

—Dr B C Wilder, late surgeon of the Fifty-fifth regiment Massachusetts volunteers (colored) gave the first of four lectures upon the *Silk Spider of South Carolina*, in Boston, Tuesday evening. The journal gives the following brief but interesting synopsis:

The first of this species of spider was discovered by the lecturer, on the north side of Polly Island, while in camp there in August, 1863. He wound from its body, in one hour and a quarter, one hundred and fifty yards of yellow silk. The next year another officer wound from thirty spiders three thousand four hundred and eighty four yards, or nearly two miles of the silk. A single thread of this was strong enough to sustain a weight of from forty-four to one hundred and seven grains. In 1865, Dr Wilder showed his specimen to Prof Aggasiz and others to whom the species was new. Returning to Charleston, he resumed his researches, and after a variety of adventures and disappointments, succeeded in getting a number of the spiders.

In the course of the season these all died from lack of knowledge as their habits, mode of living, &c. From the eggs deposited, however, many others were produced. It is the habit of the stronger to devour the weaker, so that out of several thousand only a few hundred were raised. The fact, however, was clearly demonstrated that they could be raised and live through a Northern winter. In the succeeding lectures the method of securing the silk, and other facts in regard to this interesting discovery will be given.

Specimens of the silk were exhibited, which were of a golden yellow and a silver white, and as brilliant as the metals in appearance. It is elastic, while the silver colored thread is non elastic, and is used for the main stays of the web. Dr Wilder has a lot of these spiders living in the Cambridge Conservatory, and many young broods in his room in Boston. The Doctor has made full communications to the American Academy, and to the Boston Society of Natural History.—*Hunt's Merchants Magazine*.

—A person may be saved from drowning by the proper use of a man's hat and a pocket handkerchief, which (being all the apparatus necessary) is to be used thus: Spread the handkerchief on the ground, and place a hat with brim downward, on the middle of the handkerchief, and then tie the handkerchief round the hat as you would tie up a bundle, keeping the knots as near the centre of the crown as may be. Now, by seizing the knots in one hand and keeping the opening of the hat upward, a person, without knowing how to swim, may fearlessly plunge into the water with what may be necessary to save the life of a fellow-creature. If a person should fall out of a boat, or the boat upset by going foul of a cable, or should he fall off the quays, or indeed fall into water from which he could not extricate himself, but must wait some little time for assistance, had he presence of mind to whip off his hat and hold it by the brim, placing his fingers within-side the crown, and hold it so (top downward), he would be able by this method to keep his mouth well above water till assistance should reach him. It often happens that danger is described long before we are in the peril, and time enough to prepare the above method; and a courageous person would, in seven instances out of ten, apply them with success.—*Land and Water*.

—A negro has formally petitioned the Probate court, of Tallahatchie country, Alabama, to be allowed to sell himself into slavery. He says there are too many responsibilities surrounding him, and that he is dissatisfied with his present condition.

—A letter has been received from M. de Baer, of St. Petersburg, announcing the most interesting fact that a mammoth has been found in Arctic Siberia, covered with his skin and hair. The animal must have been literally kept packed in Arctic ice from one epoch to another. The discovery had been made so early as 1864 by a Sanyede in the environs of Taz Bay, the eastern branch of the Gulf of Obi. The news reached St. Petersburg at the close of 1865. With culpable slowness the Academy of St. Petersburg has only just sent the distinguished paleontologist, M Schmidt, to investigate the matter, and especially to examine the contents of the stomach in order to discover what was the animal's natural food.—*N. Y. Teacher*.

—The principal members of the new Cabinet have already served in previous ministries. We take the following particulars respecting them from Dodd's Parliamentary Companion and other sources:

Earl Derby, the Premier and leader of the Government in the House of Lords, was born in 1799. He has been Chief Secretary for Ireland, Colonial Secretary, and twice (now three) Premier.

