



# JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

Volume VIII.

Montreal (Lower Canada), February and March, 1864.

Nos. 2 & 3.

**SUMMARY.**—**SCIENCE:** Leaves from Gosse's Romance of Natural History—Times and seasons.—**EDUCATION:** Moral instruction in Common Schools, (an extract from a lecture by the Rev. Canon Leach.)—Arithmetic, by John Bruce, Esq., Inspector of Schools, (continued).—**Verbum Sat.**—Loud Talking.—Beginning the Day—Dull Scholars.—**OFFICIAL NOTICES:** Notice concerning the examination of teachers on the Art of Teaching and on Agriculture.—Erection of School Municipalities.—Vacant inspectorships.—Appointment of School Commissioners and School Trustees.—Diplomas granted.—Donations to the Library of the Department.—Situations wanted.—**EDITORIAL:** Teachers Examinations—Twenty-second Conference of the Teacher's Association in connection with the Jacques-Cartier Normal School.—Twenty-first Conference of the Teacher's Association in connection with the Laval Normal School—Extracts from the Reports of the Inspectors of Schools, (continued).—**NOTICES OF BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS:** Logan: Notes on the gold of Eastern Canada.—Dawson: Agriculture for Schools.—Kirby: British North American Almanac Langevin: Answers to the Programmes on Teaching and on Agriculture.—Ferland: Biographical notice of Bishop Plessis.—La Revue Canadienne.—D'Avanzo: Second voyage de Jacques-Cartier.—Porreault: Exploration de Quebec au Lac St. Jean.—The Northern American—**Jugement erroné de M. Renan sur les langues sauvages par N. O.**—**MONTHLY SUMMARY.** Educational intelligence.—Scientific intelligence.—Statistical intelligence.—Neerological intelligence.—**OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS:** Table of the distribution of the Supplementary grant to poor municipalities for 1863.—List of the Teachers who have graduated in the McGill Normal School.

foliage is fine and striking. Nor are the forms which the drifted snow assumes less attractive. Here, it lies in gentle undulations, swelling and sinking; there, in little ripples, like the sand of a sea-beach; here it stands up like a perpendicular wall; there, like a conical hill; here, it is a long, deep trench; there, a flat, overhanging table; but one of the most charming of its many-visaged appearances is that presented by a shed or out-house well hung with cobwebs. After a drift, the snow is seen, in greater or less masses, to have attached itself to the cobwebs, and hangs from the rafters and walls, and from corner to corner, in graceful drapery of the purest white, and of the most fantastic shapes.

The elegant arabesques that the frost forms on our window-panes, and the thin blades and serrated swords of which hoar-frost is composed, are beautiful; and still more exquisitely charming are the symmetrical six-rayed stars of falling snow, when caught on a dark surface. But I think nothing produced by the magic touch of winter can excel a phenomenon I have often seen in the woods of Canada and Newfoundland, where it is familiarly called silver-thaw. It is caused by rain descending when the stratum of air nearest the earth is below 32 deg., and consequently freezing the instant it touches any object; the ice accumulates with every drop of rain, until a transparent, glassy coating is formed. On the shrubs and trees, the effect is magical, and reminds one of fairy scenes described in oriental fables. Every little twig, every branch, every leaf, every blade of grass is enshrined in crystal; the whole forest is composed of sparkling, transparent glass, even to the minute leaves of the pines and firs.

But all this is the beauty of death; and the naturalist, though he may, and does, admire its peculiar loveliness, yet longs for the opening of spring. To his impatience it has seemed as if it would never come; but, at last, on some morning toward the end of April, the sun rises without a cloud, the south-west wind blows softly, and he walks forth, "wrapt in Elysium." Life is now abroad: larks, by scores, are pouring, forth sweet carols, as they hang and soar in the dazzling brightness of the sky; the blackbird is warbling, flute-like, in the coppice; swallows, newly come across the sea, sweeping and twittering joyously; the little olive-clad warblers and white-throats are creeping about like mice among the twigs of the hedges; and, ha!—sweetest of all sounds of spring! there are those two simple notes, that thrill through the very heart,—the voice of the cuckoo!

Here, too, are the butterflies. The homely "whites" of the garden are flitting about the cabbages, and the tawny "browns" are dancing along the hedge-rows that divide the meadows; the delicate "brimstone" comes bounding over the fence, and alights on a bed of primroses, itself scarcely distinguishable from one of them. On the commons and open downs the lovely little "blues" are frisking in animated play; and here and there a still more minute "copper"—tiniest of the butterfly race—rubs together its little wings, or spreads them to the sun, glowing with scarlet lustre like a coal of fire.

The streams, freed from the turbidity of the winter rainé, roll in

## SCIENCE.

### Leaves from Gosse's Romance of Natural History.

#### TIMES AND SEASONS.

"To everything there is a season;" and, in its season, everything is comely. Winter is not without its charm, the charm of a grand and desolate majesty. The Arctic voyagers have seen King Winter on his throne, and a full royal despot he is. When the mercury is solid in the bulb, to look abroad on the boundless waste of snow, all silent and motionless, in the very midst of the six-months' night, must be something awful. And yet there is a glory and a beauty visible in perfection only then. There is the moon, of dazzling brightness, circling around the horizon; there are ten thousand crystals of crisp and crackling snow reflecting her beams; there are the stars flashing and sparkling with unwonted sharpness; and there is the glorious aurora spanning the purple sky with its arch of coruscating beams, now advancing, now receding, like angelic watchers engaged in mystic dance, now shooting forth spears and darts of white light with rustling whisper, and now uncurling a broad flag of crimsoned flame, that diffuses itself over the heavens, and is reflected from the unsullied snow beneath.

The appearance of the forest, after a night's heavy snow in calm weather, is very beautiful. On the horizontal boughs of the spruces and hemlock-pines, it rests in heavy, fleecy masses, which take the form of hanging drapery, while the contrast between the brilliant whiteness of the clothing and the blackness of the sombre