

## English.

All articles and communications intended for this department should be addressed to the ENGLISH EDITOR, EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL, Room 20, 11½ Richmond Street West, Toronto.

"LONGFELLOW," INTRODUCED BY A  
LESSON ON "THE VILLAGE  
BLACKSMITH."

M. A. WATT.

A STUDY of the poetry of Longfellow leads us to the conclusion that there is much of it within the comprehension of an intelligent child, who has a kind teacher to help him. It would take too long a time and too much space to name these poems, but if the teacher who wishes to give her pupils (even of the Junior Second class) a broad mental training, and who does not cramp her pupils down to the reading of the Reader, page by page—if this teacher will take down her elegantly bound copy of Longfellow, and examine it with this thought in her mind, she will be astonished and delighted with the number of suitable poems she will find. Of course, such examination must and will result in her pupils being delighted further on. "The Village Blacksmith" will serve as an introduction to a study of some of Longfellow's poems, and its treatment may be somewhat on the following lines:

Reading first, of course, the whole poem by one person, whether teacher or pupil, according to judgment. Questioning upon obscure words, or phrases likely to be so; (the pupils asking the teacher to explain, the teacher finding out by questioning the pupils in turn). Asking pupils to read the stanzas, (by asking for one liked best, prettiest, saddest, etc.; for one describing the blacksmith's appearance, the chestnut tree, the daughter's voice, etc.; for one giving the teaching of the forge; its comparisons). When the class are thoroughly interested (though not yet perhaps at the point where the teacher feels they know all to be learnt about this poem) the teacher may then turn their attention from the poem to the poet, thus:

Longfellow—his home in this continent (more interesting to children on that account). Point out Massachusetts on the map (and who can teach well anything except arithmetic and writing without a map of the world, at least, near him?) Tell how he loved children, then tell the story of how the children of Cambridge, wishing to honor him, had a chair made of the wood of the "spreading chestnut," and gave it to him on his seventy-second birthday (1879) and that he wrote to them the following poem in thanks for their gift:

FROM MY ARM-CHAIR.

TO THE CHILDREN OF CAMBRIDGE

Who presented to me on my seventy-second birthday, Feb. 27, 1879, this chair, made from the wood of the Village Blacksmith's chestnut tree.

Am I a king, that I should call my own  
This splendid ebon throne?  
Or by what reason or what right divine  
Can I proclaim it mine?

Only, perhaps, by right divine of song,  
It may to me belong;  
Only because the spreading chestnut tree  
Of old was sung by me. (About 1841).

Well I remember it in all its prime,  
When, in the summer-time,  
The affluent foliage of its branches made  
A cavern of cool shade.

There, by the blacksmith's forge beside the  
street,  
Its blossoms white and sweet  
Enticed the bees until it seemed alive,  
And murmured like a hive.

And when the winds of Autumn, with a shout,  
Tossed its great arms about,  
The shining chestnuts, bursting from the sheath,  
Dropped to the ground beneath.

And now some fragments of its branches bare  
Shaped as a stately chair,  
Have by my hearthstone found a home at last,  
And whisper of the past.

The Danish king could not, in all his pride,  
Repel the ocean tide,  
But, seated in this chair, I can in rhyme  
Roll back the tide of time.

I see again, as one in vision sees,  
The blossoms and the bees,  
And hear the children's voices shout and call,  
And the brown chestnuts fall.

I see the smithy with its fires aglow,  
I hear the bellows blow,  
And the shrill hammers on the anvil beat  
The iron white with heat.

And thus, dear children, have ye made for me  
This day a jubilee,  
And to my more than three-score years and ten  
Brought back my youth again.

The heart hath its own memory, like the mind,  
And in it are enshrined  
The precious keepsakes, into which is wrought  
The giver's loving thought.

Only your love and your remembrance could  
Give life to this dead wood,  
And make these branches, leafless now so long,  
Blossom again in song.

From a remembrance of my own childish days, such a poem as this would have filled my soul with joy, and the school-time would have been gilded with delight to my imagination. And the children of to-day, though more used to being thought for in these matters, are still susceptible to pleasure when the story and the poetry are both so charming. The best way to give them the full benefit of the piece is to have it written in their home exercise books and some inducement offered to have it memorized. In view of the near approach of the anniversary of the Battle of Queenston Heights, the little poem written by Longfellow in the last year of his life, for such a celebration as the one mentioned, will be a good poem for a class to recite in concert. It is given below:

DECORATION DAY.

