

wherever we have a city east of the Rocky Mountains, and the fluttering flocks of the robust, noisy little foreigner enliven the streets thereof in every direction. Their numbers are nearly countless.

The object at first for the introduction of the house-sparrow does not seem to have been one of a practical suggestion, but rather one in the nature of sentiment. Since, however, the attention of the citizens was called to the great nuisance of the existence of canker and measure worms in the shade trees of the old cities of the Union, the fact that the house-sparrow would remain with us all winter, and feed as energetically upon the worms as any of our own birds—which always, without exception, left for warmer climes every season—the thought of practical application took life in encouraging the introduction of the English sparrow as a means of relief more certain than that afforded by any or all of our indigenous finches. As soon as this became generally understood, the little John Bull was distributed with great industry all over the country for this purpose; but as sure as it became numerous in any town or city, a spirited opposition sprang up to it, and exists to-day with more or less vitality in every section where the bird is fairly settled. Whole books have been written *pro* and *con*, and naturalists have waged unrelenting war upon one another, as they differed in estimating the value and the services of *Pyrgita domestica*; but in the judgment of the writer, the entire practical bearing of the controversy has not been fully presented by either the friends or the foes of the little finch, for it must seem clear enough to those who will follow the line of argument in this article that while the house-sparrow is eminently fit and wonderfully well constituted for life in northern cities, yet it is a sad rowdy and nuisance in the country; while in the former case it renders admirable services in destroying insect pests that disfigure the shady avenues of city forestry, yet in the latter field it cannot compete with our native birds in entomological service to man, and having given good reason for dislike on the part of the growers of fruit, they are doubly incensed because the law will not allow them to shoot, trap, or destroy the enemy.—*Prof. H. W. Elliott.*

A NEW YORK engraver recently made this mistake: "Mr. and Mrs. — respectfully request your presents at the marriage of their daughter."

APPEARANCES.—Hairdresser: "Tremendous 'ed of 'air, sir. Better let me cut the 'ole of it horf!" Eminent violinist: "Why?" Hairdresser: "Well, you'll excuse my saying so, but it makes you look like one of them fiddler chaps, you know."—*Punch.*

An English paper offered a prize for the best parody of a nursery rhyme, having for its subject the present position of political affairs; the prize was adjudged to the following lines:—

Sing a song of gladness—	Budget day's approaching—
"Dissolution" nigh—	Don't know what to do!
All the Tory party	Hatfield's lord, and Stanley,
Eating humble pie.	Cranbrook, too, and Cross,
When the pie was opened	"Bag and Faggage," clear out—
What a mess beneath!—	What a dreadful loss!
"Peace with honour" stewed with	Ducal Richmond, also,
Turnerelli's wreath.	Country's cup's too full,
Dizzy, down at Hughenden,	With Ireland and Afghan,
Scowling at his fate—	Zulu and Cabul.
"Imperium et Libertas"	Ere another Christmas
Just a little late;	Brings its frost and snows,
Staffy at the 'Chequer	In comes "People's William!"
Looking very blue—	Heals the nation's woes!

The following is given by *Whitaker's Almanac*, as the extent and population of the British Empire at the beginning of 1880:—

	Area in sq. mls.	Population.
Great Britain and Ireland.....	121,115	33,500,000
Indian Possessions, &c.....	1,558,254	241,000,000
Other Eastern Possessions.....	30,000	3,200,000
Australasia.....	3,173,310	2,500,000
North America.....	3,620,500	4,000,000
Guiana, &c.....	100,000	200,000
Africa.....	270,000	1,500,000
West Indies, &c.....	12,707	1,140,000
European Possessions.....	120	160,000
Various Settlements.....	96,171	200,000
	8,982,177	287,400,000

The same authority says:—"This table, short as it is, presents a result unparalleled in this world's history. The British Empire is grander than those of Greece or Rome, or any other country, and it may be safely asserted that its rule is more beneficent. Wherever the flag of England floats there is freedom.—Justice is impartially administered, and no man can be punished except for infringements of the law. Religion also is free. With all its anomalies the British Empire, under its present Sovereign, presents the nearest approach to a true Commonwealth that the world has yet seen."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

It is distinctly to be borne in mind that we do not by inserting letters convey any opinion favourable to their contents. We open our columns to all without leaning to any; and thus supply a channel for the publication of opinions of all shades, to be found in no other journal in Canada.

