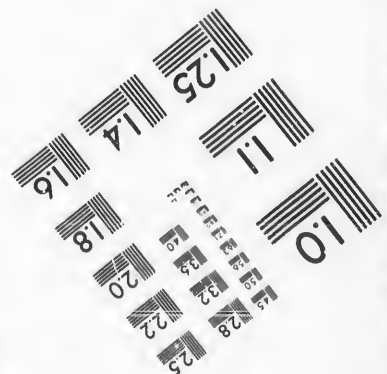
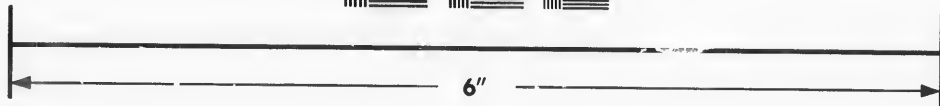
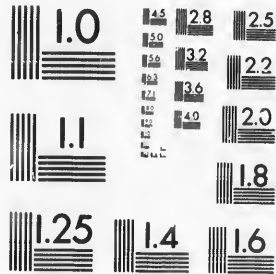


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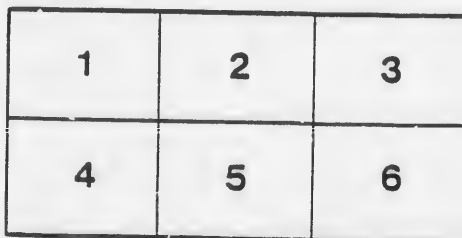
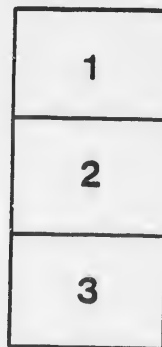
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NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

BY

THE REV. FREDERICK DENNIS, D.D.

OF

1871.

W. H. KELLOGG

NEW YORK: W. H. KELLOGG, 1871.

## NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

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MY DEAR FRIENDS,—

ALTHOUGH it has been my practice during the forty-seven years of my ministry, always to address my people at the commencement of each new year from the pulpit, on the topics naturally suggested by that interesting season of our lives, I have also found it profitable to say a few additional words, in the more permanent form of some printed pages, which peradventure may be taken up and fixed in the memory of the reader, long after the pulpit address, and perhaps its speaker, may have been forgotten. I have been gratified to find that such memorials have been kindly received, and I hope profitably, in the past, not only by those over whom I have been minister during the nineteen years of my residence in this city, but also by those beloved members of my former charge in Lunenburg, who occasionally bring forth to me, on my annual visits to that quarter the little Pastorals received by them in years gone by. Encouraged by the hope of stirring up in like manner, your pure minds by way of remembrance, not of me only, but much more of those concerning things which it is my duty to set before you publicly and from house to house, even tho' ye know them and be established in the present truth, I once more, and possibly for the last time, desire to follow the same plan, and commit a few plain words to writing, as "bread cast upon the waters." I think it meet "as long as I am in this tabernacle" to do so, knowing, as being nearly 73 years old, that I must shortly put off this my Tabernacle. And I would therefore endeavour in all humility that you may be able after my decease, to have in remembrance the concerning things which pertain to your salvation, when perhaps some of you may give more earnest heed to them than when the living voice sounded them in your ears. I am the more quickened to this act of pastoral admo

dition by the feeling that I am almost the solitary remnant of the clergy who were laboring in this diocese when I was ordained in the year 1824. My beloved brother in the ministry, the friend of a life time, my fellow worker in the vineyard of the Lord, with whom I so often have "taken sweet counsel," and walked in the House of God as dear friends, the lamented especially of St. George's, where he spent his honored and faithful ministry of nearly half a century, having been called to his rest during the past year, I have since felt more than ever, that my time too is shortening fast, and that whatever I have to do should be done quickly. Only one clergyman remains who was in the diocese before me, and he has for some years been on the retired list.\*

