Historical Sketches: The Two Hills of Falmouth.

NO. V.

BY REV. E. M. SAUNDERS, D. D.

The Bible is full of hills, the hill of Bashan, the hill of Mizar, and numberless others; but the chief among them is the hill of Zion, "which yields a thousand sacred sweets." Hills fertilize the valleys. They exhibit lights.

There are in Falmouth, N. S., two hills not far apart, sacred and memorable. They are divided by Windmill Creek. The name of this creek has in it history and tragedy. Crossing this creek on the way from Windsor to Upper Falmouth, there is a cultivated field through which the road passes. On the left is a depression which suggests an old cellar. Scattered about over the field are apple trees, ragged and untrained. This is a farther indication that a home was once located in this field. But before the house was raised over that cellar, there was a village in this field, a village of Acadian French. What a vision this suggests. Late in the seventeenth century or early in the eighteenth the Acadians following up one of the numerous streams which flow into the Avon, came to this spot at the head of the tide. There they built their collection of rude houses, so that they might enjoy village life, a passion brought with them from old France. Give the imagination freedom and their simple life is reproduced. What springs, summers, autumns and winters passed over the heads of these happy villagers. On Sunday mornings, clad in their best clothes, they made their way to the chapel, not far away. But the autumn of 1755 came. The peaceable people of this village became a part of the 7000 sent away, weeping and wailing, in transports and passed down the Bay of Fundy to unknown regions. The soldiers torch turned their homes to heaps of blackened stones and beds of grey ashes.

Six years after this, there came from the colony of Connecticut a family of Puritans and erected a house on the ashes of these Acadian French homes. In that family was a boy ten years old—no common boy was he. Those dreamy, blue eyes, that fair skin, that shock of curly light hair, attracted the attention of the least observing. The sentiment with which his soul was surcharged, glowed in his transparent face. That little fellow's name was Henry Alline. The depression now seen in the field was caused by the cellar of the Alline house. The hill took its name from the family. It will be remembered because of the character, life and labors of the man seen in little blue-eyed boy. This house overlooked Windmill Creek. The birds that sang, the squirrels that chattered to the little French boys, sang and chattered to the boy Henry. They listened to his English speech and song. To them the French lads had whistled and shouted for the last time. For them there was no more French. Henry listened to the old Windmill creak and rattle as the banished boys had done before him. His responsive spirit was soon in companionship with the pulsating life of all around him. In him were the elements of the poet, the musician, the adventurer and the leader. His life was dominated by the religion of the Puritans. Heaven and hell were facts as undoubted as summer and winter. The sovereignty of God admitted of no doubt. However dark might be the ways of his government, his justice could not be questioned. No limp and flimpsy sentiment, such as this, that God would never allow any of his creatures to be eternally lost, was ever inhaled by the Alline boy. He carried the accumulations of the guilt of twenty-seven years on his heart and conscience, guilt unpardoned, unforgiven. He knew it. He admitted it. In this way his boyhood and early life passed away. In the night when he heard cattle tramping about the house, he would fancy that the Indians had come to tomahawk and scalp the family, it was not so much the hatchet or scalping knife he dreaded, but the eternal hell into which he would be plunged.

So soon as he became a young man his power of leadership asserted itself and was acknowledge. No one in the community could tell a story, sing a song or dance like Henry Alline. He must be at the head of all social gatherings. Outwardly his life was the gayest of the gay, but secretly and deep down in his heart there was a terrible religious struggle. In this way years, in which gaiety and gloom were strangely mixed, passed over his head. Occasionally there were flashes of hope. Finally, however, he came out of darkness into light. It was a positive translation. Coincident with his deliverance came a message from heaven, preach the gospel to dead sinners. "Lord send me, I will go," was his reply.

But the Puritan sentiment that the minister should be thoroughly educated had possession of his mind. This held him back for about a year. At the end of that time he became convinced that the adversary was leading him to make ineffectual attempts to gain an education so as to keep him from going out at once to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. He decided to leave this secluded spot and evangelize the country. The Falmouth church gave him a license to preach. With this in his pocket he looked abroad upon what is now these Maritime Provinces, and saw the religious condition of the people. There were then in the whole country about 9,789 souls. These were in places made vacant by the expatriated French who had numbered about 17,000. It was in 1776 that Mr. Alline made a survey of the country with a view to engage in the work of evangelization. Yarmouth, Annapolis, Cornwallis, Horton, Falmouth, Newport, Liverpool, Barrington, Amherst, Sackville, Onslow, Petitcodiac and Maugerville were peopled chiefly with New England Puritans. Among them were a few Quakers, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Calvinists. Lunenburg was settled chiefly by Lutherans; the Church of England was dominant at Halifax.

