Bicycle Riding Dying Out.

The wheel is a thing of the past excepting in the sportnig world, and for strictly utilitarian purposes. This was shown by the reports of the L. A. W. meeting, which showed that from over 24,000 members a year ago the organization has dropepd to one of about 10,500 members today. Its decline is rapid, and with the decline of cycling as a diversoin, but natural. Oddly enough, cycle racing is more popular and profitaple now, in those sections where it obtains, than it ever was before. With good indoor tracks and big cards it probably would be equally pupular here. Cylcing's future seems to be only that of a professional sport.

Turning Off the Old.

The employer who would turn off a man who has been in his service for years just because he was old, would kick a baby to death if nobody was looking. If anybody is turned off, turn off the young ones. They can land on their feet. They have a life time before them in which to earn the right to be retained by some one. Keep the old ones if there is any mercy in your heart.—New York Press.

Science and Invention

There is as much real nourishment in one bushels of beans as in five bushels of potatoes.

An air-cooling system on a vast scale is to be tried at the St. Louis exposition. Great fans will bring down a current of cold air from a height of 800 feet above the earth and pour it over the grounds on hot days.

The amount of carbonic acid gas given off by a few plants is so small that 100 plants in a room would not give as much as one man during a night, and they make many volumes of oxygen during the day more than sufficient to compensate for their presence. Rooms in which plants are kept have, moreover, a fresh odor about them, owing to the fact that they absorb nitrogen, and it is this in part that makes a room stuffy, because nitrogen occurs in most of the secretions emanating from man or animals.

The resistance of cedar wood to decay has long been famous, and cedar fence posts often last for generations. A remarkable instance of the indestructibility of cedar has been noted in the State of Washington, where a forest of hemlocks, near Acme, has grown up over an ancient buried forest of cedars. The trunks of cedar, although lying in a moist soil, have been almost perfectly preserved for at least 150 years, the length of time that the rings of growth show the hemlocks to have been growing above their fallen predecessors.

Corundum is first cousin to the sapphire and the ruby, but lacks their brilliance of color and transparency. It is a most excellent abrasive material, better than emery, which is impure corundum, in that respect, but hitherto its rarity has made it too high-priced for general use. Recently valuable deposits of corundum have been found in the mountains north of Kingston, Ontario, and it is hoped that they will furnish a large supply of the mineral. Traces of sapphire have been found among the deposits, but as yet no specimens of the precious blue gem have revealed themselves.

The difference in color between green and black tea has been ascribed to various causes. Recently Mr. Aso, of the agricultural college at Tokyo, has investigated the subject, and he offers, in substance, the following explanation: In making green tea the leaves are steamed as soon as gathered; in the case of black tea the leaves are allowed to ferment before drying. The result is that the finished black tea contains much less tannin than the green contains. The original tea-leaf possesses an oxidizing enzyme which is destroyed in the green tea by steaming. In black tea, during fermentation, the enzyme oxidizes the tannin and gives rise to a brownish-colored product.

RICHES IN THE TROPICS.

Researches in Those Regions Are Proving to Be Very Profitable.

Few persons have any idea what prospects of wealth are opening in tropical countries. It is only within a few years that any attention has been paid to many large areas that are now found to be rich in commodities which the world needs. Of course, this work of studying the tropical world is still in its early stages and much remains to be done, even to procure a comparatively complete list of the tropical plants that are most useful.

In the last two or three years it has been feared that the demand for rubber would exceed the supply. But recent studies have revealed new fields that are already beginning to contribute to the rubber supply. The list of rubber plants is constantly growing. Within two years a number of trees and vines never before utilized have begun to yield a harvest of rubber. This valuable product bids fair to play in the humid regions of the tropics about the same part as the precious metals do in temperate regions, says the New York Sun.

In the last ten years the Congo Free State, French Guiana, Madagascar and Lagos have advanced enormously in the value of their exports, the basis of their prosperity being due to india rubber. The latest declared exports from the French Congo, amounting to about $1,200,000, were half india rubber. After the fall of Khartum, W. Garstin, a French economist, expressed the opinion that the valley of the Upper Nile, devastated for so many years by the Mahdists, would contribute practically nothing to the wealth of the world for the next half century. But the Upper Nile has since then yielded 620 tons of rubber. In French Indo-China is the large region known as Upper Laos and the Laotian Shan States, which until recently have never been of the slightest economic importance in the foreign trade. In 1899, after French experts had reported that these regions were rich in valuable resources, a little rubber began to be sent to market. In the first year only fifty tons were exported, but in the year following (1900), 340 tons were exported, almost all of it from the Tran Ninh district, which is only a very small part of the areas in which rubber is found to thrive.

The advance of our knowledge of rubber plants in the tropics is only one phase of the activity of botanical exploration there for the benefit of commerce. Annales de Geographie says that systematic efforts are now being made to extend the cultivation of the ramie fiber plant. Plantation owners, experimental stations and congresses, in which experts discuss the question in all its bearings, are now co-operating to develop a new industry on a large scale. Ramie or China grass, of the nettle family, is grown largely in China, Japan and the Malay Archipelago for coarse cloths and cordage. It forms a large part of the clothing of the Chinese peasantry who, even in the coldest weather, wear nothing but China grass or cotton. The variety which is grown most largely in Southern China and Northern Indo-China is exported to a considerable extent to England. Another variety known as green ramie thrives best in Java and the Sunda Islands. Both plants are sensitive to cold, but the variety known as white ramie stands moderate frosts and thrives in temperate climates with proper soil and cultivation.

