

ally 'out of sight' has just been patented by a San Francisco gentleman. The merits claimed for the new invention are, first, that it is 'out of sight' in a literal sense, as the only portion exposed to view is the foot or that portion coming in direct contact with the tire, and does not, therefore, give to the wheel a cumbersome or awkward appearance; then it is convenient, always being on hand and ready to operate, and light, weighing only a few ounces; it is effective, as the wheel can at once be brought to a full stop; and finally, it can be applied to any wheel and is cheap. The invention consists of a handle-bar having a screw-threaded extension, with a corresponding interior thread filling and turning upon its extension. When the rider wishes to stop, a single turn of the handle bar causes the sliding rod within the handle post to act as a pulley on the foot of the brake and forces it against the rubber tire. A half turn of the handle bar is sufficient to stop a machine under ordinary headway, while a complete turn will stop a wheel going at any speed within its own length.

How suddenly to bring your bicycle to a full stop without disastrous consequences is the problem which an Illinois inventor thinks he has solved successfully. Acting upon a theory which is the outgrowth of a close observation of nature, and which certainly seems plausible to the lay mind, Mr Guertin has taken out a patent for a new style of bicycle brake. In walking a person instinctively throws the weight of the body on the forward foot. When he wishes to stop he reverses the operation, and throws the weight on the rear one. In riding a wheel the same instinct compels the rider to favour the forward or back pedal as the case may be. When the rider applies power to the pedal crank to propel the machine forward, the upper side of the chain becomes taut and the lower slack, allowing no friction between the chain-shoe and chain, or tyre-shoe and tyre. But when back pressure is applied to the pedals for the purpose of arresting the forward movement of the machine, the upper side of the chain is slack and the lower taut. Thus friction ensues between the chain-shoe and chain and tyre-shoe and tyre, while the hub is arrested by a back movement of the chain, causing the forward movement to be arrested at hub, chain-shoe and tyre-shoe simultaneously, thereby saving the racking of the wheel. As soon as the weight is taken from the back pedal the friction is removed and the wheel forced forward, preventing the possibility of taking a header. The brake may be gauged to work tight or loose as the rider wishes, and the strain is equally distributed. Also all the rattling is done away with. This brake is a great success, and meets a crying need.

A tandem bicycle can now be made from two ordinary machines whenever the riders so desire. There need be no more walking long, weary miles, carrying a broken wheel, nor need the wheelman or woman who meets with any of the ordinary mishaps of the road despair. Nor will it be necessary for the sociably inclined to ride alone in future, for lack of a tandem. An invention has just been perfected, by means of which any good Samaritan of the road may attach his unfortunate brother's wheel to his own, and all the world may ride tandem if it chooses. An attachment has been devised which enables you in a few minutes to make a tandem from any two bicycles, regardless of their make, height, or gear, and it can be reduced to its original component parts with almost equal celerity. The weight being equally distributed upon three wheels instead of two, a high rate of speed with less output of effort is obtainable. It is a fine hill climber, because it has two perfectly independent drivers. The apparatus which accomplishes so much is simple in the extreme. The lower part consists of a fork, with springs to connect the rear axle of the front bicycle with the bottom bracket of the rear bicycle—the front wheel can, if desired, be entirely removed from the rear bicycle. The upper part of the connection consists of two tubes which telescope and connect the saddle post of the front bicycle with the stem of the handle-bar of the rear bicycle.

THE BICYCLE AS AN INDICATOR OF CHARACTER.

'How d'ye do, boys. Watching the fair cyclists, eh? Quite the proper thing nowadays to drop in at the riding academies; and, by-the-by, it will pay you chaps on matrimony intent to keep a close and thoughtful eye on your lady-love's performance a-wheel.

'That's right, laugh—but you have doubtless heard a trite proverb in regard to who laughs best.

'If you will only give the matter a few moment's consideration you will cheerfully acknowledge that you can tell more about a girl's temperament by watching her ride a bicycle than by any other means.

