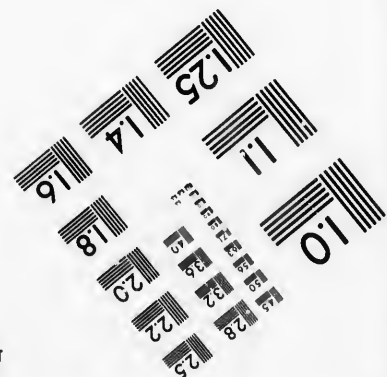
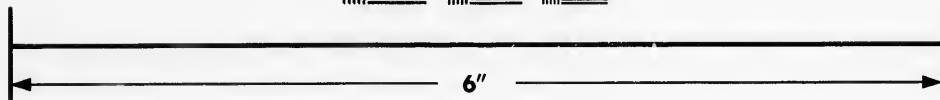
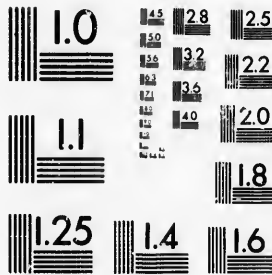


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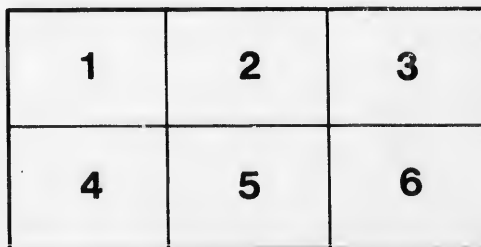
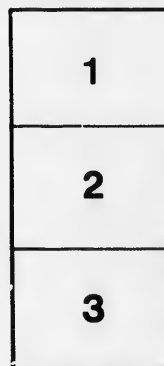
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VALEDICTORY
SERMON,
PREACHED
IN
CHRIST CHURCH,
FREDERICTON,
ON THE 29TH JUNE,
1817.

BY THE REVEREND
GEORGE J. MOUNTAIN.

“ Hold fast the faithful word as you have been taught.”
“ Am I therefore your enemy because I tell you the truth ?”

FREDERICTON,
PRINTED BY GEO. K. LUGRIN,
KING'S PRINTER.

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TO
THE PARISHIONERS OF FREDERICTON,
AND ESPECIALLY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE VESTRY,
(BY WHOSE DESIRE IT IS MADE PUBLIC.)