At first the Congregationalist churches had been well supplied with ministers from the New England colonies. At Liverpool there was Rev. Israel Cheever, graduate of Harvard of 1749; at Chester Rev. John Secombe, graduate from the same College in 1738; at Cumberland Rev. Caleb Gaunet, who graduated in 1763; at Cornwallis Rev. Beniah Phelp, a graduate of Yale of 1761; at Barrington Rev. Mr. Wood was pastor; at Halifax Rev. W. Moore, the first from New England, the other from Ireland; Rev. Mr. Murdock, Presbyterian, was at Horton; Rev. Mr. Lyon at Onslow; Rev. Daniel Dimock, Baptist, was at Newport, and Rev. Nathan Mason, Baptist, at Sackville. There may have been a Congregationalist minister on the St. John River. These men were not all on the ground when Henry Alline started out.

In his judgment the Church of England ministers were blind leaders of the blind. Presbyterianism had fallen into spiritual deadness. The Congregational churches were no better. Even the Baptists and Newlights sorely needed an awakening.

With this end in view he strapped on his saddle-bags and mounted his fine horse and dashed out into this spiritual night, commissioned with a message of life and light from the throne of God. Two classes were prepared to hear him with little or no prejudice, the Newlights and the Baptists. In 1763 Rev. N. Mason and his little Baptist church from Swansea had come and settled in Sackville. The Suttons had preached and baptized in Newport. Rev. E. Moulton, great grandfather to the widow of Senator McMaster, had preached and baptized at Horton and Yarmouth. In the population there was a mixture of races and a greater mixture of religious beliefs. It was a day when prejudices were strong and religious toleration very weak. Alline ignored all obstacles. He went from place to place singing like a seraph and preaching like an angel. Awakenings, revivals, opposition and not a little tumult came as a result. Have little regard, said the evangelist, to forms and ordinances. Get the life, the life of God in your souls. The English church has elaborate rites and ceremonies, but no religion. Puritan ministers make much of organization and the authority of the minister, but they have not the life, all need the new light. Flee from the wrath to come was his message to dead churches, dead ministers and dead sinners generally. The dry bones were stirred. Many sinners were converted.

This perfervid evangelist had not the constitutional strength to endure the strain on his physical strength. The hectic flush soon appeared on his cheek. The cough, generated by repeated colds and exposure became more alarming; but the courage, zeal and self-sacrifice of the preacher waned not. From the day that he preached his first sermon in Falmouth till eight years after, when he delivered his last message from his dying bed, at the house of the Rev. Mr. McClures, at Northampton, he ceased not to call sinners to repentance. In those short eight years, beside preaching continuously when at home in Falmouth, Newport, Horton and Cornwallis, he travelled seven times over Annapolis county, preaching day and night. Then followed a journey through Cumberland and places along the Peticodiac River. Another visit to Annapolis County was extended and took in Yarmouth, Barrington, Cape Sable, Ragged Islands, Port La Tour, Liverpool, Milton and Port Medway. Then away he rushed up the St. John River; and on his return visited places in Eastern N. B., Cumberland, Prince Edward Island, Truro, Onslow and Londonderry. Following this was another journey through Annapolis, Yarmouth, Liverpool, Petite Riviere, Lunenburg and Halifax.

His ministry, which began in 1776, came to an end in 1784. In this time, in addition to his many journeyings and ceaseless preaching, he originated a system of shorthand in which he did much of his writing. He wrote and published a large hymn-book. One of these hymns is found in the hymnal:

"Amazing sight the Saviour stands
And knocks at every door.
Ten thousand blessings in his hands
To satisfy the poor."

He also wrote and published some controverial works. His journal published after his death is still preserved. Something further may be said in another article of the effect of this ministry on the history of the Baptists in these provinces. Here let it be said that the eight years into which Henry Alline poured the rich treasury of his life, made a new epoch in the religious life of this province. The effect can be clearly traced. It has not been spent yet. Neither will it be before the judgment. The omniscience of the exalted Christ, the head of the church, sees the full fruitage of that martyr's ministry on the faith-life of the people of the Maritime Provinces. It has pulsated in every revival that has been since that day. It will go on throbbing till the end.

All this we trace back to the Alline Hill, in Falmouth.

"The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets,
Before we reach the heavenly fields
Or walk the golden streets."

And so does the Alline Hill in Falmouth.

Y. M. C. A. Juniors.

Ours is an age of new and rapid developments. A seed thought takes root and grows more quickly now than in former years. This is illustrated in the various societies and organizations that have come into being, and have attained such large proportions in recent times, and especially among the young people. The numbers and influence of Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, Y. M. C. A., B. Y. P. U. and other kindred bodies are phenomenal. Among the latter societies is the Boys' Branch of the Y. M. C. A., composed of boys of ten years and upwards. They hold their weekly meetings in the town where they are organized, their camp by the seaside or lakeside in the summer, and their annual Conference in some populous town, in early winter.

