

safely through use of helicopter motors. Patent 2,654,320.

A device for preventing icing in a jet engine. Patent 2,654,992.

A glove hermetically sealed to garment sleeve for protecting flesh against dangerous liquids and gases. Patent 2,656,663.

A floating oil storage tank for off-shore drillers. Patent 2,655,888.

A non-wetting plastic matrix for printing electronic circuits on plastic, ceramics or glass. Patent 2,656,570.

An electromagnetic pump for handling "hot" liquids in atomic plants. Patent 2,658,452.

The synchrotron, a powerful atom smasher that increases the magnetic field in proportion to increase in mass of the electrons at high energies. Patent 2,624,841.

A warning device for dangerous temperatures in jet airplane engines. Patent 2,621,239.

A mechanical circulation device to substitute for a patient's heart and lungs during delicate heart operations. Patent 2,659,368.

Science News Letter, December 26, 1953



Mistletoe

➤ MISTLETOE, WHICH all over the country is making boys bold and girls blush, has many reputations. None are as romantic as the one we briefly bestow on it at the Yuletide season.

For one thing, during the workaday months of the year mistletoe is thought of, if at all, preeminently as a plant pest. It is a plant that grows on trees as a parasite. In Australia mistletoe reached the status of a major pest. Its principal victim there was the eucalyptus tree, on which it worked such damage that weed killers were used in a full scale campaign against it.

Mistletoe is native to both the Old World and the New, the two being different forms of the same family. Many legends and charms were associated with the mistletoe in Europe. According to one belief, the mistletoe was once a full grown tree that grew like any proper tree on its own roots sunk firmly in the soil. Then, the legend has it, its timber was cut for the cross on which Christ was crucified. Since then it has dwindled to its present low estate, a dwarf and a parasite living off other trees.

The belief is still held in some of the more superstitious parts of Germany that mistletoe will make ghosts appear and if you talk to them they will answer you.

Among the ancient Druids, mistletoe was a symbol of spirit, since it grew in the air on the sacred oak. At the year's end, a Druid priest in a white robe would cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle. A white cloth spread on the ground made certain that the twig did not touch earth.

The people would make charm bracelets and rings of the plant. Worn on the person or fastened over doorways, it was believed to have power to ward off evil.

The seeds of this parasitic plant, which has meant so many different things to different men and different ages, are given a wide range by the birds that feed on the berries. The seeds are sticky and they adhere to the bill of the feeding bird. Later the bird will clean his bill by rubbing it against the bark of a tree.

The seed sticks to the bark. Eventually it puts out a tap root which penetrates the bark and draws on the food circulating in the tree's sap.

Mistletoe has many facets: Cupid's ally, plant pest, magic charm, wood of the cross. It is also the official state flower of Oklahoma.

Science News Letter, December 26, 1953

MEDICINE

**Warns of Hearing Loss From "Gin and Tonic"**

➤ "GIN AND tonic," alcoholic beverage that has grown increasingly popular, at least in eastern United States, may cause ringing in the ears and even deafness in some persons, Dr. Stephen Bennett Yohalem of New York warns in a report to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Dec. 5).

The ear trouble would come from the quinine in the "tonic," or quinine water. While the amount per pint is probably so small that the average grown person would have to drink an "enormous" amount to get the ear trouble, some persons have an idiosyncrasy to quinine and they might get in trouble from smaller amounts of the drink.

Science News Letter, December 26, 1953

**Questions**

ASTRONOMY—When will a total eclipse of the sun next be visible from the U. S.? p. 407.

□ □ □

DERMATOLOGY—How can the chronic itcher get relief? p. 402.

□ □ □

ELECTRONICS—What is FOSDIC? p. 409.

□ □ □

MEDICINE—For how long has a two-headed baby been known to survive? p. 405.

□ □ □

SURGERY—Who were the original Siamese twins? p. 404.

□ □ □

Photographs: Cover and p. 403, U. S. Army; p. 405, General Electric; p. 412, Vern S. Skamser Co.

**ERRATA, Vol. 64, Nos. 1-26, July-December, 1953**

PAGE	TITLE BEGINS	CORRECTION
24	New Anti-Ulcer	Last paragraph, lines 2 and 3, read retail for 5 to 7 cents a tablet.
47	Better Humidity	Par. 4, first sentence to read The instrument employs the principle of selective absorption of two bands in the infrared portion of the visible spectrum.
134	Clue to	Col. 2, lines 16-18, read <i>Escherichia coli</i> , <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> , <i>Bacillus megatherium</i> , <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> .
184	Soap and Water	Research not based on experimental work, but presented new theory explaining how bacteria are killed.
196	"Cosmic Stopwatch" (p. 195)	Line 5, to a hundred years read to nearly 300 years.
229	Fluorescent Light	Line 4, Stoutmeyer for Stoutemyer.
240	Dc You Know	Lines 3 and 4, order for family.
278		Col. 3, last line, read attain speeds of 70 miles an hour.

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