Mr. Disraeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is now 67 years old, and first entered Parliament in 1837, in which he has always had a seat ever since. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Derby from March till December 1852, and again from March 1858 to June 1859.

Lord Stanley, the new Foreign Secretary, is the eldest son of the Earl of Derby, and represents *Lynn-Regis* in the House; and notwithstanding his comparatively tender age (40), has already occupied places of considerable trust in the Cabinet. In 1852 he was made Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Colonial Secretary; in the short-lived Derby government of 1858, President of the Board of Control, and Secretary for India. He is one of the hardest working and most promising men in the House,

and when the crisis recently occurred was unanimously selected by public opinion for the responsible post now conferred upon him.

The Right Hon. Spencer Horatio Walpole, Sir Charles Grey's successor in the Home Office, is M. P. for Cambridge University, and exactly 60 years old. He is a Q. C., and was Home Secretary in the Derby Ministry of 1852 and 1858-59, resigning in the latter year in consequence of his dissatisfaction with the Reform Bill brought down by his leader.

Gen Peel, the new Secretary of War, was a member of the Cabinet, as War Minister, in 1858-59, and has been in Parliament for Norwich and Huntingdon since 1826. He entered the army in 1815, and was created a Lieut.-General in 1854.

Sir John Pakington, the new First Lord of the Admiralty, is as old as Lord Derby, having been born in the same year, and has sat for Droitwich ever since 1837. He was Colonial Secretary under his present leader in 1852, and First Lord of the Admiralty from 1857 till June, 1859.

Sir Stafford Henry Northcote, M. P., for Stamford, the new President of the Board of Trade, was at one time Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone, when he too was President of the Board of Trade, and Financial Secretary to the Treasury—a minor post under Lord Derby's Government in 1858-9. He is a lawyer by profession.

The new President of the Council, the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, is better known in America as the Marquis of Chandos. He was born in 1823, and has been a Lord of the Treasury, and Keeper of the Privy Seal to the Prince of Wales. He is one of the most popular noblemen in Great Britain, having several years ago relinquished all title to the family estates for the purpose of paying his late father's enormous debts, a sacrifice which he could easily have avoided under the law of entail, had he been so disposed. The despatches received do not state who is to be Colonial Secretary. It will probably be Lord Cranborne.

## ADVERTISEMENTS.

### McGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL.

The Annual Calendar for the Session of 1866-7 is now published, and contains full information respecting

THE FACULTY of LAW.  
THE FACULTY of MEDICINE.  
THE FACULTY of ARTS.  
THE MCGILL NORMAL SCHOOL.  
THE HIGH SCHOOL of MCGILL COLLEGE.  
THE SPECIAL COURSES.

Copies of the Calendar may be obtained gratis, on application, post-paid, to the undersigned.

W. C. BAYNES, B. A.  
Secy. Royal Institution.

### McGILL NORMAL SCHOOL, MONTREAL.

The tenth session of the School will commence on the third September, 1866, and extend to the first of July, 1867.

Candidates for admission into the Junior Class will be required to pass an examination in Reading, Writing, the Elements of Grammar, Arithmetic and Geography.

All Students must produce certificates of good moral character, and that they have attained the age of sixteen years. They will also be required to sign a pledge that they purpose to teach for three years in some public school in Lower Canada.

At the close of the first year of study, students may apply for examination for diplomas giving the right to teach in Elementary Schools; and after two years' study, or if found qualified at the close of the first year, they will, on examination, be entitled to diplomas as teachers of Model Schools.

Students having passed the examination in the Model School Class, or having advanced to the requisite knowledge, may go on to the Academy Class, and, on examination, may obtain the Academy Diploma.

On passing the examination, Students not resident in Montreal will be entitled to bursaries in aid of their Board; and if resident more than ninety miles from Montreal, to an allowance for travelling expenses.

Tuition and use of Text-Books free.

The printed announcement of the School, and all other information, may be obtained on application to the undersigned.

W. C. BAYNES, B. A.