Thus left alone of all those who walked with me in the ranks of the ministry at first, it behoves me to offer my heart felt acknowledgements to Him, who has permitted me to labor in His service so long, although alas, with too little profit. To His goodness I would ascribe the uninterrupted health I enjoy, and the ability to be in my accustomed place on every Sabbath of the two years which have elapsed since my last address to you, as well as to go through with the other various duties of my position. May the manifold shortcomings which, as I painfully feel, have marked every day and every year of my course, be covered over by the all perfect robe of the Redeemer's righteousness; and every failure on my part towards you be supplied out of the infinite fulness that dwells in Him. In looking back over the last two years I have also to express my thankfulness for the harmony and good will which has prevailed in our congregation. The attendance, if not as large as my wishes would make it, has yet been very satisfactory and made up chiefly of that class for which this church was designed. I am persuaded that to have God's House thus free to all, has been a privilege highly valued and blessed by Him to the good of many who have passed away, as well as of you that remain. And when the day of final reckoning shall come, I trust and believe that it will be said of this and that one as regards our Zion, "he or she was spiritually born in her." So that then you and I may rejoice together and be forever with our Lord. Still I long to see among you a greater progress in Divine things, more zeal and warmth and earnestness in the great work of your salvation. I desire to find a larger increase in the numbers of our communicants. You

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\*There are upwards of ninety clergymen now in the Diocese.

will, I think, bear me witness that I have given you "line upon line and precept upon precept" as regards this essential duty and blessed privilege of the Christian believer. While cautioning you against the prevailing error in regard to that Sacrament of exalting it above everything else in religion, and considering that if you are only communicants all is right with your souls—and that there is a real corporeal presence of Christ therein (which I believe to be as much at variance with scripture and the teaching of our church, as it is contrary to our reason) I trust I have duly urged upon you, time after time, the necessity of that holy ordinance, in remembrance of your dying and risen Lord, if you would grow in grace and be acknowledged by Him as His faithful servants. "This do," said He, in the last moments of His precious life. How can we face Him if we leave it undone? Once more then, most dearly beloved, do I bid you in the name of God, I call you in Christ's behalf, I exhort you as you love your own salvation that you, who have not yet done so, will henceforth lose no opportunity of being partakers of that heavenly feast." Fear not to come, if you desire to love and please that Saviour who gave himself for you. Rather fear to stay away. Nothing should keep us from it but loving and living in actual unrepented sin. And that will keep us from Heaven. You may confidently expect to meet your Lord at his Table. Not in the *substance* of the Bread and Wine, but *spiritually*, in your own hearts, by faith, when devoutly doing as He has bidden you. Away then, my dear friends with all excuses, which will not be accepted before God. Come at once, the very next time after you read this. And if "you cannot quiet your own conscience herein but require further comfort and counsel," you know how gladly I will give it, to the best of my ability, pointing out to you how in God's holy word you may find all fears and scruples removed, and be "received as worthy partakers of that Holy Table," not worthy of course in yourselves to gather up even the crumbs that fall from it, but accounted so by your Lord, when you are deeply convinced of your own unworthiness.

I would very earnestly enforce all this, especially upon those who have been confirmed under my care in Salem and since we moved to Trinity. Many of you have never advanced the next and most important step, and knelt at the table of Him with



regard to whom on those solemn occasions, you professed before men and angels,

That long as life itself shall last,  
Ourselves to Christ we yield,  
Nor from His cause will we depart,  
Or ever quit the field.

