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A collection of plants from Spitzbergen has been received at Chiswick from Captain H. J. Charrington. The plants are in good-sized clumps, and if a suitable spot can be found for them very cold, and with little or no light during the winter months possibly they may thrive and eventually become acclimatised. It is scarcely likely, however, that they will prove an addition to the "horticultural" world.

The tramcars in Glasgow are, it is stated, to be lighted by electricity in "such a manner as never before has been seen." There are, it appears, to be two lamps inside each car, and two lamps outside, and the latter are to be sufficiently powerful to enable "any person" sitting on the top of the cars to read an evening paper with the greatest ease. These statements are reported to have been made at a meeting of the Town Council of Glasgow; but the details do not appear to have been mentioned, nor estimates of the expense.

According to a report, mussels are accumulating on the Kentish Flats, because dredging has removed "five-fingers" and star-fish, and the mussels have established themselves within a quarter of a mile of the oyster beds. It is held by experts that oyster-spats will not settle where mussels are or "have been," so the Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee have prohibited any further removal of five-fingers or star-fish on the Kentish Flats before January 1, 1896. The question arises for naturalists to settle whether mussels are obnoxious to oysters, and if so, why so?

Cobwebs are still valueless as a raw material for manufacturing purposes and, like many an other article, remarks the *Drapers' Record*, await the ingenuity of man to turn them to better account in the service of man. No thoughtful observer of the wonderful elastic web of the common garden spider, for example, can resist the temptation to speculate on the possibilities of the spider and its web. Indeed, considering the rate of progress in arts and sciences, we ought not to be quite so far from the day when the cobwebs in the cellar will be carefully collected and converted into silk dresses for the ball-room.

In the public schools of France 24.2 per cent. of the scholars are shortsighted, in those of Germany 35 per cent., and in those of the United Kingdom 20 per cent. The percentage of myopia is highest in the classes of rhetoric and philosophy. The hygienic condition of the school does not seem to affect it, but in the opinion of Dr. Martin, a French authority, want of physical exercise is the chief cause of it. By modifying the work of the classes and allowing reasonable spells of exercise between them, the proportion of myopia in the College of Giessen fell from 26.6 to 17 per cent. in five years.

A plan to establish a division dealing with the geology of highways is, it is said, in contemplation by the United States Geological Survey. It is proposed to establish a laboratory where materials to be used in the construction of highways will be tested and reported on, and it is to be assumed that the decision of experts in these matters will not only be of an educative but a practical value. Any movement in this direction cannot fail to be an added impulse to road reform. We have the worst highways of any civilized nation, and the improvement of our country roads would be an important factor in our national prosperity and in the development of trade.

Several interesting discoveries regarding prehistoric man have been announced. The remains recently found in Switzerland show the existence, in the neolithic age, of a race of pygmies in Europe. Herr Mascha has unearthed within a few days, in Moravia, many remains of mammoths, and with them the skeletons of a whole human family almost gigantic in size. The discovery seems to settle the disputed point whether man was coexistent with the mammoth. In Guatemala, an explorer reported the discovery in an ancient mound of many small jars each containing the remains of a little finger from the human hand. It is supposed to have been the custom of mourners in some prehistoric race to make this sacrifice.

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