

enable the whole congregation to join in singing the daily portion of the Psalms—which is ushered in by the exhortation from an inspired Source—"O come, let us *sing* (not let us *read*) unto the Lord." And what can be more truly edifying than this manner of speaking the devotional words with one heart and one voice? On the other hand, what can be more disagreeable to the musical ear than the responsive *reading* of a congregation, some fast and some slow—some in a high key, some in a low? It is no wonder that in many churches the responses are weak, and at last sink into "zephyr-like whispers." But in the singing of these parts of the worship to the music of the Plain Song, the musical hearer is encouraged to join in the response throughout, and the mere listener enjoys the great advantage of hearing and understanding *every word* spoken by the whole congregation. The voice of the minister, too, sustained by the clear musical note, never dies away at the end of a sentence, but is heard distinctly in measured exactness in every syllable to the farthest part of the largest building.

This subject has grown upon us beyond the space first intended. We propose to finish it in our next number.

Leaves from the Book of Nature.

No. 4.

THE DAWN OF SUMMER.

Every one must be aware how anxiously all look for the return of summer, that joyous season when nature resumes her most pleasing attire, and presents to the eye a varied aspect charming in the highest degree. It is this very anxiety, however, which leads to much difference of opinion in regard to the commencement of this season. Some say, "what a very long winter we have had, surely summer will *never* come," others again, "what a backward season, I'm sure the trees have *never* been so late in leafing for many years." Now, if those who live in the country in the midst of trees and flowers would only take the trouble (a sad term to use) to mark down the precise time when each tree began to bud, or to put forth leaves; when each flower, or at least, the more common ones, bloomed; when the different birds arrived, and began to build their nests; when frogs began to whistle and croak, or in fact registered any occurrences connected with the revival of Nature from her long winter's sleep, it would not only afford a very interesting source of enquiry, but would tend to exhibit the exactness and punctuality with which all Nature's laws are carried out, and prove most clearly that the ever wavering mind of man and his discontented disposition alone, cause our winters to appear longer, and the summers shorter than they really are.

Let us proceed to enquire how far the gradual leafing of some of our more common trees in the vicinity of Halifax has differed during the past seasons. First, we will take the Red Maple, (*Acer rubrum*.) In 1864, which our readers may recollect succeeded a winter of extraordinary mildness, during which robins were heard singing in February, this tree was in bud on the 2nd of May; its flowers were falling on the 15th, and its leaves opened on the 26th of the same month. In 1865, its leaves opened on May 20th. In 1866, on May 25th; while this year, it was in bud on April 17th; in flower May 12th, and opened its leaves on May 28th.