

The Causes of Death in Pneumonia.

Dr. Bollinger maintains that croupous pneumonia is a typical local infectious disease, pursuing in the majority of cases a very regular course. It is not dangerous on account of the duration or the intensity of the fever. The impairment of the function of the lung is likewise insufficient to explain death. The oedema so frequently found in the parts of the lung spared by the disease is not the result of a passively increasing collateral hyperæmia, but of cardiac failure. The collapse symptoms in croupous pneumonia and the fatal weakening of the heart are dependent on oligæmia, which leads to impaired nutrition of the cardiac muscle, already weakened by the fever and the extra demands upon it. Anæmia of the brain may cause disturbances of innervation of the heart, and this may be an additional factor. The exudate into the lung tissue may be likened to a venesection produced by the pneumococcus, which in a few days deprives the blood of a large quantity of important constituents. The reason why death takes place so early, and usually in the same stage of the disease, from the sixth to the eighth day (corresponding to the transition from red to gray hepatization), is probably because the exudate has to attain a certain acme before life is imperiled. If these facts are applied to therapeutics, it follows that, in addition to the usual treatment of pneumonia, every effort should be made to combat the oligæmia. Large quantities of fluids should be supplied to the system through every available channel, even in the form of saline infusions. This should be done at an early period, before collapse symptoms have manifested themselves.—Münchener medicinische Wochenschrift.

Uses for Old Corks.

Corks are thrown away in great quantities, and very few people think that there is any value attached to that material after it has served its purpose once as stopper of a bottle. Nevertheless it has become one of the most valuable components of a city's refuse. Great quantities of used corks are now used again in the manufacture of insulating covers of steam pipes and boilers, of ice boxes and ice houses and other points to be protected from the influence of heat. Powdered cork is very useful for filling in horse collars, and the very latest application of this material is the filling in of pneumatic tires with cork shavings. Mats for bathrooms are made of cork exclusively, and it also goes into the composition of linoleum. Cheap life preservers are now filled exclusively with bottle stoppers, cut into little pieces.

AN IMPROVED RAILWAY TRICYCLE.

The illustration represents a light, strong, and inexpensive tricycle, adapted to carry one or more persons, as well as tools and appliances for repairing electric lines and railway tracks. The improvement forms the subject of a patent issued to William J. Mellor, of Langtry, Texas. The front and rear main wheels are journaled in a frame, on which is a crank shaft and sprocket wheel to rotate the rear wheel. The other track rail is engaged by a flanged guide wheel on a short axle clipped to a transverse bar whose other end is bent to the form of a post and journaled in the middle portion of a U-shaped bracket attached to the frame. On the post is a collar engaged by an eye on a rod carrying the handle bar, the collar being adjustable to raise or lower the handles to suit the rider. From the lower end of the post a stiffening rod extends to an eye on the transverse rod, which is also further strengthened by a detachable brace rod, connecting it with the frame, but, by disconnecting the latter, the guide wheel may be folded upon the frame so that the machine will take up but little room, and may be conveniently moved about when not in use. A brake is arranged in the rear of the front wheel, and on the frame, in front of the sprocket wheel, is carried a tool box, a platform at the rear affording space for another passenger or for fixtures and appliances to be carried. By the movement of the handle bar the rider keeps the guide wheel in a proper forward or rearward position on curves, preventing any binding of the wheels, and readily balancing the frame where there is considerable difference in the elevation of the rails.

In the Boston Museum of Fine Arts there are many casts of works of sculpture which are dusted in a novel manner. A large air pump is mounted on a truck and is rolled around to the various rooms. One man operates this pump, the other applies a fine jet of air to the sculptures, blowing off the dust. This blowpipe is connected to the pump by means of a pole and rubber tube.

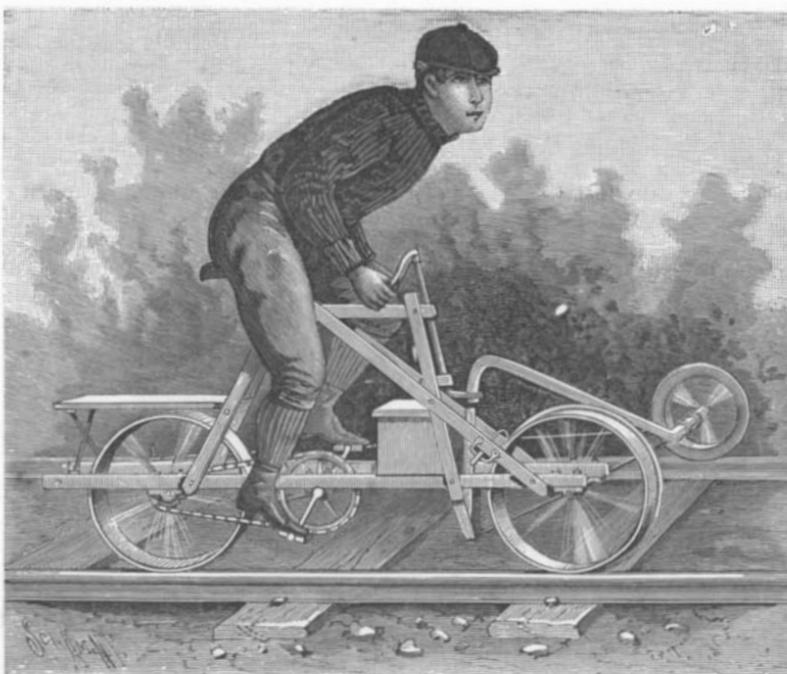
CYCLIST POLICEMEN IN NEW YORK CITY.