'Just watch Miss Rose—the best *partis* of the season. For my part I should not want to marry her, even if I had the chance. A careful observer will note the firm grasp upon the handle-bars, the snappy throw of the feet upon the pedals. Despite her charming exterior, that girl would make a perfect hornets' nest for her better half.

'Miss Hogany—May Hogany? Well, she shows a great lack of self reliance in her riding—gives the path too easily, and would rather take a tumble than risk running into anyone. I'm afraid she would be likely to make home so wishy-washy that no spirited man would be content.

'Miss Von—Daisy Von? Ah, there's the ideal! Steady and easy, with a quick eye and a springy foot. As a hostess she would never omit a single detail. As a wife she would enter into your life as a true friend and a sympathetic champion. The one that marries her will be sure of a congenial companion along the road of life. Should the sharp pin of misfortune puncture the pneumatic tire of prosperity, her ready brain and fingers would aid to patch the leaky tube.

'Myopinions prejudiced? Heard rumours of my being engaged to Miss Von?

'Well, what of that. Shouldn't a man have a good opinion of his wife that is to be?'

OLDEST MEN IN THE WORLD.

THE oldest man in the world has been discovered. He is Bruno Cotrim, a negro born in Africa, and now a resident of Rio Janeiro. The most careful investigation shows that this remarkable coloured man has lived to the age of 150, and promises to continue his remarkable exhibition of longevity for an indefinite period. The discovery of this long-lived individual was made by a German statistician, who has prosecuted his investigations with most interesting results. He finds that the closest rival to Cotrim is a retired Moscow cabman named Kustrim, who is in his 140th year. The statistician says the oldest woman in the world is 130 years of age, but probably out of natural courtesy to the sex he refrains from giving her name and address.

In diving still further into the life and death statistics of the world, the investigator found it necessary to turn to the least civilized corners of the earth in order to get the longest lives.

The German empire, with 55,000,000 population, has but 78 subjects who are more than 100 years old.

France, with fewer than 40,000,000, has 213 persons who have passed their 100th birthday.

England has 146, Ireland 578, Scotland 46, Denmark 2, Belgium 5, Sweden 10, and Norway, with 2,000,000 inhabitants, 23.

Switzerland does not boast a single centenarian, but Spain, with about 18,000,000 population, has 470.

The most amazing figures found by the German statistician came from that troublesome and turbulent region known as the Balkan Peninsula. Servia has 575 persons who are more than 100 years old. Roumania 1,084 and Bulgaria 3,883. In other words, Bulgaria has a centenarian to every thousand inhabitants, and thus holds the international record for old inhabitants. In 1892 alone there died in Bulgaria 350 persons of more than 100.

In the Balkan Peninsula, moreover, a person is not regarded as being on the verge of the grave the moment he becomes a centenarian. For instance, in Servia there were in 1890 some 290 persons between 106 and 115 years, 123 between 115 and 125, and 18 between 125 and 135. Three were between 135 and 140.

THE TAILED MAN OF MECCA.

COLONEL DU CORRET, in a report to the French Academy of Sciences, says:—'When I was at Mecca, being often at the house of an Emir, I spoke to him of the supposed race of tailed men, called Ghilanes, which are thought to live in the interior of Africa. I doubted the existence of the race, but in order to convince me of my error the Emir ordered before me one of his slaves, who, he said, was a tailed Ghilane. An examination proved that the slave, whose name was Bellal, had a tail about three inches in length, and almost as flexible as that of a monkey.'

FORESTALLING IDEA THEIEYER.

As Thomas A. Edison watched the pumping of the air from a glass tube in his laboratory a day or two ago, remarks *New Ideas*, a man said to him:

'You patent every little thing you discover, don't you, Mr Edison?'

'I do,' said Mr Edison; 'and do you know why I do it?'

'I suppose you do it so you will reap the benefit of your discovery,' was the reply.

