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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Religious.

Report of the Executive Committee of the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society.

The Executive Committee of the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society have much satisfaction in again presenting their Annual Report. The Institution which, for more than thirty years, has enjoyed the confidence and support of the Baptist Denomination, continues, your Committee believe, to deserve the enlarged patronage of all who love the cause of education. There is reason to cherish the assurance that, to this great work of supplying to the youth of Nova Scotia means for a liberal education, God has given His sanction and blessed the efforts put forth. The labor and time already spent but lay the foundation for the future of the Institutions at Horton, and your Committee hope and believe that the Academy is but entering upon a career of usefulness that shall in coming years identify it with the best interests of this land. In reviewing the past year, your Committee have no fault to find, while at the same time many improvements demand our attention and continued labor. The teachers who began the year have continued in the untiring discharge of their duties, always, as your Committee believe, devoted to the best interests of those under their instruction, and imparting, in accordance with the views of those most experienced as educationists, such a course of education as will not be likely to fail in developing the powers of the youthful intellect. Nor have your Committee to complain of the attendance. It has been larger than in any former year, as follows:

Male Department:—

Whole number during the year,	150
Greatest number in attendance at one time,	105
Least " " " "	58
Average " " " "	81

Female Department:—

Whole number during the year,	94
Greatest number in attendance at one time,	60
Least " " " "	35
Average " " " "	47

The branches studied and the course generally pursued have been much as last year. The year was marked with general and a good degree of prosperity. Eight of the pupils have health entered College. Two of the young women of the Seminary have completed the course of study marked down in our curriculum, and now hold Certificates to that effect.

The religious aspect of the school has been more encouraging during the past year than the year previous. Meetings for exhortation and prayer have been kept by the pupils in the rooms from time to time, and good has resulted therefrom. Two young men belonging to the Academy and quite a number of the pupils of the Seminary have, during the last quarter made profession of religion and have been received into the Baptist Church. Your Committee regard these facts as significant, and believe that there is in this large Denomination, as well as in other christian communities, a growing demand for education. Be assured that an important point is reached, when the people generally value this blessing. We, however, are far from that measure of success at first aimed at, but trust the growing desire for knowledge will excite the increased activity of the many who have, at Horton, been furnished with means of enlarged usefulness.

Reasonably may your Committee rely upon those who go out from Horton to aid in the work of education. If each and all lay the claims of this Society faithfully before their several communities, many more would be found encouraged in the laudable ambition of seeking knowledge.

Your Committee would express their increased conviction that the Principal and his associates are well prepared for their work; the experience of each year adds to their worth; and that the course of instruction is sound and judicious, fitting those instructed at the Institution for the various places of usefulness daily presented.

While the Baptists of this Province may justly congratulate themselves on having, in years past, taken such a high and decided stand in popular education, and while expressing our grateful thanks to the Dispenser of all good, they must not forget that success necessitates an enlargement of means for a yet higher course of instruction; for education in any country will always seek a higher or lower range. If associated with the religious affections and prayers of the Church of Christ, the tendency will be upward; dissevered from the religious element, the moral range will be downward. The work of education in this and the neighbouring Province is now employing a large number of young men, educated at Horton, and the demand will yet for a long time exceed the supply.

The Committee would direct attention especially to the Female Department of the Horton Institution. For a number of years the idea of an institution for young ladies was before this Society, but the way for the inauguration of this scheme did not present itself until two and a half years since, when, as a mere experiment, a House was rented, Teachers obtained, and the attempt made to supply female education of a high character and within reach of a larger class of society.

Your Committee had fears and hopes,—the former have not been realized, the latter have.

The Female Seminary in Horton is no longer an experiment, but a successful and necessary part of our great educational scheme. The building now occupied has been purchased at a reasonable rate, and furnished. It, however, was found insufficient to accommodate those seeking the benefits of the Seminary, and last winter, at a limited expense, some apartments additional were provided, so that the premises will now accommodate forty.

