

A VELOCIPEDE AMBULANCE.

The greatest novelty in the bicycle exhibit at the Berlin Trade Exhibition is a velocipede ambulance, patented in the United States, December last, by the inventor, Dr. Honig, of Berlin, Prussia. The invention is already in use at the Royal Charité Hospital, Berlin, and is pronounced by those capable to judge of its merits to work admirably and smoothly.

By the use of this velocipede ambulance, all the many disadvantages arising from the use of horses are obviated, the transportation of the patient is accomplished with more ease and comfort, all jolting is avoided and much trouble and expense spared. Whereas it is often difficult to obtain stabling for the horse ambulance, this vehicle can be easily housed in private buildings. The arrangement of this new velocipede is very simple. The litter, which can be easily raised, is provided with a canvas covering, adjustable head rest and mattress, and can, in severe cases, serve as a bed; it rests on strong springs supported by bearings, running on five wheels, provided with pneumatic rubber tires, of which the four rear ones support the body of the ambulance, the front one serving as a guiding wheel. The vehicle is propelled by two persons, the one sitting in front acting as driver, the one behind keeping his eye through the rear window on the patient within. Two side windows admit light to the interior, which at night is lighted by electricity, fed by an accumulator. The vehicle is well ventilated by an arrangement in the top of the canvas covering. A box underneath serves to hold medicines, bandages and instruments. The litter is so arranged, at a convenient height from the ground, as to admit of operations being performed upon it. The slight weight of the ambulance admits of a high rate of speed. Taken all in all, this velocipede ambulance is worthy of a Yankee's brain, and ought to come into general use and favor in our hospitals and become an indispensable accessory at all sanitary, police and fire department stations. The ambulance can be widened so as to accommodate two litters, thus making it a useful adjunct for army purposes.

Some Facts About Bananas.

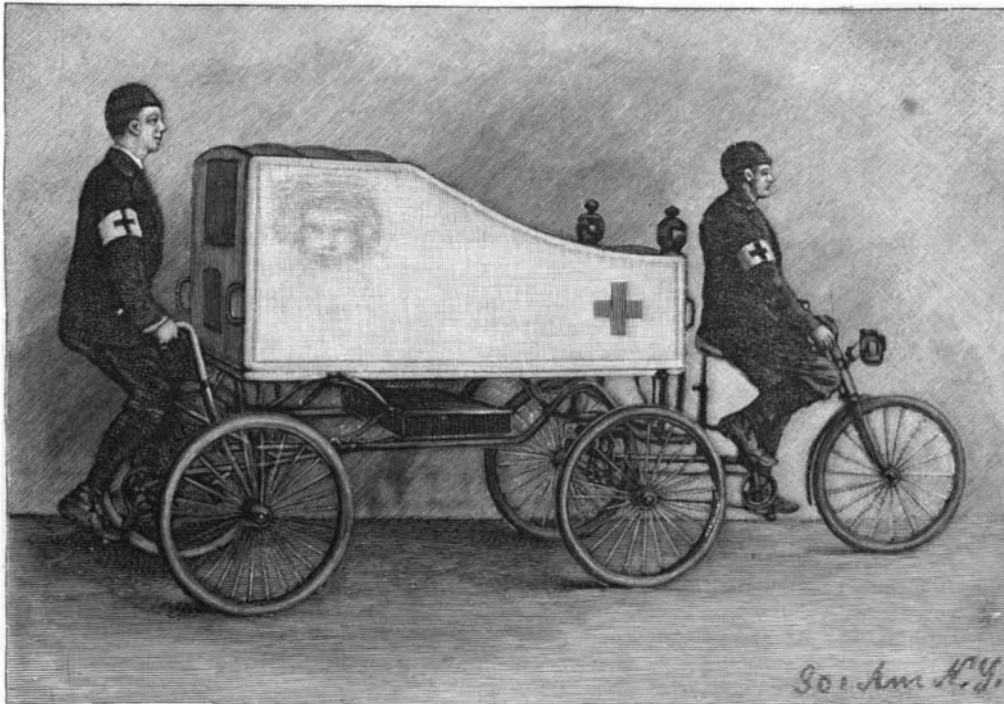
It is hardly necessary to state that well matured bananas that have not begun to decay are a very wholesome and nutritious food. No more than that the biggest apples or pears always are the best, are the biggest bananas the finest flavored; on the contrary, the larger they are the more mealy they taste.