Why then have ye been so long in acting up to this, and never proceeded to confess your Saviour in his own appointed way? Delay no longer. Remember the word of the Lord. "Promise unto the Lord and *keep* it all ye that are round about him. When thou vowest a vow defer not to pay it." Then again, my friends, how is it about other essential duties. Are you mindful of the Saviour's charge. "Enter into thy closet (any private place) and shut thy door and pray to thy Father which is in secret." If you fail in this you will fail in all. Earnest private communion with your heavenly Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit, lies at the very root of saving godliness. It is the oil to feed the lamp of all real devotion. Thus speaks the word of God. "Pray always. Pray without ceasing." Examine yourselves then, honestly, as to this essential duty and high privilege. And how is it about your Bibles, the precious book divine with which God has blest our land—which all may have. Be sure to read it, prayerfully, regularly, and with heart application for light from above. Not on Sundays only, but a portion of it at least once every day. Take care that the newspaper or the fictitious and sensational trash which floods our land, and crowds our book stores, does not push God's book out of the way. Remember, that is the only book by which you will be judged in the great day of account.

Moreover, have my frequent addresses on the duty of Family Prayer, had the effect of making that the practice in your dwellings morning and evening, in the midst of the children whom God has given you? Your observance or neglect of this beautiful and influential exercise may have its effect for weal or woe on generations yet unborn. Its due performance will bring a blessing down upon your households, and promote harmony and love and order and peace within your doors. Forms to assist you are easily attainable; or your Prayer Books will supply you with sound and spiritual words. Therefore, dear Fathers and Mothers of my people, if the morning hours of 1871 have found your houses silent as to family worship, let them I

entreat you be so no longer. And the God of ail the families of the earth will bless you and yours.

Closely connected with this subject I would urge upon you renewed care in the training of your families in the knowledge and practice of true religion. The Scripture gives it as one mark of the "last days that men shall be disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection." And truly this mark is upon our present times. Insubordination, impatience of control, want of respect for age and rank, abound. The young forget that part of their Catechism (with many others) which bids them "submit themselves to all governors, spiritual pastors and masters, and to order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters." I fear that in many cases this and other juvenile failures may be traced to the want of due care and right example at home. O remember that you are greatly answerable for the souls of your children. You are told in God's word to "train them up in the way they should go—in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "In the morning sow thy seed," and the promise is sure, that good will come of it. Especially, if as you surely ought, you add fervent prayer for God's blessing upon all your care. How many are the instances of gracious answers to such prayers, especially from a mother's heart and lips, for some wayward child, perhaps wandering and dying in a far-off land. Meanwhile, take care while they are under your roof to accustom them to the observance of the Lord's day, to be with you in His house, and to attend regularly at the Sunday School, in connexion with the church of their fathers. "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded" is the precept of your Bible. Suffer a word of exhortation specially for yourselves. I delight to see you around me in the church and our other meetings. I desire to have you prepared to take the places of your fathers in all that is good and praiseworthy. I would guard you, if I could, from the snares and temptations which surround you. Especially from the great evil of our city, the love of strong drink, and all the downward paths that lead to it. You know that for nearly forty years I have supported Temperance Associations, I hope not without some success. I intend to do so to the end of my life. Convinced of their necessity and benefit, I want you all to unite your efforts with mine, in the good cause. Choose your own, out of the many forms of organization, but belong to some portion of the great Army now engaged in fighting

against a foe, a thousand times more destructive to human life and happiness than all the wars of past or present times. "Touch not, taste not, handle not." You are quite sure if you take none you will never take too much. Above all, pray for God's strength and God's blessing on your vows and pledges. In this too many fail and therefore fall.

I believe Intemperance to be the curse of our country and of all others, and that it would be a most happy thing if "all that intoxicates" were banished for ever from among us, except for medicinal or artistic purposes. Meanwhile, if we cannot banish it entirely, let us fight against its poisonous effects. Use all your influence my young friends, against its use, speak against it, strive against it, advise against it, pray against it. But at the same time do it all in love, and with allowance for those who differ. We can not, all, in this, or any thing else, "see eye to eye." Violence does good to no cause, and I believe the one in question has been often injured by intemperate advocates.