A Hall adjacent is rented for a day-school, which school is no insignificant part of the entire institution, and has been under the instruction of Miss Anna Shaw. The Principal of the Seminary, Miss Townsend, has proved herself in every way suited to her responsible station. The Committee are persuaded that their choice of a Principal was most happy and advantageous, and feel that they can assure the community at large, that in placing young ladies under the care of Miss Townsend, every reasonable expectation will be realised. At the examination during the year the classes manifested an acquaintance with the different branches, creditable alike to teacher and pupil. Miss Townsend will resume her duties in August.

Your Committee must keep before the mind of the Denomination the necessity of having an Academical Edifice, adequate to the growing demand for Female instruction. The building now occupied, though large, is by far too small, and in many respects inconvenient and unsuited to the system of domestic management. At any time the property can be sold without loss, perhaps with gain, but a large additional sum would be needed. We trust the time is not distant when the necessary contribution will be cheerfully made. Your Committee feel happy in being prepared to supply, in both departments, a superior education, at an exceedingly low rate. The charge in the Female Department being but about $80 for Board and instruction.

Let us humbly and gratefully acknowledge the arm that has hitherto helped us, and trace all success to God. With His help we shall do valiantly; without that help our labour is in vain. To-day, as the past is reviewed, we must exclaim, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." Let all our duties be contemplated in the light of truth, and success is certain.

(From the Baptist Magazine.)

A Sunday in Oxford.

The annual services of our denominational societies being concluded, and needing a little relaxation, I hastened, on the day previous to the first Sunday in May, to refresh myself amid the gardens and groves of the university city of Oxford. Through the wise regulations of the authorities, the quiet of its cloisters, and the soft flow of its streams, and the sacredness of its Sabbaths, are not broken by the rush of excursionists, seeking pleasure and relaxation on the day of the Lord, to the sacrifice of the peace and rest of the inhabitants of the towns whither they come. Thus it was that on the Sunday morning I found myself traversing the quiet streets, in which every shop was closed, the bells ringing out their peals of welcome to the day, and summoning the worshippers of God to the sanctuary. My object was to hear the Bampton lecture, which this year is preached by the Rev. Dr. Hannah, who is said to be the son of a Wesleyan minister. As I approached the university church of St. Mary's, the academic costume of the persons passing in at once indicated the nature of the service. On these occasions the morning prayer of the liturgy is not used. This has already been "said or sung" in the various college chapels. After, therefore, the Vice-Chancellor, with his attendant doctors robed in scarlet and black, has taken his seat opposite the pulpit, and the singing of a hymn, the preacher of the day immediately proceeds to ask the thanksgivings of the congregation for the benefactors of this ancient seat of learning, whom God has raised up, and especially for the virtues of the founder of the college to which the preacher himself belongs. It is called the bidding prayer. This done, the next is named, and the discourse begins.

From no other pulpit can we gather a better idea of the currents of thought prevailing in the university. On the same day may be heard men of the most diverse schools of theology; and just now peculiar interest attaches to the utterances of the university pulpit, inasmuch as, as is well known, there are struggling in the bosom of the *alma mater* of our clergy the most contradictory dogmas, ranging from the coldest negations of Atheism to the torrid bigotry of Rome. The Bampton lecturer of the year usually selects a subject bearing on the controversies of the day. Dr. Hannah's course is on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, with especial reference to the attacks made upon it by Mr. Jowett and Bishop Colenso. He took for his text the appropriate words of the apostle, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." After remarking on the obvious fact that we have a human element as well as a Divine one manifesting itself in the Scriptures, he at once discarded the theory of verbal inspiration as not admitting of a full explanation of the facts, and proceeded to examine the effect which the laws of history and literary criticism, and the facts of scientific discovery, must have on the question of inspiration. He pointed out, that while Scripture remained invariable, its interpretation might undergo many changes from the increased knowledge and more accurate criticism to which it was of necessity subjected. An apparant contradiction of one period may be harmonized in another by the discovery of some hitherto concealed or unknown fact. The vast accumulation of various readings has only rendered more certain the accuracy of the text, and in no instance has affected any important doctrine of the Church's creed. It was altogether an irrational procedure to multiply and heap up minute difficulties; difficulties which alone proceeded from our ignorance of possible facts, and which no record or narrative could be expected to supply. So vast is the number of proofs of the accuracy of the Divine record, that now any seeming difficulty should rather be referred to our ignorance, than be allowed for one moment to bring into doubt *its* veracity or inspired authority. And if in various parts of the volume there are marks of a later hand—as of Ezra, who is allowed by all to have been the last editor of the Scriptures—it must not be forgotten that these additions were made by men themselves inspired, and belonging to those schools of the prophets to whom the keeping and exposition of the sacred word were confided. It is, moreover, altogether opposed to the laws of historic literature to imagine, that because a narrative is compiled from various sources, therefore its authorship is various. It may be granted that the Pentateuch contains a collection of many traditions and historic facts gathered from many sources—some by immediate revelation, and others from the lips of those who had received them by oral transmission—and yet it may be perfectly true that Moses is the author of the work as it has come down to us. Macaulay's "History of England" may be resolved into the manifold sources from whence its facts are drawn, and yet it is no less the work of the great man whose name it bears.