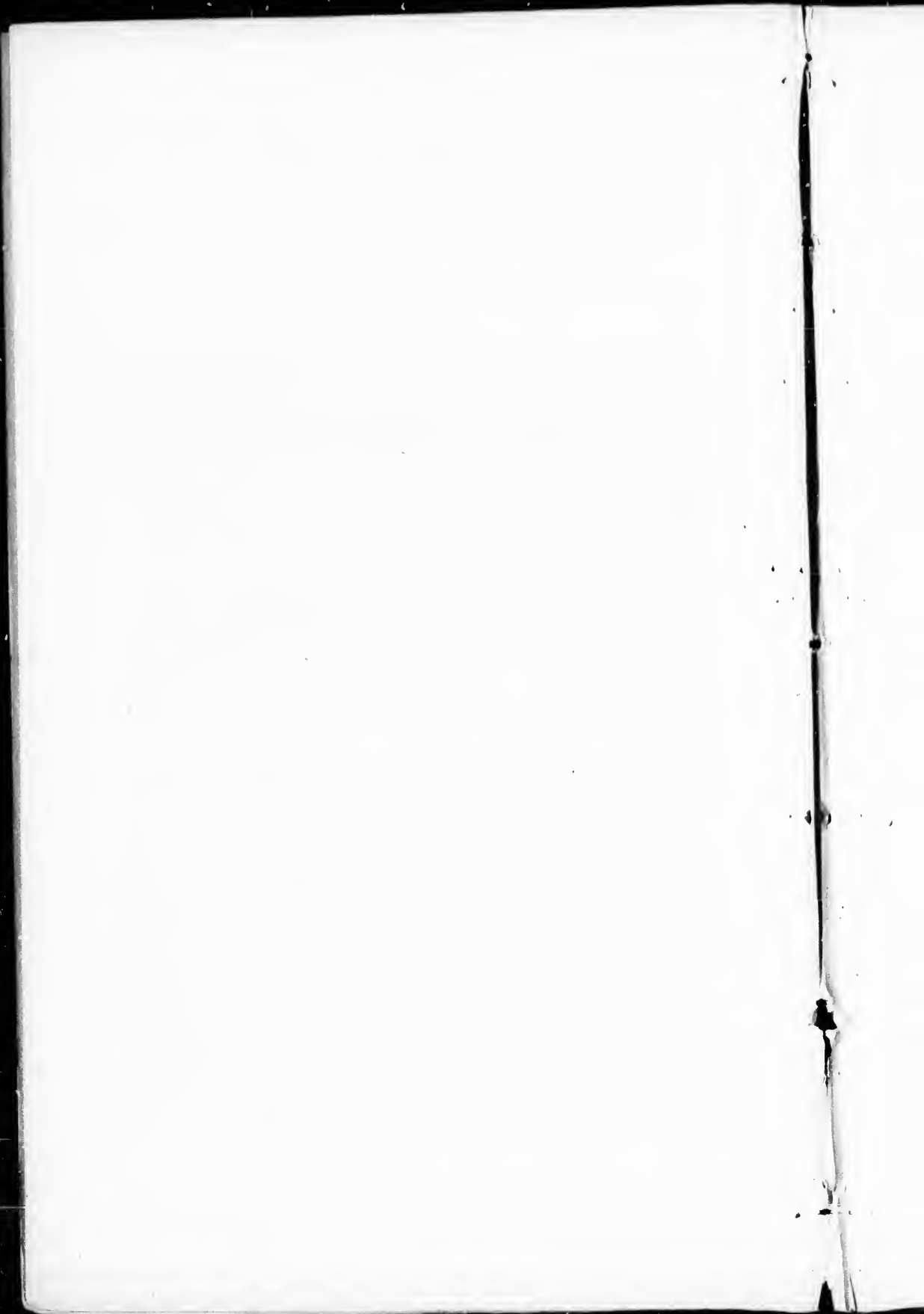
THIS Sermon, composed under circumstances of extreme hurry, of which the marks are too evident in the *stile* and *arrangement*

But containing no fruits of hasty or unadvised proceeding in the *principles* and *sentiments* which it expresses,

Is inscribed by their faithful
and ever affectionate servant,

GEO. J. MOUNTAIN.

Quebec, Sept. 1, 1817.



1. *THESSALONIANS. IV. 1, 2.*---We beseech you, brethren and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound more and more.

THE entreaty and exhortation thus enforced in the name of our Lord, are delivered by an inspired Apostle to persons who had been converted to Christianity. Yet under different circumstances, and with very different pretensions to authority, every Minister of the Gospel may adopt the same language; understood according to the character and situation of the parties. With all the earnestness of those who are stewards of the Mysteries of Grace, and whose task is to advance the salvation of others; with all the anxiety of faithful shepherds who feed and watch the flock; with all the solemn sense of Duty which ought to be felt by men set apart to stand, as it were, between God and the world, he may "beseech and exhort" them to "walk and please God as they have received" from *him*. He is more than a mere lecturer in morality; his office is more than to set forth the advantages of virtue with the ill consequences of Vice, and to remind men that they are destined to be immortal. This
is