LONGFELLOW, FEB. 3, 1882.

Sleep, comrades, sleep and rest  
On this field of the Grounded Arms,  
Where foes no more molest  
Nor sentry's shot alarms!

Ye have slept on the ground before,  
And started to your feet  
At the cannon's sudden roar,  
Or the drum's redoubling beat.

But in this camp of Death,  
No sound your slumber breaks;  
Here is no fevered breath,  
No wound that bleeds and aches.

All is repose and peace,  
Untrampled lies the sod,  
The shouts of battle cease,  
It is the Truce of God.

Rest, comrades, rest and sleep,  
The thoughts of men shall be  
As sentinels, to keep  
Your rest from danger free.

Your silent tents of green  
We deck with fragrant flowers;  
Yours has the suffering been,  
The memory shall be ours!

As said before, the difficulty is not to find material suited to the capacity of an average class, but to make an end when we begin. It is not within the scope of an article like this to enumerate or deal with the points of literary excellence. We must be content with the office of guide-post, where there is so much to lead on the enthusiast in literature. The teacher of junior pupils must rather try to form taste than to make precocious critics of the little ones, and the best way to form taste is to give them poems and good prose of a poetical cast. I append one more poem, and then leave the

teacher and her copy of Longfellow to finish what I have simply indicated:

MY CATHEDRAL,

Like two cathedral towers, these stately pines  
Uplift their fretted summits tipped with cones;  
The arch beneath them is not built with stones;  
Not Art, but Nature, traced these lovely lines,  
And carved this graceful arabesque of vines;  
No organ but the wind here sighs and moans;  
No sepulchre conceals a martyr's bones;  
No marble bishop on his tomb reclines.

Enter! the pavement, carpeted with leaves,  
Gives back a softened echo to thy tread!  
Listen! the choir is singing; all the birds,  
In leafy galleries, beneath the eaves,  
Are singing; listen, ere the sound be fled,  
And learn there may be worship without words.

CORRESPONDENCE.

C.C.—In the sentence, "That is mine," "mine" is a possessive adjective pronoun in predicative nominative relation to "that." For general acquaintance with the Tudor and Stuart period, use Green's "Short History;" for the Victorian age use McCarthy's "History of Our Own Times."

C.—In the sentence, "He told her that he thought he knew where he had dropped it," the dependent clauses are: (1) "he thought he knew where he had dropped it," which is a noun clause, object of "told;" this noun clause itself contains (2) the noun clause "he knew where he had dropped it," which is the object of "thought;" again this second noun clause itself contains the subordinate clause "where he had dropped it," which is the object of "knew."

In the Elegy, discuss "save where," "save that:"

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,  
The moping owl doth to the moon complain, etc.

"Save," originally an adjective, has become in some cases a preposition, equivalent to "except," "but," as in "All were lost save one." Then as a preposition it assumed the power of governing a noun clause, usually introduced by "that;" as in "He did everything save that he did not see the king." Thus "save" like "except" could be used as a conjunction, joining sentences; hence in the compound-complex sentence in the Elegy above. "Now fades . . . and stillness holds the air," "save that the moping owl doth complain." "Save that" is a subordinative conjunction joining the dependence clause "the owl . . . doth complain" to the principal clause, "Stillness holds . . . air." If "that" is to be parsed separately, it will be explained as the conjunction introducing the subordinate noun sentence governed by the (originally) preposition "save." Similary "save" in "save where," etc., is strictly a preposition governing the clause "where . . . flight," etc.

W.M.A.—There is nothing in the copyright law, I believe, to prevent you issuing a book of extracts from Longfellow.

TEACHER.—In the last Grammar paper for Entrance, sentence 2 of question 1 is analyzed above. The words to be parsed are as follows: When James was going home yesterday evening he lost the note which his teacher had given him to take to his mother. He told her he thought he knew where he had dropped it. She sent him back to try to find it.

"Home" is an adverb of place, mod. "was going;" "yesterday" usually an adverb of time has here adjectival relation to "evening;" "which" is a relative pronoun object of "had given," its antecedent being "note;" "where" is a relative adverb or conjunctive adverb or adverbial conjunction, as you wish; "sent" is a verb, trans., act., 3rd sing., past indic., of the