, or the ages of the living without the age of the dying, are in both cases greatly mistaken.

* The pauper population of the London Workhouses was 19,413 at the time the Census was taken in June; it would probably be greater in Winter.