is a part, and a very important part of his Office, but it is far from being all. There are indeed among the Professors of Christianity many who keep in the back ground what are, in fact, its prominent and distinguishing points; and receive them, if presented to their notice with neglect if not with averseness: There are many, to whom its prospects appear in a dim and dubious light, and a haze seems to rest over a great part of its extent. But the defect is in their own vision. Were there no evil propensities and prejudices of wordly attachment intervening to darken the scene, they would never take a partial and confined view of the Christian Religion, nor be desirous of abating its high pretensions, and reducing its exalted character to something more resembling the systems of human Philosophy. It never can be, that we should find, *first*, a long train of preparatory dispensations---a series of Prophets and Delegates of God---a people selected to be the depositories of his oracles, and to convey the chosen seed from which the Messiah was to spring after the flesh, and conducted through various struggles "by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm"---and *then*, at length, this Messiah appearing; this "Desire of all nations" and "hope of the erds of the earth" born miraculously into the world; conversing familiarly with mankind; displaying many wonders of divine power; submitting to suffer and to die: re-appearing alive among his followers; sending them to preach the everlasting gospel; enduing them personally with supernatural qualifications for the work; providing for the perpetuity of their office, and instituting a visible Church and Sacraments ;---

Sacraments;---it never can be, that all this was projected and executed in the Counsels of Divine wisdom, if things were to be left, after all, nearly in the state in which they were before, and it was simply intended to *improve the moral light* of the world.---No---To proclaim redemption to fallen man: To shew him the origin and the cure of all that Sin and evil of which the most wicked and light-minded must acknowledge the existence, that perverseness of nature by which men are impelled to act in a way contrary to their happiness, and contrary to their inward convictions: To encourage him by great and gracious promises as well as to arm him with sound principles: To warn him against the snares of temptation and the deceitfulness of sin: To impress upon him the necessity of vigilance and exertion: To exhort him to resist his spiritual enemies, and pray for the assistance of the promised Comforter, which will enable him to do so: To unfold at large the various duties of Christian duty, private, relative and public, and to insist upon obedience to which our salvation depends; and to urge the condition of "adorning the doctrine of our Saviour by good works:" To explain and open the *word of God*,---the actual communications received from Heaven by mankind: To officiate in public worship, to administer ^{the} ordinances of Religion, and dispense the appointed means of Grace,---all these are duties appropriated to that standing Order of men who are called *the Clergy*. These are the duties which during the period of my labours among you I have, although imperfectly, discharged; and these the principles which I have endeavoured to maintain: And these principles

principles now that I address you for the last time, I most solemnly, most earnestly recommend: "I beseech you by the Lord Jesus that as ye have received from us" (according to the measure of influence which may have been reasonably allowed me,) "how ye ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound therein more and more."

It would be happy if this were all. It would be a great consolation if the Clergy had only to enforce the truths of Christianity; to check the progress of Vice, and to lead those committed to them in the way of life, by the ordinary and prescribed means. But their situation in these days is precisely that of the Jews who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem under the inspection of Nehemiah. "They which builded on the wall, and they which bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." In vain would they hope for success in proceeding regularly with their work, and *edifying* their Congregations; in vain would they expect the whole to become "fitly framed together" unless they repelled in some way the inroads of their numerous Competitors. "He that is not against us, is for us" says our Saviour. And to the benefit of this rule we may admit those regular reformed Churches, (though we could by no means conform to them in certain points) which do not interfere with us, and never were comprised within our jurisdiction:---But our Saviour also says, upon another occasion, "He that is not with me is against me"---and we see and feel but too well how this declaration may be reconciled with the former, and where the Church may apply it to
her

her own case:--- We see and feel but too well how grievously the body of Christ is rent, by those who have separated themselves *from* us; who by that very separation condemns us; who are not only *against* us because they are *not with* us, but against us in the shape of active and unwearied opponents, "drawing away disciples" and thriving by our decay. It is therefore that I have lately entered at such length into the merits of the question between us, and I may be pardoned for now calling to mind the principal points which were then explained; in order that the arguments which were advanced, (so far as they were satisfactory,) may recur to the minds of those who found them to be so, upon the mention of the several subjects which were treated. The necessity of a settled Faith and the danger of an accommodating and temporizing Religion, were first shown: The characteristic marks of Religious delusion in its various shades and degrees, and its effects upon human society, were next pointed out: The system of doctrinal teaching to which we adhere was defended: The principles of Unity, and Episcopal Church Government were laid down, and the mutual connection between the Scriptures and the Church, their authentic vehicle, was proved: The nature and obligation of the two Sacraments, the propriety of infant baptism, the true efficacy of ordinances when rightly used, and the advantages of a liturgy in public prayer, were successively investigated.