Scientific discoveries can just as little overthrow the fact of inspiration. It must first remodel human language, which is not based on science, but on things as they appear. Take the first chapter of Genesis. It was no part of the object of that revelation to give scientific expression to the facts of creation. Objections do not touch the substance of the narrative, but only its form. It teaches the great doctrine that God created the heavens and the earth; that man is his creature, and dependent on his care. The objections relate only to the *order* of the creation, and to the *time* in which the work was done. Yet obviously it was impracticable, in the then state of knowledge, to give a perfectly accurate conception of either. The very form of the narrative conveys the impression that such was not the intention; the first three days' work constituting a striking parallelism with the second three, and the work of the seventh day crowning the whole. In the first three days we have the creation of light, the fixing of the firmament, and the formation of the land: in the second three the light receives its appointed work, the firmament is filled with its winged and scaly inhabitants, and the land is clothed with verdure and occupied with cattle of every kind. In no more striking form could be conveyed to man the great fundamental truth of the creation of the universe by God. We learn by the survey ever to mark the distinction between the truth of God and the speculations of man.

This is a brief and very imperfect sketch of the very able lecture, in which the preacher sought to direct into a right channel the speculations of many of his auditors; on the one hand to correct the extravagant claims of the literalist, and on the other to check the broad denials of the sceptic. How far he may succeed in this, only a knowledge of the entire series of lectures can say. None who heard him, however various their opinions, but must admit the candour with which he dealt with the objections of opponents, and the moderation of his views.

Pondering over the discourse I had heard, and its relation to those grave questions agitating the minds of so many leaders of thought in the university, I wended my way to the Christ Church meadows. Caught by the sounds of harmony issuing from Merton College Chapel, as I was passing, I determined to enter. It is also the church of the parish in which the college is situated, the burial-place of Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of the celebrated library of Oxford, and of Antony Wood. The chapel consists of a choir of considerable dimensions, with a cross aisle, apparently intended for the transepts of a cathedral church, but which was never finished. The whole is of rich Gothic workmanship. The choir is beautifully paved with tesselated tiles, the windows are enriched with ancient stained glass, and the sides are seated with oak stalls. I found the congregation seated in the aisle; but the minister, with his numerous band of acolytes and singers, was in the choir, beyond their sight. The service had so far proceeded, that shortly after my entrance about one-half of the congregation left, the rest entering the choir to partake of the Communion. I passed in with them. The ministering clergyman was kneeling at the altar, which was richly adorned with coloured drapery and a cross. Another clergyman knelt at his side, both clothed in surplices and scarlet hoods. The Communion office now proceeded, the whole being either intoned or sung by the band of choristers. In every respect it seemed that I was assisting at a Popish mass service, only that the prayers were in English, and the book used was the Book of Common Prayer. At the consecration great silence was observed, and during the participation the organ breathed forth low and melodious harmony. This occupied a long time, as the communicants were numerous, chiefly consisting of young persons of both sexes. The priest and the sacrament were here everything: the doctrine of Christ crucified was lost in the superstitious observance of a ceremony.

Thus side by side in Oxford we see growing up together the practice and forms of Popery with a scoffing scepticism. No educated or high minded man could enter a ministry in which the qualities of a musical performer have to be combined with the attitudes of a posture-master, and in which the lofty office of a teacher of Divine truth is reduced to the claim of priestly