'I thought you'd say that,' said Mr Edison, 'and I don't suppose you will believe me when I tell you it isn't so; nevertheless, I discover a great many things that I would be glad to give to the public for nothing, but I don't dare. I patent these things to save myself from defending lawsuits. There are a lot of sharks in this world who are continually on the lookout for new things, and when one of them hears of something new he hustles to the Patent Office to see if it is patented. If it isn't he claims it as an original discovery and files his claim. Then he will turn right around, and like as not, begin a suit with the man who invented the thing for making or using it. The inventor will say: "But I discovered this thing first; I am the inventor." He is referred to the Patent Office, where he finds the official claim of original invention. The fact that the papers are filed long after he made his discovery does not help him, for all the other man does is to hire a fellow to swear that he made the discovery a month or two prior to the date the inventor claims. It sounds ridiculous, probably, but it is a fact that there are often races between the inventors and the sharks to reach the Patent Office. What I say is literally true.'

RULES OF DRESS NEEDED.

A LEADING London newspaper pleads for an authoritative set of rules 'for the guidance of gentlemen who wish to appear suitably attired at fashionable race-meetings. It is so awkward to be light-suited, brown-booted, and billy-cocked when everyone else in the inclosure is in a high hat and frock coat. It is equally unpleasant to stand out against the sky in a high hat and frock coat when everybody else is in a straw hat and serge.' The necessity for such rules is shown by the experience of a leading American statesman just concluding his first visit there. He went down to Ascot (writes a correspondent) the day after his arrival, in his customary lounge coat, tanned shoes, and straw hat. 'I would as soon have found myself at the opera in that guise,' he said; 'there was not another man in the grand-stand who was not dressed as if for a garden party.' A little later he went down to Newmarket, this time in full garden-party array, but every man, from the Prince down, was in tweeds, billycocks and all. He was invited to a famous horse sale, with preceding luncheon, at the private country seat of a noted Englishman. Surely, he counselled with himself, lounge dress will be in order here. He found again every man in Ascot garb, the ladies in fullest summer styles, and he and the stud grooms alone in tweeds and billycocks. He was invited to a house-boat at Henley; he informed himself that there was to be an elaborate luncheon, with many lady guests, and he complacently donned his frock coat and silk hat. Even the negro minstrels contemptuously grinned at him as he tried to hide himself there behind the flowering plants on the boat. He did not know that Ascot is a 'royal function' and full afternoon dress, therefore, absolutely necessary. But he could not know why it was equally *de rigueur* at the horse sale, nor can anyone not in 'the know.' It is the mystery of the club autocrats who set such fashions, communicate them to the world, and thus, perhaps, deliberately use their power to make the outsider feel that he is one.

'YALUMBA' VINEYARDS, Angaston, South Australia. The wines from these vineyards are celebrated for purity and delicacy of flavour. Have secured gold medals at *Bordeaux, Melbourne, Calcutta*, and numerous prizes at Dunedin and Tasmanian Exhibitions. Claret, Rich Constantin, Red Frontignac, Mnsac, Special Old Port (80 vintage), etc. Obtainable from leading Wine and Spirit Merchants, and all first-class hotels.—S. SMITH AND SON, Proprietors. (Advt.)

FOR COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE

FOR

Artistic

Printing

OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS,

CARDS, CIRCULARS BALL & CONCERT PROGRAMMES, MENUS,

WEDDING & MOURNING CARDS,

SEND ORDERS TO—

MANAGER,

GRAPHIC OFFICE,

AUCKLAND.

DESIGNS SUBMITTED.

CONVENIENT & HEALTHY LOCALITY

THE LANGHAM HOTEL,

PORTLAND PLACE AND REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.

IN THE MOST FASHIONABLE



Near the Best Shops, etc. Modern improvements. Table d'hôte, 6.30 until 8.15. Artesian well water. Electric light throughout. Moderate tariffs.