If I have asserted, in pursuing these subjects, the claims of the Church, and the exclusive power of the regular Clergy to meddle with sacred things, I have

have not asserted them for myself.---Neither have I asserted them in order to excite animosities and disputes, or a contempt of others because we cannot agree with them; a feeling more to be deprecated than the very errors which are the object of it.---If we judge our brethren *personally*, let us beware of the judgment to be passed upon ourselves.---To *leave* a strong and serious impression of the foregoing truths has been the object of my solicitude, and it was one advantage of my approaching removal that it enabled me to "speak boldly as I ought to speak" upon points which, from motives of delicacy, I might have hesitated to enforce, had I remained with you. As it is possible that some time, (though I trust no considerable time) may elapse before my place is filled up, the interval will try the constancy of many, and the zeal of our Competitors will not fail to make advantage of the opening. It is an inconvenience much to be regretted, but unavoidable in the present state of these Provinces, that the Church of England is so sparingly supplied with Ministers, and that, where vacancies occur, they sometimes continue open so long. As it is impossible, in consequence of arrangements long ago made, that I should now wait the arrival of my successor, (which otherwise I would willingly do,) I trust that you will bear the inconvenience, and consider it as a far less evil than those which infallibly result where there is more popular voice and influence in matters regarding the Ministry. In proportion as the Minister is dependent upon his Congregation, or subject to their controul; in proportion as their pride is flattered by a share in the regulation of religious affairs,---

affairs,---*in such proportion* his real fidelity and usefulness will be impaired; he will be tempted to abstain from those topics in regard to which they most need admonition; he will fail to insist, --- (at least such will be the natural consequence,) --- upon those duties which are repugnant to their particular interests and inclinations; and, declaiming against follies and vices to which they are *not solicited*, or warming them by highly-coloured descriptions of the more awful and sublime things in Scripture, to neglect the cultivation of a substantial integrity, and singleness of heart; of a Piety content to be unseen; of an Humility willing to move only in its proper sphere.---“ My Brethren,” says the Apostle, “ be not *many Masters*.”---The advice was more wholesome than soothing. For there were not wanting, in those days, “ unruly and vain teachers, who subverted whole houses teaching things which they ought not.” There were many who “ *desiring to be teachers* of the Law, had turned aside unto vain jangling, understanding neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed.” Is the world much changed?---And are there no traces of the same thing to-day?

It would be easy enough, no doubt, for this Congregation to provide itself a Minister. There is no occasion to wait for one regularly educated; canonically ordained; sent by due authority; or for any such troublesome requisites:---Not the smallest.---For, once admit the principle, that these are not essential to the Ministerial functions, and there can be no lack of Ministers. The only wonder is that the Preachers do not out-number the hearers. For where can there be a more open
read,

road, a more direct, inviting avenue for the ambition of all whose lot is cast in obscurity and toil, or who tread a dull routine of unvarying and unnoticed employments, than in the assumption of the Ministry? The *Clergy* are, very generally speaking, men whose worldly motives would lead them to the choice of some other profession. But it is directly the reverse with their Competitors; and, in such a state of things, we may well expect that the one will bear that *proportion* to the other which subsisted in the days of Elijah, between the Prophets of Baal and of the Lord---“ I, even I only, am the Prophet of the Lord, but the Prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men.”