It is with bananas, as with other fruit, that poor soil, producing small fruit, generally compensates in the quality of these for what the bunches lack in size, and yet these latter are left to rot in the plantations because they are less salable, while only the larger bunches of inferior flavor are exported.

To attain its best condition, the bunches should be cut what is called two-quarters and a half ripe, when the fruit is full of juice—that evaporates if left to be three-quarters ripe. The hardening of the rind, after cutting, if exposed to the sun and protected from wet, retains the juice. But if left to ripen on the tree, the juice evaporates and the fruit has hardly any taste at all. Again there is just as much variety in bananas as there is in other fruits, and several kinds that on account of their small size are not exported, would undoubtedly find ready sale in the United States. To the man who buys a nickel's worth of bananas it ought to be immaterial whether they come off a six hands bunch or a ten hands. Your six hands bunches, containing 288 fruit, are given at the same price as one nine hands with 108 fruit, and during the nine months in the year when there is no sale for bunches below eight hands. In this point the planters lose, but the public in the United States does not gain, as the people generally hardly know what good bananas are, or the consumption would be doubled.

The cultivation of bananas, although it has in the last ten years assumed gigantic proportions, may still be said to be in its infancy. Almost every part of the plant can be used for some useful purpose; the stalk forms an excellent material for the manufacture of paper, or the fiber might be extracted; the peel of the fruit will make excellent indelible ink; the green fruit dried can be converted into wholesome flour.

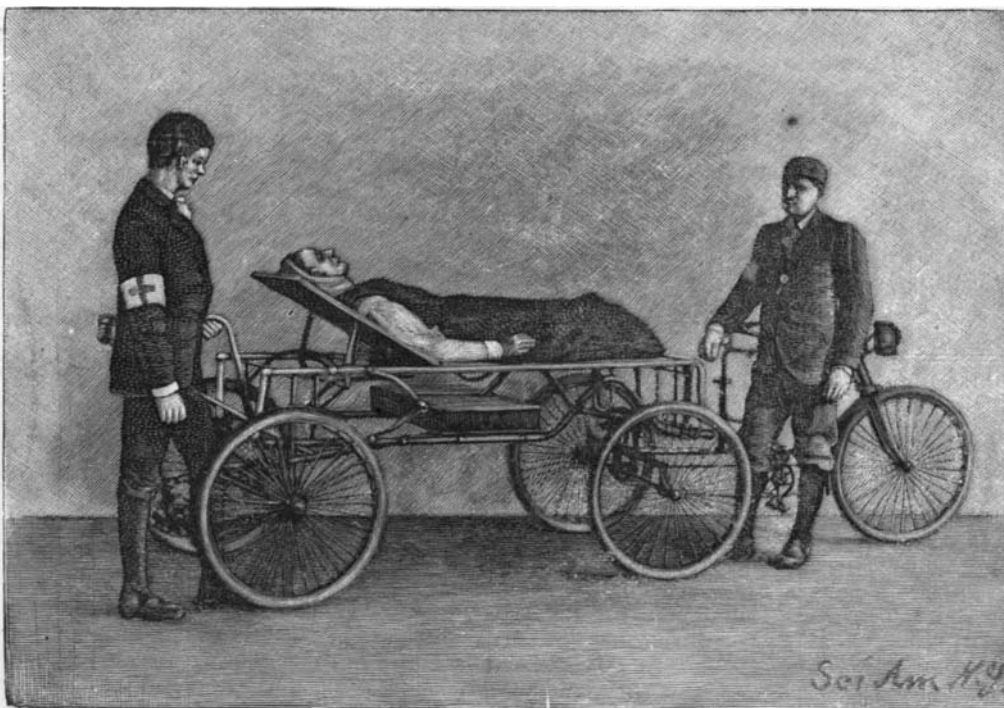
One acre of land planted in bananas, if properly cared for as it ought to be, is capable of yielding an enormous crop, and by having ten acres to attend to,

**VELOCIPEDE AMBULANCE—READY TO START.**

an industrious man could make a good living, even if he only worked one hour a day. The fruit of a single tree sometimes weighs 70 to 80 pounds; or ten trees average 30 to 40 pounds. According to Humboldt's estimate, 10,000 square feet, which will yield only 462 pounds of potatoes or 38 pounds of wheat, will produce 4,000 pounds of bananas, and in a shorter period of time! The fruit, however, when ripe, consists of 74 per cent of water; of the remaining 26 parts, 20 are sugar and 2 gluten or flesh-forming food. Hence, like rice, though exceedingly nutritious, it requires the addition of some more nitrogenous material.