In conclusion, my dear people, let us be quickened in every good word and work, by the serious aspect of the times in which we live. As regards the world at large, how closely do the solemn sayings of our Lord apply. As when he speaks of "wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes and pestilences in divers places, men's hearts failing them for fear and for locking after those things that are coming upon the earth." But amid "the shaking of the nations" let us see the hand of Him who "sitteth between the Cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet," and can make the "fierceness of man turn to His praise," bringing good out of evil. It is a season assuredly, for uttering with redoubled fervor the prayers of our church for "peace in our time," for "unity and concord" among all nations, and for the advent of those glorious days when the Prince of Peace shall have universal sway, and men shall not learn nor practise war any more. But as to this little corner of the world in which God has cast our happy lot, though mercifully free from war and other public calamities, we of course have had our changes and trials. How many of those familiar faces which were to be seen among us two years ago, are seen no more, leaving many a once happy dwelling shrouded in gloom. The year just closed especially, soon brought a heavy weight of sorrow in the loss of the ill-fated "City of Boston" to many families of our city, with whom the sympathy was univer-

sal. And in our own Congregation, we have had to lament the loss of many of our members.—not the old and infirm only, but rather more of an age at which death is generally supposed to be far away, thus enforcing the Divine caution upon us all, to “watch” and be ever ready for an early call. Thus “the Lord’s voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the word and who hath appointed it.” May such be the use that we all make of the Lord’s dealings around us and with us. “When thy judgments are abroad, saith the prophet, the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness.” Finally, dear brethren one and all, “hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering.” “Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.” Be ever looking unto Jesus, as the way, the truth and the life. After all our long years of preaching and of hearing, it comes to this at last, “are we Christ’s or are we not.” Have we His Spirit in our hearts, and its fruits in our lives. Have we come as poor sinners to His Cross and to that alone for pardon, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? He will soon come to take an account of his servants. Examine yourselves, then, whether you are ready. Discard false teachers, and false doctrines are abroad even here. Avoid them. Cling to your church with unwavering affection, because in her services and articles and creeds she clings to Christ, teaching us that we are justified only by faith in Him, freely, and not for our own merits or deservings—holding forth to us the words of Life, following us with wholesome food from our cradles to our graves, and there leaving our mortal bodies with the cheering promise that He who is the resurrection and the life will not forget us, but will reunite us by and bye, if joined to Him by a living faith to the Spirits that meanwhile have lived with Himself in the higher world. True, your church cannot save you. But she would lead you to Him who can. You need no better earthly helps or outward means than that church supplies. Love her much, but love Christ more. He must be exalted far above all on earth. I trust I can love all those by whatever name distinguished, who love Him. But at the same time I more especially prefer that Church in which I and mine have been born, baptized and nurtured, in which I have so long been preaching the Gospel of Salvation, and in which as I have lived, so I hope to die. And I hope it is no bigotry (which I abhor) to commend her to your unceasing regard and support, and your regular and devout

attendance, always however, guarding against the "form of godliness without the power thereof." May the Lord turn these imperfect lines written by snatches from manifold engagements, to the good and comfort of at least some of you, and may He bless you and keep you all, and make His face to shine upon you now and evermore is the fervent prayer of

Your affectionate friend and Pastor,

J. C. COCHRAN.

Halifax, Jan'y., 1871.

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EXTRACTS from my Pastoral Journal for 1869 and 1870 :—

Visits.....	5,393.
Public Services.....	517.
Baptisms.....	218.
Funerals.....	76.
Marriages.....	110.

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NOTE.—As to the doctrine of the Church of England on the Sacraments.

*Article 28th.* "The body of Christ is given, taken and eaten, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is Faith."

Again,

"It is hereby declared that no adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental bread or wine there bodily received, or unto any corporal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood. For the Sacramental bread and wine remain still in their natural substances, and therefore may not be adored (for that were Idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians) and the natural body and blood of Christ are in heaven and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body, to be at one time in more places than one."—*Book of Common Prayer—end of Communion Service.*

