TABLE V.—Showing for each of the Counties of England, and for North and South Wales, the Attack-Rates per 10,000 of Population in respect of "All Scheduled Diseases."

Under 50 per 10,000 Population.		50 to 60 per 10,000 Population.		60 to 70 per 10,000 Population.		70 to 80 per 10,000 Population.		80 to 90 per 10,000 Population.		90 and Upwards per 10,000 Population.	
Rutland	38.5	Bucks	54.1	Surrey	61.0	Hunts	70.6	<i>England and Wales</i>		Middlesex	95.4
Dorset	42.8	Sussex	55.0	Westmorland	61.2	Worcester	72.1	Gloucester	82.9	London	110.0
Suffolk	44.3	Berks	56.2	Hants	62.5	Norfolk	72.2	Northumberland	84.9	Essex	110.2
North Wales	44.3	Cheshire	58.0	Lincolnshire	62.8	Kent	73.7	Somerset	87.4	Devon	112.3
Cumberland	44.7	Warwick	58.5	Derby	63.2	Lancashire	75.5	Durham	89.0	Leicester	116.5
North Riding	47.2			Cambridgeshire	63.8	Bedford	75.9			South Wales	144.1
East Riding	48.6			Nottinghamshire	64.9	Stafford	77.6			Monmouth	170.0
Northampton	48.8			Cornwall	65.9	West Riding	78.9				
Oxford	49.0			Wiltshire	68.0	Hereford	79.3				
				Hertfordshire	68.8						
				Salop	69.0						
(9 Counties)		(5 Counties)		(11 Counties)		(9 Counties)		(4 Counties)		(7 Counties)	

(To be continued).

AUTOMATIC WRITING.

III.

By HENRY RAYNER, M.D.,

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THE article in a recent issue of the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* on Mr. Stead's automatic writing experiences hardly dwells, perhaps, with sufficient emphasis on the dangers to health resulting from the habit of inducing automatic mental states.

A state of automatism, every psychologist will admit, is a reduction of mental function to the plane which obtains in the lower developments of animal life, and an enduring reduction to this state in man, as seen more or less completely in some forms of insanity, confirms this view. I regard this condition, therefore, as a devolution of function which will, if frequently repeated, produce injurious results. On this ground I have always opposed the extensive use of hypnotism, and now oppose the self-induced automatic habit, as exemplified by Mr. Stead.

The constant tendency of ideas to expression through the muscles is usually under control but at times is not, and results in involuntary acts, such as talking aloud with gesticulations. This may be a bad habit only, but is often a symptom of loss of control in states of disorder. If writing were as habitual as speech, involuntary writing would be as common as talking aloud.

Writing when purely automatic therefore ought not to excite astonishment or to be regarded as mysterious. The outward expression of trains of thought characteristic of the individual in states of incomplete consciousness is common enough and requires no supernatural explanation, but the fact that Mr. Stead also writes things of which he has no knowledge in his fully conscious state, may well excite his wonder. As pointed out by "Hypnos," in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and in your leader, this also is easily explicable (on grounds which I will not reiterate) and is analogous to what has occurred in hypnosis, somnambulism, delirium, and cerebral traumatism. The essential feature of this, on which I would wish to insist, is that the analogous states in which it occurs are conditions of more serious disorder of consciousness than the slighter automatic condition in which Mr. Stead utters (or rather writes) thoughts which he recognises as his own.

The recapitulation or amplification of the arguments you have advanced, is to medical readers unnecessary, but I consider it most desirable to draw attention to the importance to health of this subject, which many are inclined to regard as trivial, or merely as an object of ridicule.

Automatic writing, as "Hypnos" points out, is the backbone of spiritism, and is the basis on which most intelligent spiritualists have been converted. In this indirect aspect alone, it is of great significance. Still more important are the possible direct results from its practice by persons of unstable mental endowment; an instance of this kind in the writer's experience ended in absolute insanity. The process of mental degeneration being through a lessened grip on reality and impaired judgment, to confusion between the phenomena of the complete and incomplete states of consciousness, ending in the acceptance of the latter as realities with consequent delusions, just as dreams are accepted as

realities by some insane persons, by savages, and occasionally by children.

A cause which can produce so extremely disastrous an effect in one case must also be capable of producing less severe results in more numerous instances. The widespread publication, therefore, of such inquiries, without any accompanying scientific explanation, and with the suggestion of the supernatural element, is greatly to be deprecated by all who are interested in the mental health of the community, and who are cognisant of the possible evil results.

The inclination to belief in the mysterious or supernatural still lingers in the minds of many, and the acceptance of such belief should be clearly recognised, not as an advance in mental evolution, as is commonly suggested, but as a retrogression or devolution to a mental state allied to primitive and even abnormal conditions.

The investigation of the facts of automatic writing by persons unacquainted with physiology or psychology should be strenuously discouraged, not by ridicule, which provokes antagonism, nor by severely logical scientific arguments, which often cannot be grasped by those to whom they are addressed, but by careful teaching and explanation of the true significance of the phenomena.

The risk of mental deterioration by the frequent induction of states of incomplete consciousness, hypnotic or other, should also be distinctly taught, and the habit for those of the neurotic diathesis labelled, "Dangerous—this way madness lies."

THE CHOLERA ABROAD.

At St. Petersburg from noon of November 22nd to 29th inclusive there were 20 cases of cholera, with 16 deaths, leaving less than 30 patients under treatment.

The disease is disappearing from Teneriffe, which has been practically isolated from the rest of the Canary Islands. The health of the remaining islands is excellent, visitors to Grand Canary arriving by every steamer for the winter months.

A case of cholera developed last week at Oranienburg, near Berlin, the patient being a bargeman newly arrived there. The disease is extinct at Niederbarnim, near Berlin.

An English barque has been wrecked on the coast of Martinique, after death by cholera of her master and 11 men on a voyage from Senegal to Barbados, the disease, it is stated, being epidemic in Senegal when the vessel sailed.

PASTEURISM AT CHICAGO.—The Director of the Chicago Pasteur Institute has issued a circular, dated November 18th, giving the results of the preventive inoculations against hydrophobia practised in this institution since its opening on July 2nd, 1890. Three hundred and two persons have been treated, classified as follows: 104 bitten by animals proved to be rabid by the results of experimental inoculation or by the death of other persons or animals bitten by the same animal; 126 bitten by animals recognised to be rabid by the symptoms of the disease during life; 72 bitten by animals strongly suspected to be rabid; 282 were bitten by dogs, 7 by horses, 7 by cats, 3 by skunks, 2 by wolves, and 1 by a mule. One death was reported among the patients treated, thus giving a mortality of only 0.33 per cent.