

the saying. One and all professed unbounded admiration for Lord Chelmsford, who has not been banqueted, besworded, and belauded. With similar unanimity each had a civil word for Sir Bartle Frere, who was so obliging as to set the dogs of war loose without asking anybody's advice or permission, and who may on that account be fairly considered to have earned the gratitude of the service, and more especially of those members thereof who have profited in the way of promotion. The noteworthy feature, however, in the post-prandial orations of Pearson, Wood, and Buller was their total silence with reference to a comparatively recent and a painful incident in the war. By common consent the very name of the young Napoleon was passed over by these worthies. What the motive of this reticence may be we know not. Suffice it that Frenchmen of every phase of political faith profess themselves surprised, while not a few are positively chagrined. We, as our readers are well aware, had the utmost objection to the pretensions of this harebrained Marcellus, but now that they lie dead in the chapel at Chislehurst, nobody need grudge him the meed of praise due from soldiers to a soldier who died with seventeen wounds to the front and none in the back. Yet somehow both his fate and his qualities, which hitherto the army has been somewhat given to exaggerating, were judiciously overlooked. Could it have been because the very mention of that quite too awkward affair would have been displeasing to the august Prince who guides the destinies of the British officer at the Horse Guards? We ask the question in cool blood, content to note a fact which, view it how you will, is in itself alike significant and incomprehensible.—*Weekly Dispatch*.

THE great difficulty of arguing some people out of a thing is that they have never been reasoned into it.

EDUCATIONAL.—A Government schoolmaster, not a hundred miles from the Island of Montreal, is responsible for the following, amongst divers other orthographical eccentricities:—"Trowuserss, kidd, remmember, honnor, adultery." The efficiency of this gentleman's tuitional system, and the satisfactoriness of its results have been attested and certified by two official supervisors, and have since been strikingly illustrated by the cruciform signs-manual (X) of fifteen "finished" pupils. An increase of emolument, and some special mark of Government approval ought to be accorded to so exemplary a pedagogue.

#### PAST AND FUTURE.

History may tell us of the vanish'd past,  
Or chronicle the days now sweeping by;  
A gloomy shade is round the future cast,  
Unsearch'd, unsearchable by mortal eye.

Forests have been where crowded cities rise,  
And left their domes and turrets in the air;  
And stars have faded from the far-off skies,  
Passing away, no tongue may tell us where.

Rivers have rush'd where verdant islands bloom,  
Shedding their perfume on the restless breeze,  
And beauteous lands have found a spacious tomb  
Within the waters of the mighty seas.

Will heaven again shower down its dreadful ire,  
And whelm the world beneath a watery grave?  
Or cast o'er all its bright consuming fire?  
A blazing sea from which no ark can save!

We know such things have been in by-gone years,  
But o'er the coming darkness throws its pall,  
Our hopes may be in vain—in vain our fears,  
Yes, our own fate is vain conjecture all.

We know not our own fate—why should we strive  
With destiny, or with its flag unfurl'd?  
Enough for us that now we breathe and live,  
Yet know not when from life we may be hurl'd.

We know the rose of beauty will turn pale,  
Wrinkles will gather on the fairest brow,  
The light and bounding step of youth will fail,  
And all must perish, blossoming below.

The destin'd path we have to tread conceal'd,  
How much of woe is hidden from our sight;  
While yet enough is to the mind reveal'd,  
To shape our course and guide our steps aright.

Nature's great secrets though we may not scan,  
We know how frail the tenure of our breath;  
We know the period to the race of man,  
And all the beings born of earth, is death.

The end of life is death—then let our aim  
Be fix'd on things beyond our earthly doom;  
Though dust return to dust, the soul may claim  
Its refuge then—its earliest, latest home!

—John Bolton Rogerson.

#### SONG OF THE FROST SPIRITS.

We come on the breath of the sharp clear breeze,  
The spirits of frost are we;  
We hang our wreaths on skeleton trees,  
And beautiful wreaths they be.

White, pure white, are the robes we wear,  
Robes wrought of the feathery snow;  
With bright quick wings through the sparkling air,  
On our silent missions we go.

By our aid the spirit of silence reigns,  
We hush the brooklet's song,  
And bind the water in icy chains,  
By a spell unseen but strong.

Silent we work through the livelong night,  
In cities, and trees, and dells;  
And men behold, by the morning light,  
Our carv'd work and icicles.

We sprinkle the snow on the harden'd plains,  
We whiten the barren moor;  
We hide from view mortality's stains,  
Till the sinful earth seems pure.

David Holt.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

Letters should be brief, and written on one side of the paper only. Those intended for insertion should be addressed to the Editor, 162 St. James Street, Montreal; those on matters of business to the Manager, at the same address.

"GRITS."

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR.

DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly answer, under the head of "Questions in Canadian History"—

What is the origin of the term "Grit," as applied to the Liberal party in Canada? Is it a term of reproach or otherwise?

Yours truly,

J. A.

St. Stephen, N.B., Oct. 28, 1879.

[The term "Grit" or "Clear Grit" was first used, as applied to Canadian politicians, by the late Mr. Malcolm Cameron about the year 1854. Mr. Cameron had been a Radical, but having "ratted," or gone over to the opposite side, he sarcastically spoke of his old party as "Clear Grits." In Bartlett's "Dictionary of Americanisms," the following definition is given:—

"GRIT.—Hard sandstone, employed for millstones, grindstones, pavement, &c. Hence the word is often vulgarly used to mean courage, spirit."

Amongst the illustrations are—

"The command of a battalion was given to Mr. Jones, a pretty decided Whig in politics, and, like many other men of Zacchean stature, all *grit* and spirit."—*New York Commercial Advertiser*.

"Honour and fame from no condition rise. It's the *grit* of a fellow that makes the man."—*Crockett's Tour*.

"If he hadn't had the *clear grit* in him, and showed his teeth and claws, they'd a nullified him so you wouldn't see a grease spot of him no more."—*Sam Slick in England*.

These are from a third edition of the Dictionary published in 1860. The first edition was published in 1848, and a second in 1859, so that the phrase was possibly in existence before Mr. Cameron's happy use of it.—ED. CAN. SPECTATOR.]

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—I send you these lines apologetically, as I am sure "the readers are weary of 'Argus' and his critics;" but I wish to correct "Roswell Fisher" when in his "criticism" he refers to "Marih." He states that "Marih" seems to have failed in understanding the drift of his argument, this "Marih" is perfectly willing to admit; but maintains that it is through no defect in his understanding, but rather on account of the argument drifting so much. "Roswell Fisher" states that the man who tends a machine is not the intelligence which originates the Whitworth gun. Wonderful discovery! But the man who tends the machine necessarily becomes acquainted with some of the principles upon which it is constructed, thereby often stimulating his mind to further study. Did not some of the great manufacturers commence as "tenders of machines"? And if a man makes a *particular* tomahawk he does not advance much, as we may see in the history of the Indians. Again, "Marih" merely asked "Roswell Fisher" to admit that a person might have studied Political Economy and still be a Protectionist, and "Marih" is pleased to see that "Roswell Fisher" has the good sense to admit it. Further "Roswell Fisher" states that a merchant with large interests in a country has no necessary right to an opinion on the interest of his country at large, to which his own may or may not be antagonistic. This statement can be easily shown