All communications to contain the name and address of the sender.

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.

## THE CLIMATUM OF INTERVIEWING.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR.

SIR,—In the *SPECTATOR* of December 20th, one of your correspondents, speaking of the pestilent system of interviewing, said—

"It was playfully said of Smithfield, as a live cattle market in the heart of the city of London, that it would never be abolished until an alderman had been tossed by a bullock, so the interviewer may exist until some indignant Englishman who refuses to accept the system kindly, shows the pestiferous creature the door, or possibly a more speedy means of exit through the window."

By a singular coincidence the *Gazette* of January 8th, in an editorial under the heading "Unfair Controversy," says:—

"Let public men generally act upon the same principle, and show interviewers the door whenever they present themselves, and we shall at least escape a repetition of the disagreeable discussion to which recent events have given rise."

Whose cow was gored this time? I remember that the abolition of the property qualification for a member of Parliament in England (one of the points of the People's Charter) was carried by the Tory party, when one of their own men (Mr. Auchmuty Glover, I think, was his name) found himself in gaol for furnishing a fraudulent qualification. *Verbum sap.*

*Plebs.*

## THE CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ART.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—To treat Mr. Popham's senseless twaddle in a serious manner would be a waste of time. We can the more profitably employ it in letting our deepest sympathy go out for the benighted ignorance of His Excellency. How sad it is to reflect that opportunities were never afforded him to converse with eminent artists or to see good art. How greatly the Governor-General must feel this misfortune. There is this consolation that in coming to Canada he can avail himself of, and profit by, the superior wisdom and instruction of Mr. John Popham, one in every way so able to guide and lead him into the pleasant paths of Art-knowledge. How can His Excellency be sufficiently grateful? And we in all humility advise him to send for Mr. Popham immediately upon the arrival of Her Royal Highness that she too may profit by his extensive experience in Art matters.

And to the good people of Ottawa, whose want of taste Mr. Popham so sadly deplures, we have a suggestion to make which is worthy of their serious consideration. For some time past they have wanted to deprive us of the Geological Survey and Museum. Cannot we compromise the matter by giving them Mr. Popham and let the Museum stay where it is? Will the good people of Ottawa think of the great advantage to be derived from such an exchange? We of Montreal having enjoyed his elevated culture so long, however loath we may be, still for such a consideration will spare him.

What can we say for the poor artists of Canada? Could not Mr. Popham have been a little more lenient? Why crush and almost annihilate them? How sad it is to contemplate their condition. There is nothing for them but to bow before the superior wisdom and attainments of King Popham. His extensive travels; his keen insight into the philosophy of, and love for, Art; his happy choice of the English language; his large range of thought; his fine sense of the beautiful; his brilliant wit, and his biting sarcasm, have impressed upon us a deep sense of our unworthiness and complete incapacity for anything pertaining to Art. For who can stand before a man invested with the power of bestowing upon men the gift of longevity? For according to the late keeper of the National Gallery of England, Ralph N. Wornum, the Royal Academy of Berlin was established in 1669 by Frederick the First; so, under the circumstance, some of those German painters mentioned by Mr. Popham, and now living, must have attained a riper age than any artist of the Dominion can ever expect under the withering scorn of John Popham.

Yours truly,

*J. W. G.*

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—Would you allow me to ask a question with reference to part of an article entitled "Vulgarity—an Experience," in this week's *SPECTATOR*? "Oday," the writer, is evidently a well-bred, clever and observing man, and it is not strange that he should feel disgusted by the vulgarity, arrogance and either lack of good manners so often displayed by office bearers of Societies and other public men; but we must remember these men are not altogether to blame for this. They are, as a rule self-made men, *i. e.*, they have made the money which places them in their present positions, and while making money