These Boys' Branches have become quite numerous in the New England States, and large benefit to the boys has been the outcome.

The movement in these Maritime Provinces began four years ago, under the leadership of Mr. Edgar M. Robinson, of St. Stephen, in a summer camp of thirty boys, at Passamaquoddy Bay. During the past year, three camps, numbering over two hundred boys, were held at L'Etang, N. B., the Amherst Shore, and Chester, N. S. The camps are well organized under experienced camp leaders, who watch for the safety and welfare of the boys in their various pastimes of boating, bathing, fishing, etc. These camp gatherings last about a fortnight, are inexpensive and promote the moral and physical health of the boys. A row of tents by the seashore, (each containing a limited number of boys and in charge of an adult leader), a large tent where meals are prepared and served, and a large convocation tent for evening meetings, present a fine appearance, especially to boys, and afford healthful conditions for a holiday outing.

The first Maritime Conference of the Boys was held last year at Amherst, the last one at Moncton, beginning Thursday, December 30, and closing the following Sunday evening. About two hundred boys attended, chiefly from St. Stephen, Calais, Fredericton, St. John, Sussex, Chatham, Moncton, Amherst, Pictou, Truro, Halifax and and Wolfville. Three sessions were held each day and evening. All the day sessions were private. The first three evening sessions were public and were addressed by specialists from abroad, including Rev. G. W. Hinkly, of Good Will Farm, Maine; Dr. F. N. Seerley, Springfield, Mass.; and George G. Peck, of Newburgh, New York State; also by Dr. Bruce, of St. John, and others. It was my privilege to attend and to note carefully the proceedings of the eleven sessions held, and I give it my deliberate judgment that these meetings from first to last were of exceeding value to the boys in attendance. Among the subjects of the papers, discussions, and addresses were: "Assurance, its Ground and Consequences," "Good things in the Gymnasium," "Happy Times in the Boys Room," "The Cigarette and the Boy," "Sunday Uses and Abuses," "A pure Life for Every Boy," "Character and the Boy," "What Every Boy owes the Church," "Personal work possible for Boys." The brief, but pointed papers, prepared in several instances by boys, the earnest, thoughtful discussions that followed, and the instructive addresses and appeals of those who were appointed to conduct the discussions, could not fail to leave lasting impressions upon young minds and hearts.

The consecration service Sunday morning, the large testimony meeting Sunday afternoon and the farewell service Sunday evening, were meetings of deep earnestness and spiritual power. The simple, heartfelt utterances of the boys were genuine. There was little of the artificial conventional or stereotyped. The large Sunday afternoon meeting was probably the beginning of the Christian life to a score or more of Moncton boys, as well as to many who went as delegates and visitors.

Leader Robinson's consuming desire to help the boys upward, and his unselfish efforts and sacrifices in their behalf, attract the boys not only to him self, but toward noble Christian character and service. Among his coworkers of kindred spirit are G. E. Williams and A. W. Robb, of St. John; J. A. Irvine and J. Howard Crocker, of Halifax; W. J. McCleary, of Yarmouth; Irving L. Woodman, of Providence, R. I., and Dr. F. W. Barbour, Fredericton. These summer camps and yearly Conferences are deservedly growing in public favor, because parents realize that it is a good thing to promote the physical and moral welfare of a boy by placing him near the springs of life. The conference was a source of noble inspiration, priceless information, and timely warning to every boy in attendance. I. B. OAKES.

Wolfville, January 10, 1898.

Italy: Its People and Its Prospects

BY PROF. SAMUEL C. MITCHELL.

The Italian nation has recently gone to housekeeping, and one has the same delight in noting its success as we all feel in watching the first experiment of this kind of a newly married couple. After 300 years' subjection to the rule of Spain, France, and, worst of all, Austria with Metternich at her council board, the Italians rejoice in their nationalization. How lovingly the mind lingers upon each step and person in the unfolding history of that accomplishment. The splintered and prostrate condition of Italy at the close of the Napoleonic wars; the baffled hopes for independence, centering in the little kingdom of Sardinia, the only native dynasty; the daring enthusiasm of the picturesque knight-errant, Garibaldi, the astute diplomacy of Cavour, the courage of Victor Emmanuel II.; the strange friendships with Napoleon III. and Bismarck, as it suited the ambition of each to use Italy as a tool for his own ends; the disaster of Novara and the glory of Solferino; the stirring political debate, embittered by religious rancor; the gradual addition of one principality after another to the national union, until the arch of unification was all complete save the keystone; and finally Rome, abandoned in 1870 by the French, falling into its rightful place, crowning and solidifying the whole work—all the elements of dramatic interest enter into the story of this triumphant achievement, the most thrilling in recent centuries. No wonder that statutes to the heroic men who took part in this long struggle are raised in all portions of Italy by a people