The introduction of the bicycle into municipal service has been tried in this city with excellent results. So far the introduction has been experimental, but the success of the service has been such that it will lead to a considerable extension in the near future. Police Commissioner Andrews, himself a wheelman, is



A NEW YORK CITY CYCLIST POLICEMAN.

made directly responsible for the innovation. Four policemen were mounted on bicycles, and assigned to duty in the upper part of the city. Already a number of meritorious arrests of reckless drivers and cyclists have been made by them. In the case of a driver the tactics followed are for the officer to ride ahead of the offending vehicle and allow himself margin enough for dismounting and making the arrest. In the case of a cyclist who was obdurate, the officer in one case ran into him, bringing wheels,



MELLOR'S RAILWAY TRICYCLE.

officer, and cyclist down in a heap, but, as the commissioner expressed it, with "their man on top."

The photograph shows one of the Boulevard police on duty. As the service is extended a special color or other designation will be adopted for the police wheels.

Commissioner Andrews told of one man who was recently promoted to the position of roundsman for meritorious arrests with the aid of the bicycle. Although a foot patrolman he impressed into his service on each occasion a private wheel, mounted it and

caught his men, who, otherwise, on account of their long start, would infallibly have escaped.

The next move is to be the mounting of roundsmen on wheels. The duty of a roundsman involves the overseeing of a large district and the control of the patrolmen who are performing their tours therein. The bicycle mounted roundsman will, it is thought, be the ideal officer for this work.

For patrol work in the annexed district the cyclist policeman will be able to cover his round four or five times where the foot policeman would do so but once. In the case of an equestrian or mounted policeman the difference would probably be as great, as the horse is kept at a walk not exceeding a pedestrian in speed.

The Magical Mistletoe.

Few plants belonging to the English flora have associated with them so much that is of interest as the mistletoe, and the spoils of our orchards and of those of Normandy with which the markets are now crowded testify in no uncertain manner to the high estimation in which this remarkable plant is held by all classes of the community. Nor to those familiar with the traditions with which the mistletoe is surrounded is it surprising that it should be regarded with so much favor by rich and poor alike. The origin of the plant, about which a correspondent inquires was, according to tradition, an event of the most remarkable character, and it has had ascribed to it almost every conceivable virtue. We read in Norse mythology that Frigga, the mother of Baldr, the Apollo of the north, endeavored to preserve her son from harm by an oath from all, as she believed, created things, that they would not injure him. She, however, overlooked the mistletoe, "so small and feeble," that she did not take an oath from it. Loki, an evil spirit, discovering this omission, made an arrow of one of the branches and placed it in the hands of the blind god Hödr, who, throwing it at a venture, fatally wounded Baldr. The gods, however, restored him to Frigga, and, as some reparation, dedicated the plant to her, and gave her control over it for so long a time as it did not touch the earth. From this tradition has probably arisen the practice of suspending a bough from the ceiling and of persons saluting each other under it. The views held by some of the older herbalists and others with regard to the growth of the mistletoe are not less remarkable than the mythological account of its origin, and with reference to this Gerarde writes: "This excrescence hath not any roote, neither doth encrease himself of his seed as some have supposed; but it rather cometh of a certain moisture gathered together upon the boughs and joints of the trees, through the barke whereof this vaporuous moisture proceeding bringeth forth the mistletoe." We may, however, excuse Gerarde for writing what we now know to be nonsense, for before him Bacon treated with ridicule the views of those who contended that the plants were raised from seeds, and declared that they were produced by sap which "the tree doth excrete and cannot assimilate." As befits a plant with so remarkable an origin and manner of growth, the mistletoe had traditionally many virtues. The Druids attributed to it curative properties of a magical character, and, among other things, water in which a bunch had been dipped was distributed among the faithful as a talisman against witches and sorcerers.

Allusion is made to the magical properties of the mistletoe by Virgil, Ovid, and other old writers, one mentioning the power of opening locks. Clusius asserted that a spray worn as a charm round the neck was a sure protection from the evils associated with witchcraft, and another famous old herbalist, Matthioli, declared it to be a certain cure for epilepsy, and it was held in considerable esteem as a remedy for that malady as late as the end of the eighteenth century. Since that time the mistletoe has fallen into disuse both as a charm or curative agent, and become popular for Christmas decorations, with the result that it now contributes more to the enjoyment of the Christmas season than at any other period in its history.—The Gardeners' Magazine.

THE year 1895 was the nine hundredth anniversary of the first appearance of the fork in western Europe, according to the *National Zeitung*. In 995 a son of the Venetian Doge Pietro Orseolo married the Byzantine Princess Argila, who at the wedding breakfast brought out a silver fork and gold spoon. She was copied by the great Venetian families, though the Church opposed the fashion as an insult to Providence. It took 360 years for the fork to reach Florence; in 1379 it is found in France, but it was not till 1608 that "the traveller Corgate brought it direct from Venice to England."