I take no pleasure in reviving this subject, and willingly quit it with one more observation:--- That it is perfectly impossible---perfectly impossible---that the *Power of Ordination* should reside any where but in the regular Clergy. For how can persons *convey* or *confer* ordination who have not *received* it? Suppose a succession of persons exercising the functions of the Ministry:---Suppose that, in our day, we hold that a person cannot exercise them without being *ordained*---then, the Person who preceded him, lay under the same previous incapacity,---and the person again who preceded *him*---and so on, trace it as far back as you will. Wherever you are obliged to *stop*, and find your ordination commencing in incompetent persons, it must inevitably vitiate the whole.---*This* alternative, therefore, is tolerably clear to common sense:---*Either*, that ordination is not necessary at all---is a mere idle mockery---or, that it must be transmitted by a succession of ecclesiastical persons. And all *other* Ministry
must

must be unlawful, and all the ordinances of such Ministry null and void.---And, whatever may have been the faults of the ecclesiastical body, (for they are a body of *men*,)---where should we have been at this day, without them? How should we have emerged from a worse than Egyptian darkness? Who were the persons that translated the Scriptures, and gave them to the People? To whose learning and researches are we indebted for understanding many important points of Scripture, not to be understood at all, without a knowledge of antiquity and the learned languages? Who silences the Patrons of Superstition, and exposes the sophistry of the Infidel!---Whoever they are who have rendered these services to the Christian world, they at least do not deserve to be displaced from its respect and affection in favour of any who *cannot* do the same. We do not plead our individual merits, but we are persuaded that, as a body, “ he that despiseth us, despiseth” our Master, and “ Him that sent” our Master.

There are one or two points---of subordinate moment---which I venture, however, to recommend to your favourable attention.---We have now commenced an attempt to enlarge the accommodation; and improve the appearance of this Church. And I hope that those among you who have the immediate management of its interests and property, will consider that you have a sacred trust reposed in your hands; and will never suffer it to lose the advantage which it owes to the liberality of the Civil Power, by any remissness, or any regard to *personal considerations*.---The truest service is in the temple of the inner man, and the most acceptable sacrifice is offered
upon

upon the altar of the heart:---True---But it cannot indicate a very zealous respect for the honour of God, that his house should be neglected, and his Courts should wear an aspect of meanness. And it does not look well, that the Church at the seat of Government in this Province, should be still unfinished, still destitute of various usual and decent appendages---without a steeple, without sacramental plate, without a font for the administration of Baptism, without any external enclosure to prevent its immediate precincts from becoming a harbour for cattle. All these wants will, I trust, be supplied, and the means of the Church so husbanded as to supply them soon: And I am not the less anxious that they should be so, because I shall not see it. For in this and all other points, I shall never cease to take a lively interest in the affairs of that flock to which I have once borne the relation of Pastor.

There is another improvement which regards, not the *place* of Divine worship, but the *manner* of its stated *performance*,---in which those who have concurred with me deserve, (and I beg them to accept,) my cordial thanks,---the improvement in the performance of our Psalmody. In this I trust you will persevere: to drop it would be worse than never to have attempted it---but I need not now enlarge upon its importance which has been fully represented upon a former occasion.

And now I bid you farewell, and may the blessing of ALMIGHTY GOD be with you!---Were this the place to do it, I could assure you sincerely, that that regret which many of you have been pleased to express for my departure, is fully met by corresponding feelings on my side; and I will

not

not pretend to be so above human weakness, as to deny that I am gratified by such testimony of your approbation, though conscious that it is greatly beyond my deserts. I could assure you that neither I, nor mine, will soon forget the kindness and attention which we have experienced here. But I shall only once again entreat you to "abound more and more in walking that will please God;" and if you are disposed to bear in mind "what ye have received from us it is summarily this:

In the general conduct of life "to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God:"

In your social and political capacity to abide by the wise man's advice---"My son fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change:" To "fear God, honour the King, and love the brotherhood," are three things which always go together---

In the guidance of religious opinion, "stand ye in the way and see, and ask for the *old paths*; where is the good way; and ye shall find rest for your souls."

* * It will probably be thought that too large a portion of this Sermon is devoted to the subject of Church-Communion.---But here was the particular danger to which the Congregation were immediately to be exposed.---And there were circumstances at the time which left no room for hesitation or reserve.



