



JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

Volume V.

Montreal (Lower Canada) April 1861.

No. 4.

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LITERATURE.

POETRY.

THE RED RIVER VOYAGEUR.

Out and in, the river is winding
The links of its long, red chain
Through belts of dusky pine-land
And gusty leagues of plain.

Only at times, a smoke wreath
With the drifting cloud-tack joins,—
The smoke of the hunting lodges
Of the wild Assinibouins!

Drearly blows the north wind
From the land of ice and snow;
The eyes that look are weary,
And heavy the hands that row.

And with one foot on the water,
And one foot on the shore,
The Angel of Shadow gives warning
That day shall be no more.

Is it the clang of wild-geese?
Is it the Indian's yell?
That lends to the voice of the north wind
The tones of a far-off bell?

The voyageur smiles, as he listens
To the sound that grows apace;
Well he knows the vesper ringing
Of the bells of St. Boniface.

The bells of the Roman Mission,
That call from their turrets twain,
To the boatman on the river,
To 'the hunter on the plain!

Even so in our mortal journey
The bitter north winds blow,
And thus upon life's Red River
Our hearts as oarsmen row.

And when the Angel of Shadow
Rests his feet on wave and shore,
And our eyes grow dim with watching
And our hearts faint at the oar,

Happy is he who heareth
The signal of his release
In the bells of the Holy City,
The chimes of eternal peace!

J. G. WHITTIER.

SPARE MOMENTS.

A wand'rer in a desert land,
A cup of water held in hand,
And sprinkling some upon the sand;
"Spare drops!" he cries,
His brow though fevered, parched his lips,
The precious liquid scarce he sips,
And moistens but with finger tips
His burning eyes.

"I have enough," he cries, "of this,
These few small drops I ne'er shall miss,"
He little thinks how much of bliss
Hides in those drops!
The cup has fallen from his grasp!
The fragments now the madman clasps,
And murmurs with his dying gasp,
'Come back, spare drops!'

That water, time-drops, minutes are;
We lavish without thought or care,
This wealth on objects frail though fair;
Nor heed its worth,
To guide the soul, refine the mind,
The broken heart of woe to bind,
And virtue's highest joy to find
In blessing earth.

We have no minutes given us,
Save as a noble, holy trust,
Which we, the spirit-linked-with-dust,
Should e'er give back,