of the cases of suicide over the months of the year. Most valuable inquiries have also been made into the distribu­tion of suicides with regard to occupation, with results which appear to show that suicide is more prevalent among the educated than among the illiterate classes. For the suicidal tendency in insanity, see vol. xiii. pp. 105-6.

*Sex.—*It will have been observed that, apart from fluctuations in particular years, the various countries maintain fairly constant re­lations to one another as regards number of suicides. The series of numbers in Table I. is fairly regular, in each country usually in­creasing as the population increases, but in several cases faster. The proportion of female to male suicides is also fairly constant, so far as experience has hitherto gone. Broadly speaking, female suicides are never less than 15 per cent. and never more than 30 of the average annual number of suicides in any country. In England the proportion is high, having during the period 1863-76 averaged 26 per cent. In France the rate is nearly as high, though it appears to have been decreasing of late. In Prussia and most German states the rate is under 20 per cent. For further details reference may be made to Morselli, and for England and IVales to Dr Ogle’s paper already mentioned.

*Age.—*The influence of age on suicide shows considerable regu­larity in each country from year to year, and a certain degree of similarity in its effects is perceptible in all countries. Morselli gives a number of tables and diagrams, a study of which indicates a variety of interesting features. The observations already made as to the minuteness of the whole phenomenon in relation to the social organism must be particularly borne in mind in drawing conclusions from investigations which involve the breaking up of numbers already small into parts. It is true that, by adding to­gether the corresponding figures for a series of years, fairly large numbers may be obtained, even for those parts of the age scale which, in any single year, yield only one or two cases of suicide, or even occasionally none. But this mode of obtaining an enlarged image of the age scale of suicide must be employed with caution, since there may have been changes in the tendency to suicide, in the age scale, and in the occupations of the people during the period. Dr Ogle has prepared a table (IV.) which gives as correct a repre­sentation of the effect of age on suicide in England and Wales as it is possible to furnish. The age scale of suicide in question is also fairly representative of the corresponding age scales of other countries, though in each country slight variations from the typical scale are apparent at different parts of it.

IV. *Average Annual Suicides in England and Wales at successive Age Periods per million Lives, 1858-83* (Ogle).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age. | Rates per Million. | | | Age. | Rates per Million. | | |
| Persons. | Males. | Females. | Persons. | Males. | Females |
| 10 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 55 | 251 | 396 | 119 |
| 15 | 28 | 26 | 30 | 65 | 243 | 394 | 113 |
| 20 | 47 | 62 | 34 | 75 | 183 | 306 | 85 |
| 25 | 69 | 99 | 42 | 85 | 116 | 226 | 46 |
| 35 | 116 | 175 | 62 |  |  |  |  |
| 45 | 184 | 271 | 103 | All ages | 72 | 104 | 41 |

It will be seen that, taking both sexes together, the suicide rate rises steadily and rapidly after the tenth year has been passed, attaining its maximum in the period fifty-five to sixty-five years, after which it remains almost stationary for another ten years, when it sinks rapidly. Although no figures are given for any period previous to the tenth year, Dr Ogle mentions that there were actually four cases of suicide of children between the ages of five and ten during the twenty-six years observed. Child suicide is apparently of more frequent occurrence on the Continent than in the British Isles. It is important to notice that the age scale of suicide for women is materially different from that for men. If represented by a diagram its curve makes a smaller angle with the base line than the corresponding curve of male suicide. As might be expected from the fact that females become fully developed, both in mind aud body, at an earlier period of life than males, the suicide rate for women is relatively very high during the years fifteen to twenty, being in England and several other countries actually higher than that for men. Comparison between different countries in this respect is difficult, but the figures given by Morselli (Table xxvi. in his work) show that during the period in question the number of female suicides increases with great rapidity in all countries. Regarding the suicide of young persons of both sexes, Dr Ogle observes that it is higher than is generally supposed. “ Few,” he says, “would imagine that one out of every 119 young men who reach the age of 20 dies ultimately by his own hand ; yet such is the case.” According to Dr Ogle’s figures, 1 out of every 312 girls who reach the age of 15 ultimately dies by her own hand.