The development of the ramie industry has been retarded by the fact that it is difficult to obtain the fiber, which is protected by a tough skin that resists most chemical dissolvants. Great efforts are now being made to overcome this difficulty. A ramie congress held two sessions last year and it is believed that the difficulty will be overcome.

TALKING TO ONE'S SELF.

Supposed to be One of the Early Symptoms of Insanity.

Talking to one's self has this obvious advantage over any other form of oratory or gossip—one is assured of a sympathetic audience. But it has also this peculiar drawback—it is supposed to be one of the early symptoms of insanity. Wrongly so, perhaps. A mad doctor might rule the habit out of his diagnosis. Nevertheless the popular belief is firmly rooted. And it is for fear of this belief, doubtless, that we talk to ourselves, even as we dress our hair with straws, so rarely. It may be said that we never do address ourselves at any length except in the delirium of a fever. In moments of ordinary excitement, of course, we utter to the wind some sort of appropriate ejaculation. Delight wrings from us a cry of "Hurrah!" or "Thank Heaven!" even though there be none by to echo us.

Similarly in any disgust we emit one of those sounds whose rather poor equivalents in print are "Ugh!" and "Faugh!" "D——n!" and "Tut!" Much further than this we do not go. "Why, what an ass am I!" cries Hamlet in one of his soliloquies. Omitting the first word and transposing the last two, the ordinary modern man does often soliloquize, to that extent. But he could no more soliloquize to Hamlet's extent than he could speak in decasyllabics. Nor is there any reason to suppose that that class of the community with which, contemptuous of his own fluency, Hamlet compared himself, is or ever was more prone to soliloquize than any other. In the matter of soliloquies we cannot accept Hamlet as an unbiased authority. We merely find in him the possible origin of the belief that talking to one's self is a bad sign.—London Saturday Review.

PARIS SCHOOL

In Which Aspiring Detectives Are Trained for Their Profession.

Paris is the home of a new school for detectives, where aspiring trackers are taught by regularly graded lessons and examinations.

The students are first trained in the use of their eyes and hands. One of the lessons consists in placing a pupil in the middle of a brilliantly lighted room full of furniture. He is left for a few seconds, when the room is darkened, and he is required to sketch hastily a complete map of the room indicating the position of the furniture.

After this he is allowed to look at a face for a moment or two. The student is then required to describe the face and the color of the hair and eyes. He is afterwards required to recognize a photograph of the face among several hundred others.

The education of the hand follows. The pupil is placed in a darkened room full of curious and unusual objects. He is required to touch them rapidly and afterwards to recall exactly what he has touched and write a description of them. He must remember even the slightest details. One of the exercises consists in placing a jeweled knife before him in the dark, which he is allowed to touch only for a moment. Afterwards he must tell by touch what the jewels are—whether rubies, diamonds or opals.

How It Happened.

"Yes," said the member of Congress, "I had been in Washington but a short time when I awoke one morning and found myself famous."

"How did you manage it?"

"Published my biography in the Congressional directory without trying to conceal any facts or trying to assume a statesmanlike pose. It was an accident, but it was effective."—Washington Star.

Cool.

"You don't get such poetry as was written in days gone by," said the regretful person.

"Of course you don't," answered the smug modernist. "There is no further demand for it. There is so much days gone-by poetry already on the market that there is no further demand for it."—Washington Star.

Relics of Roman Art.

At Montalto, in the province of Genoa, in tearing down an old church a small underground room was found full of art objects of the Roman time, chiefly chiseled silver amphorae and vases filled with gold and silver coins.

Every man barked at by a dog is not a thief; every man talked about by a gossip is not guilty.

What a Woman Photographer Sees.

A woman photograhper, who gives as much thought to each portrait she makes, as any portrait painter, says that she has a peculiar feeling in peering through the camera of looking into the souls of the sitters. Some people are able to stand this, and she likes them better after they have been put to the test, while others she does not like as well. She sees what the untouched photograph often reveals, the true character of the sitter unsoftened by color and with all the lines exaggerated. The portrait painter frequently reveals characteristics in a portrait which the world never suspected in the subject.—New York Times.

Zulu women always indicate by their head dress whether they are married or unmarried.

Lawton, Okla. six months old, has 7,000 inhabitants, 188 lawyers, 45 saloons, 27 gambling dens and 4 schools.

Sixteen inches of room would seem an inadequate accommodation for each passenger in a street car. Yet this is the space to be allotted in Westminster Abbey to those fortunate 8,000 who will be bidden to attend the coronation.

South Carolina proposes to exhibit at the St. Louis Exposition a reproduction of the cabin in which President Andrew Jackson was born.

Each package of PUTNAM FADELESS DYE colors more goods than any other dye and colors them better, too.

Passenger in a Predicament.

A passenger on an elevated road in Brooklyn had the slack of his trousers leg caught in a closing door as he was standing with his back to it. The side doors are only opened from the outside with keys kept at the Brooklyn bridge. The passenger was therefore obliged to go way beyond his station until a bridge man and a key could be found.

Few women flirt after they get married—and few men flirt before.

A petroleum well has been known in Zante, one of the Ionian islands, for nearly 3,000 years. It is mentioned by Herodotus, who was born 484 years before the Christian era.

Farthing breakfasts, consisting of coffee, bread and butter and jam, are now being provided by the Salvation Army for poor children in Newcastle, England.