denote a mental process which produces effects very similar to those producible by suggestion is now so well established that it must be accepted. In auto-suggestion a proposition is formulated in the mind of the subject rather than communicated from another mind, and is accepted with conviction in the absence of adequate logical grounds. Generally the belief is initiated by some external event or some bodily change, or through some interpretation of thc behaviour of other persons; *e.g.* a man falls on the road and a wagon very nearly passes over his legs, perhaps grazing them merely; when he is picked up, his legs are found to be paralysed. The event has induced the conviction that his legs are seriously injured, and this conviction operates so effectively as to realize itself. Or a savage, suffering some slight indisposition, interprets thc behaviour of some person in a way which leads him to the conviction that this person is compassing his death by means of magical practices; accordingly he lies down in deep despondency and, in the course of some days or weeks, dies, unless his friends succeed in buying off, or in some way counteracting, the malign influence. Or, as a more familiar and trivial instance of auto­suggestion, we may cite the case of a man who, having taken a bread pill in the belief that it contains a strong purgative or emetic, realizes the results that he expects.

Literature.—H. Bernheim, *De la Suggestion, et de ses applications à la thérapeutique* (2nd ed., Paris, 1887;; Pierre Janet, *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria* (London, 1907) ; Otto Stoll, *Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Völkerpsychologie* (2nd ed., Leipzig, 1904); Boris Sidis, *The Psychology of Suggestion* (New York, 1898); W. Μ. Keatinge, *Suggestion in Education* (London, 1907) ; F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (London, 1903; 2nd ed., abridged, 1907); A. Binet, *La Suggestibilité* (Paris, 1900). See also literature under Hypnotism. (W. McD.)

**SUHL,** a town of Germany, in the province of Prussian Saxony, picturesquely situated on the Lauter, on the southern slope of the Thuringian Forest, 61/2 m. N.E. of Meiningen and 29 m. S.W. of Erfurt by rail. Pop. (1905), 13,814. The armourers of Suhl are mentioned as early as the 9th century, but they enjoyed their highest vogue from 155o to 1634. The knights of south Germany especially prized the swords and armour of this town, and many of the weapons used in campaigns against the Turks and in the Seven Years’ War arc said to have been manufactured at Suhl. It has suffered considerably in modern times from the competition of other towns in this industry, especially since the introduction of the brcech-loading rifle. It still contains, however, large factories for firearms military and sporting, and side arms, besides ironworks, machine-works, potteries and tanneries. The once considerable manufacture of fustian has declined. A brine spring (Soolquelle) at the foot of the neigh­bouring Domberg is said to have given name to the town.

Suhl, which obtained civic rights in 1527, belonged to the principality of Henneberg, and formed part of the possessions of the kingdom of Saxony assigned to Prussia by the Congress of Vienna in 1815.

See Werther, *Chronik der Stadt Suhl* (2 vols., Suhl, 1846-1847).

**SUICIDE** (from Lat. *sui,* of oneself, and *cidium,* from *caedere,* to kill), the act of intentionally destroying one's own life. The phenomenon of suicide has at all times attracted a large amount of attention from moralists and social investigators. Its existence is looked upon, in Western civilization, as a sign of the presence of maladies in the body politic which, whether remediable or not, deserve careful examination. It is, of course, impossible to compare Western civilization in this respect with, say, Japan, where suicide in certain circumstances is part of a distinct moral creed. In Christian ethics and Christian law it is wrong, indeed illegal, as a *felo de se,* self-murder. It is within comparatively recent years that the study of suicide by means of the vital statistics of various European countries has demonstrated that while the act may be regarded as a purely voluntary one, yet that suicide as a whole conforms there to certain general laws, and is influenced by conditions other than mere individual circumstances or surroundings. Thus it can be shown that each country has a different suicide-rate, and that while the rate for each country may fluctuate from year to year, yet it maintains practically the same relative proportions to the rates of other countries. The following table shows the suicide-rate for various European countries (Bertillon).—

Table I.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Country. | Period of Observation. | Annual Number of Suicides per Million Inhabitants. |
| Saxony | 1878-1882 | 392 |
| Denmark . . . . | 1880-1882 | 251 |
| Switzerland ... | 1878-1882 | 239 |
| Baden . . | 1877-1881 | 198 |
| Württemberg ... | 189 |
| France | 1878-1882 | 180 |
| Prussia | ,, | 166 |
| Belgium ..... | ,, | I∞ |
| Sweden ...... | ,, | 92 |
| England and Wales | ,, | 75 |
| Norway | ,, | 69 |
| Scotland | 1877-188r | 49 |
| Ireland | 1878-1882 | 17 |

In addition to furnishing materials for an approximately accurate estimate of the number of suicides which will occur in any country in a year, statistics have demonstrated that the proportion of male to female suicides is practically the same from year to year, viz. 3 or 4 males to 1 female; that it is possible to predict the month of greatest prevalence, the modes of death adopted by men on the one hand and women on the other, and even the relative frequency of suicide amongst persons following different professions and employments; and that in most of the countries of Europe the suicide-rate is increasing. In England and Wales the annual death-rate per million from suicide has steadily advanced, as is shown by the following figures for quinquennial periods:—

1861-1865 . . 65 per million living.

1866-1870 . 66 „ „

1871-1875 . . 66 „ ,,

1876-1880 . . 74 „ „

1881-1885 · · 75

1886-1890 . . 79 „ ,,

1891-1895 . . 88 „ ,,

1896-1900 . . 89 „ „

1901-1905 . *.* 1oo

The next table illustrates the continued increase in recent years, and at the same time shows the total number and the number of male and female suicides each year from 1886 to 1905.

Table **II.**

*Total Suicides—Male and Female.—in England and Wales, 1886-1905, together with the annual rate per million living (Registrar-General’s Reports).*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year. | Male. | Female. | Total. | Suicide-rate per Million Living. |
| 1886 | 1694 | 560 | 2254 | 82 |
| 1890 | 1635 | 570 | 2205 | 77 |
| 1895 | 2071 | 726 | 2797 | 92 |
| 1896 | 1979 | 677 | 2656 | 86 |
| 1897 | 2090 | 702 | 2792 | 90 |
| 1898 | 2166 | 711 | 2877 | 91 |
| 1899 | 2121 | 723 | 2844 | 89 |
| 1900 | 2166 | 730 | 2896 | 90 |
| 1901 | 2318 | 803 | 3121 | 96 |
| 1902 | 2460 | 807 | 3267 | 99 |
| 1903 | 2640 | 871 | 3511 | 105 |
| 1904 | 2523 | 822 | 3345 | 99 |
| 1905 | 2683 | 862 | 3545 | 104 |
| Total. | 28,546 | 9564 | 38,110 | — |

The reason of the high suicide-rate in some countries as com­pared with others, and the causes of its progressive increase, are not easily determined. Various explanations have been offered, such as the influence of climate, the comparative prevalence of insanity, and the proportionate consumption of alcoholic drinks, but none satisfactorily accounts for the facts. It may, however, be remarked that suicide is much more common amongst