*Influence of Occupation.—*The difficulty of investigating the mode in which the suicide rate is affected by differences of occupation is considerable. Dr Ogle has with great labour worked out the figures for males for the six years 1878-83 in England and Wales. He obtained about 9000 cases of the suicide of persons with known occupations ; these he compared with the statement of occupations obtained from the census of 1881, taking account of the very con­siderable variety in the average age of the persons in each occupa­tion. This precaution was necessary in an attempt to ascertain whether the persons engaged in any particular occupation were more liable to suicide than those in other occupations, for the effect due to the occupation would in some cases be entirely obliterated by the effect due to age. The general result of his labours@@1 was that the rate for soldiers is enormously in excess of that for any other occupation. It is followed at a considerable distance by inn­keepers and other persons having constant access to alcohol,—a fact which certainly suggests that an excessive use of spirits is one of the principal causes of suicide. But another reason for the high rate among soldiers is certainly the fact that they have a ready and effective means of destraction constantly at hand. In like manner the high rate of suicide among medical men, chemists, and druggists may be attributed in part to their familiarity with poisons. Hardly any other general inferences can be drawn without entering on matters of conjecture, except that, excluding the case of clergy­men, the rate of those occupations which involve no serious bodily labour is higher than that observed in persons who work chiefly with their hands. It is impossible to make any satisfactory com­parison in this respect between England and Wales and other coun­tries, as the divisions of occupations in different countries are not on the same plan. It would be very advantageous if some approach to a common list of occupations could be adopted by all states ; but there is little prospect of that being realized for some time to come. It is, however, satisfactorily established that in all countries the suicide rate is higher for the educated than for the uneducated classes.

*Season.—*May and June are in most countries the months in which most suicides occur ; but in some countries, such as Bavaria and Saxony, the maximum is in July. The difference between the warm and cold portions of the year is more marked in female suicides than in male suicides, especially in Italy. This is probably due to the fact that women show a tendency to adopt drowning as a mode of killing themselves, and that there is more shrinking from a plunge into water in cold than in warm weather. The fact that the maximum number of suicides occurs in the hot season, during which, according to Morselli and other Continental statis­ticians, insanity is more frequent than in the cool portions of the year, has been alleged as a reason for the high suicide rate in May, June, and July.

*Modes of Suicide.*—The favourite mode of suicide in England is among men hanging and among women drowning,—about one- third of the suicides of each sex being effected in these modes respectively (Morselli, Table xlv.). In Italy, however, the most common mode is by gunshot among men, and after that by drown­ing, hanging being less usual. A very large number of Italian women drown themselves, the proportion being in some years over 50 per cent. of the total. In Prussia considerably over one-half the male suicides hang themselves, and women also make use of the rope more than in England. The use of poison is more common among English women than among those of Italy and Prussia. Dr Ogle observes that women take less care than men to select painless poisons, nearly 50 per cent. of female suicides by poison in England during the years 1863-82 being effected by means of strychnia, vermin killer, carbolic acid, and oxalic acid, while GO per cent. of the men employed prussic acid, laudanum, and other comparatively painless poisons. Dr Ogle, Morselli, and other writers have investigated the connexion between the choice of means and the age of suicide. Dr Ogle has also compiled a valuable table relating to method of male suicide in relation to occupation.

The whole subject has been treated exhaustively by Morselli in his *ll Suicidiο, Saggio di Statistica Morale Comparata,* Milan, 1879 (Eng. trans., *Suicide: Essay on Comparative Moral Statistics,* London, 18S1). Reference may also be made to A. Legoyt’s *Le Suicide Ancien et Moderne,* Paris, 1881. This volume contains much interesting historical matter, but is inferior as a statistical work to that of Morseili. It contains, however, a useful bibliography of works on suicide.

*official Information.—*Accurate information regarding suicide has for many years been given for all the countries of which mention has been made above in the publications of their respective Governments. For other countries the available statistics are meagre, accurate figures having in many cases only recently been obtained from Finland, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, Croatia, Spain, and three or four of the States of the American Union. There are no figures for the whole United States, and none of value for any other countries. Such statistics as are in existence for these countries will be found in *Confrontι Internationale per gli Anui 1865-83* (Rome, 1881), published by the Italian General Statistical Department. (w. ho.)

SUIDAS, the author of a Greek lexicon. His personal life is totally unknown and even his date is uncertain. He must have lived before Eustathius (12th century), who quotes him repeatedly. Under the heading “Adam the author of the lexicon gives a brief chronology of the

@@@1 See *Stat. Jour.,* Mardi 1886, p. 112.