

visited Nova Scotia; but not until 1604 was any attempt at colonization made by Europeans. In that year a number of French settlers established themselves in the Annapolis basin. In 1613 these colonists were assailed both by Jesuits and by English colonists from Virginia, who succeeded in expelling the French. The ancient name of the colony, Acadia, was changed to Nova Scotia in 1621, by Sir William Alexander, who received a grant of the peninsula from James I. His intention was to colonize the whole of it, but finding that the localities most suitable for settlement were already occupied, he returned to the Mother Country. By the treaty of St. Germain, in 1632, the French were granted possession of the colony again; but in 1654 it was retaken by Cromwell's troops. Charles II restored the colony to France by the treaty of Breda, in 1667. But by the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, it again became British territory. Finally, by the treaty of Paris, in 1763, France resigned all claim to the country. Up to 1784, Nova Scotia included New Brunswick and Cape Breton.

An emigration of Yorkshiremen in 1772-75 brought a number of these sturdy settlers to Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, and with them came Methodism. Among these Yorkshire settlers were godly laymen, who, after the manner of Embury, Webb and Strawbridge, kept the Methodist fire burning, and in 1779 a great revival swept over the colony, as a result of their labors. It was during this revival that William Black was converted.

William Black belonged to one of the Yorkshire families that had come out with the first contingent. The death of the mother, in 1775, had been followed by a lapse of the whole family into irreligion. William was the first to become awakened. His conversion was accompanied by a call to preach, and he began in his own home, with the result that the whole family were brought back to Christ. He was only nineteen years of age, but with three other young men he began to visit outlying settlements, where they held services after the Methodist manner. The Episcopal clergymen of the places they visited opposed them, and several who had attended their meetings were arrested, but they were soon dismissed. With apostolic zeal Black continued his work. His literary attainments were limited, but he knew Wesley's sermons and the book of Methodist hymns, and he knew God. He burned with desire for the salvation of men and he felt that God had called him to preach the Gospel.

In 1781, at twenty-one years of age, Black entered upon his work in real earnest. Imagine, for a moment, the extent of his parish. It comprised the present Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, aggregating 50,000 square miles of territory. Over this vast field were scattered numerous small settlements at points widely separated. Of roads there were few, and they were in a very rough condition. Long, toilsome and dangerous journeys had to be undertaken to reach these scattered communities. But the youthful missionary had heard the call and, nothing daunted, he fared forth, like a true apostle, to his task.

Everywhere he went, with the exception of Halifax, he was given a hearty welcome. Even in that early day that garrison town had gained an unenviable reputation as a place of drunkenness and vice. At Halifax, Black was both insulted and persecuted, but he persisted in his preaching, and soon Methodism had gained a permanent footing there.

Requests now came from so many places for a visit from the young evangelist that he found his field was vaster than he was able, unaided, to cover. There were, at this time, five Anglican clergymen, four Presbyterian and one Baptist in the Maritime Provinces. There had come in from the New England Colonies a few Congregationalist ministers also; but most of these had returned during the Revolutionary War. But not one of the ordained ministers of the different denominations seems to have had any serious concern for the salvation of men. We can thus easily understand why an earnest man like Black should be so heartily received. For a time he had a competitor in a young man named Henry Alline, who had passed through a profound religious experience and who was zealous in propagating his views. Some people classed Black and Alline together, but Alline's teach-

ing was Calvinistic and Antinomian, while Black's had the truly evangelical and Arminian ring. Some of Black's converts were, for a time, led away by Alline, but they were brought back. The theology of the young Methodist was simple, but it embraced all the essentials. Someone half-judiciously described it as consisting of the three R's—"Ruin by Sin, Redemption by Christ, Regeneration by the Holy Spirit."

In the spring of 1781, Black appealed to John Wesley for men for Nova Scotia. Again, in 1782, he wrote. The vener-



IN SEYMOUR CANYON, B.C.

Amateur Photo. Negative by Miss E. L. Brown, Millbrook, Ont.

able leader replied, expressing the hope that at the coming Conference he might send him assistance. In 1783 the need of helpers became still more urgent. In that year a large number of U. E. Loyalists came into the colony from the United States. Many of these were Methodists, and their coming increased Black's responsibilities. He had already travelled over the greater part of his big parish several times, and each time it became more evident that no one man was equal to the task he had undertaken. John Wesley seems to have thought that help could be had more easily from the neighboring States than from England, and thither Black went in 1784 to confer with the newly appointed bishops of the American Church, Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury.

At the historic Conference of 1784, Black met the American preachers and pressed the claims of his vast field. Dr. Coke, who presided at this Conference, responded to Black's appeal by appointing two men, Freeborn Garrettson and James Oliver Cromwell, to the work in Nova Scotia. Money was also asked for to help this needy cause. In Garrettson the American Church gave one of its best men to the mission field. He was a young Marylander of good family and of great ability. For seven years he had preached under Asbury, prior to his appointment to Nova Scotia. Already he had become a prominent figure in New World Methodism. To him the task of summoning the widely-scattered itinerants to the Conference