

are proposed to be applied for information are altogether, or very nearly similar to that for which they were made. Tables shewing the expectation of life at different ages over the whole of Sweden, for instance, could not be followed as safe guides for ascertaining the expectation of life, at the same ages, over the whole of Hindostan. And so too, it would be improper to take the tables of expectation formed for the City of London as rules for ascertaining the expectation of life in Wales. The causes materially affecting the duration of human life, at the time and place for which a table has been made, must, therefore, be understood and compared with those of the place where the life in question exists, before such allowances can be made for the differences, should there be any, as will warrant the use of such table as a means of ascertaining the value of each life.

But, as it is to those tables to which the modern English adjudications refer, in speaking of the means of ascertaining the present value of a life interest, it will be proper to advert to some of the principal circumstances of time and place from which the most approved among them have been formed. It seems, that the formation of tables of the expectation of life, at various ages, calculated from observations made, some time prior to the year 1679, at Breslaw in Lower Silesia, as to the duration of human life, originated with Dr. Halley, of England. But it is now admitted, on all hands, that those tables are so imperfect as to be wholly unfit for use; thus leaving to the Doctor no other merit, in this respect, than that of having been the first to shew the use of such tables, and how they might be constructed from correct observations. *Rees' Cyclo. v. Life Annuities and Mortality.* The next tables are

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those which may be called the London tables, * formed by Mr. Simpson from the bills of mortality for London for ten years, from 1759 to 1768; and as these gave the values of lives among a body of people taken, in the gross, in one of the worst of all situations, they are by no means fit for common use; and are therefore, now never resorted to as a means of ascertaining the value of a life even in London itself. 1 *Price Obser.* 211; *Rees' Cyclo. v. Life Annuities and Mortality.*

The next set of tables are those formed by Dr. Price from bills of mortality kept in the parish of All Saints in the Town of Northampton in England, during the years 1735 to 1780. Northampton stands on a high region in the midst of England, and contains at present about eight thousand four hundred inhabitants. It is situated on the River Nen, and is chiefly built on the slope, and near the top of a hill, and is generally clean and pleasant. The parish of All Saints embraces about half the population of the town. 2 *Price Obser.* 94. The next table is that which has been formed for Carlisle, one of the most northerly towns of England. The situation of Carlisle is extremely beautiful; it stands