Green bananas, boiled tender, if given to the hens cut up, will make them lay more eggs than any other food.

Yet, in spite of all this, the banana planters at present are hardly making a living, on account of the discrimination of the railroads against the small bunches, by charging the same rate on single small bunches as

**VELOCIPEDE AMBULANCE—PATIENT RECEIVED.**

on big ones, instead of rating them by weight. Dried bananas, or banana figs, as they are called, are now in the market, and will undoubtedly soon be a great article of trade as soon as found by the schoolboy. They are sweet, wholesome and nourishing. — The Sanitarian.

THE splendid botanical garden at Buitenzorg, Java, has the finest collection of palms in the world. There are three hundred determined species, besides about one hundred which appear distinct.

England's Great Museum.

A blue book is just published containing an account of the income and expenditure of the British Museum (special trust funds) for the year ended March 31, 1896, and a return of the number of persons admitted to visit the museum and the Natural History Museum in each year from 1890 to 1895, together with a statement of the progress made in the arrangement, a description of the collections, and an account of the objects added in 1895. The purchase from the Duke of Bedford of the houses and gardens immediately contiguous to the museum for the sum of £200,000, granted by Parliament, has been completed. The total number of visitors to the museum in the year 1895 was 542,423, a falling off of more than 36,000 from that of 1894, which, however, was unusually high. The total number of visitors to the reading room during the year was 194,924, being 8,000 fewer than that of 1894. The daily average was 643. The number of volumes supplied to readers was 1,405,866, as against 1,470,191 in 1894. There was generally a reduction in the numbers of visits of students to the several departments, as will be seen by comparing the total number, 232,484, with the 264,864 of the previous year. Indeed, the number for 1895 is smaller than that of any year since 1890. Next to the reading room in popularity come the newspaper room and the department of manuscripts. The number of visitors to the collections in the British Museum (natural history) in 1895 was 446,737, a larger number than in

any year since 1890. Of the general progress made at the museum, Bloomsbury, during the year it may be mentioned that the collections of antiques, ornaments in gold and silver, and engraved gems have been rearranged in the new gold ornament room, which has been thrown open to the public; a more scientific arrangement of the sculptures from the site of the Temple of Diana at Ephesus has been taken in hand, and the excavations commenced in Cyprus in 1893 have been continued on the ancient site of Curium.

Two purchases of more than ordinary interest were made from funds specially voted by Parliament. The correspondence and papers of Lord Nelson, which were in the possession of Lord Bridport, were secured for £3,000, and the very choice cabinet of drawings by old masters and of early Italian and German engravings formed by the late Mr. John Malcolm, of Poltalloch, passed into the hands of the trustees for £25,000.

The additions to the reading room consist of 34,337 volumes and pamphlets, 70,394 parts of volumes, besides maps and pieces of music while the number of newspapers published in the United Kingdom and received under the copyright act during the past year has been 3,098, comprising 205,646 single numbers.

The most remarkable acquisition made during the year was that of 1,014 editions and translations of the "Imitation of Christ."

Electricity in Mineral Waters, and Its Therapeutic Influence.

It has very generally been claimed that artificial mineral waters are far less efficacious than are the natural waters themselves, and it is known that many watering places produce effects upon patients submitted to the regimen there prescribed which cannot be explained upon the basis simply of the chemical composition of the water. Several learned authorities have ascribed this to the negative electricity with which the water is

charged. Zinno (Bolletino Chim. Farm.) attributes the unexplained therapeutic activity of these waters to electricity, but believes that the electricity is generated to a certain extent by chemical changes which occur in the constituents of the water. The electrical energy contained in the waters, as indicated in the galvanometer, disappears more rapidly where the water is contained in closed vessels than when left open. It sometimes disappears within a few hours, and sometimes not until within several days after the water has been taken from the earth.