

THE

Canadian Independent.

VOL. XVII.

TORONTO, JUNE, 1871.

No. 12.

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

Evidently with an eye for the beautiful, as well as convenience, the ecclesiastical bodies of Canada have, for many years, with notable unanimity, held their Annual conventions in the "leafy month of June." One or two of them come earlier, as if, like the warm days of March and April, to remind us that the summer, with its high religious festivals, is nigh; and one or two others, in the Maritime Provinces, occur in the Autumn. But June, when

"Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
And swells, and deepens to the ravished eye;
The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands displayed
In full luxuriance to the sighing gales."—

June carries the palm, and it is meet that it should. To many an over-worked, ill-paid minister, the journey to Synod or Conference is his one opportunity of the whole year for relaxation, and for travel outside of the bounds of his own parish, or immediate neighbourhood. It is his annual holiday, when, with a glorious *abandon*, he throws books and manuscript where Macbeth threw physic, and gives himself up to enjoyment and rest. Of course that is not his only object in going; but the work of such assemblies inevitably falls upon a comparatively small number of persons, and hence many are able, without neglect of duty, to indulge themselves in the manner we have described. The season for such meetings is, therefore, pre-eminently that in which the heart is in liveliest sympathy with nature; for, in the words of Ruskin, "There is a calm and holy religion in the unbreathing things of nature, which man would do well to imitate. It is a meek and blessed influence stealing in, as it were, upon the heart; it comes quickly and without excitement; it has no terror, no gloom in its approaches; it does not rouse