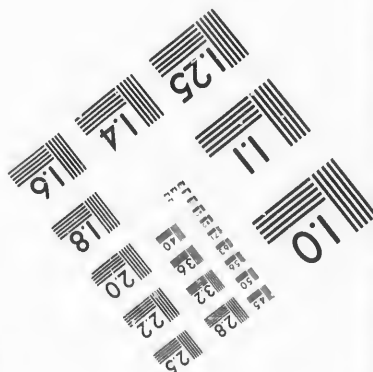
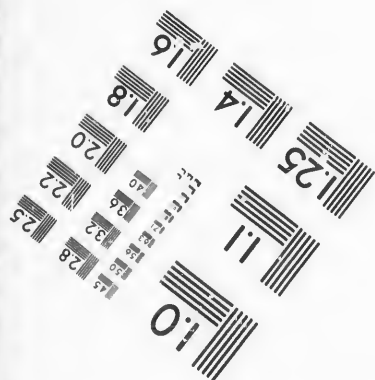
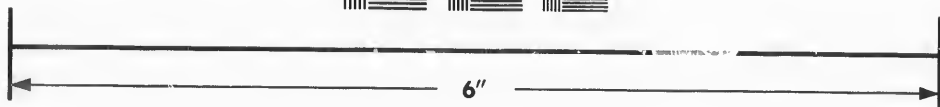
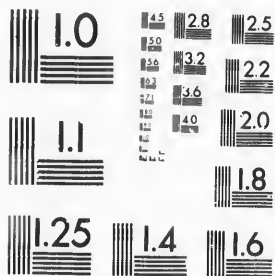


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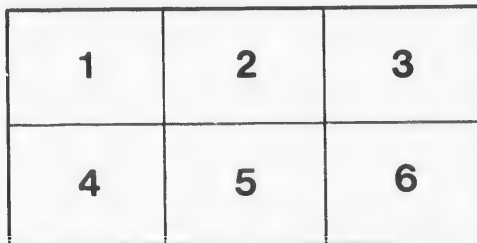
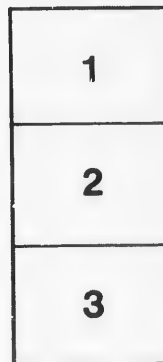
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1865
A
NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

TO THE
CONGREGATION

OF THE
BISHOP'S CHAPEL,

HALIFAX, N. S.

HALIFAX:
JAMES BOWES & SONS, HOLLIS STREET.
1865.

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NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE BISHOP'S FREE CHAPEL:

My dear friends,—

Brought by the good providence of a gracious God to the commencement of another year, I feel a desire to address a few words, as I have done on previous occasions, to you who are under my pastoral charge. Not that I have any thing to say unto you, more or better than you hear from the pulpit from Sabbath to Sabbath, or in our private meetings at your own houses. But, knowing that all this is too apt to make but a short stay in our memories, I would endeavour, if it may be, to impress more firmly on your minds, some of the plain and everlasting truths which it is my duty at all times to inculcate—with earnest prayer, that the Spirit of God, the only infallible Teacher, may graft them inwardly upon your hearts. I am the more encouraged to do this from the results of past experience, proving the advantage of presenting in a more permanent form, the advice and exhortations which are orally delivered in the course of our ministrations. They will be read, not only while the writer lives and moves from day to day, but, probably with even deeper interest, when he is dead and gone.

While residing, as I did for twenty-seven years, in my never-to-be-forgotten parish of Lunenburg, to which the full vigor and freshness of my early missionary life was given, I several times put forth such pastoral addresses as the present, and when I have since paid my annual visits to my old friends there, I have frequently found within the leaves of their bibles carefully preserved, those mementoes of our affectionate connexion as pastor and people.

Two years have passed away since my last New Year's

address to you, dear brethren and sisters of the congregation of the Bishop's Chapel. Many an eye that rested upon those humble lines is now wasting in the grave. Many a soul for which they were penned is now in the everlasting world, sealed up unto the judgment of the great day. By these, what I have now to say, can be "marked, learned, and inwardly digested" no more. But ye, beloved, are yet in the land of the living, where you may still "grow in grace and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." * To you it is my desire still to be useful, if by this or any other means, I may through God's blessing, help you forward in the narrow path which leadeth unto life. Each one of you, I would still strive to present, through our common Saviour, faultless with exceeding joy, † when He comes to take account of His servants. Mindful of the rapid flight of time in which we are all to "make our calling and election sure," ‡—mindful how soon that interesting relation, now subsisting between us, may be snapped by the hand of death, which severs every earthly tie—I would endeavour so to use what remains of our day of grace, that when it is over, you and I who have so often worshipped together here, may be permitted to join in the endless adoration and praise of the Church triumphant above. It behooves us, who stand on the walls of our Zion, and who watch for your souls, to be "instant in season and out of season," § in the solemn duties committed to our charge. Especially as we advance in years, should we the more earnestly "take heed to our ministry, that we may fulfil it," || remembering how short our day of work is. I trust I am endeavouring to realise this more and more, as it becomes one who has been permitted to live more than sixty-six years, and to spend more than forty of these (alas! how unprofitably) in the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle to stir you up by putting you in remembrance:

* 2 Peter, III. 18. † Jude 24. ‡ 2 Pet., I. 10.

§ 2 Tim., IV. 2. || Col. IV. 17.

knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle,—
moreover. I will endeavour that you may be able after my
decease to have these things always in remembrance.*

If e'er my heart forget
Your welfare or your woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow!

Let me remind you, in the first place, of the abundant mercies which we enjoy as a people and as individuals, and which ought to constrain us to "present ourselves, our souls and bodies, as a holy and lively sacrifice unto God, which is our reasonable service;" † and yet it is to be feared, that in the abundance of the gifts we are too apt to forget the Gracious Giver. Blessings are daily flowing in upon us and around us, in such a copious and uninterrupted stream, that there is danger of our forgetting the great Fountain from which they all proceed. We require "line upon line and precept upon precept," ‡ in this respect as in others. Yet a glance would seem enough to convince us of the numberless causes we have for gratitude to our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Surely "we have a goodly heritage." § "Our lot is cast in that blest land where God is truly known." We dwell in a peaceful and a happy land—none more so, I believe, in the wide wide world. The climate temperate, and so conducive to health as to be the frequent refuge from pestilence to the inhabitants of southern and more sunny regions. No earthquakes swallowing up whole cities. No sweeping and destructive hurricanes, such as we read of lately in India. The government over us, so mild and gentle, under the sway of the best of Queens, that we hardly know we are governed at all. Protected by the Army and Navy of England, not only without cost, but actually with great profit to ourselves. Enacting our own laws, which are ably and impartially administered, in the case of the poorest no less than of the richest. Every man's house his castle, which no arbitrary power can violate, while he sits securely under his own vine and fig tree, no man making him afraid. In regard to religion, no country is more favoured. Every man can worship God

* 2 Peter, I. 12. 14.

† Rom. XII. 1.

‡ Isaiah XXVIII. 10.

§ Psalm XXI. 6.

according to his own conscience. Ours is a land of Sabbath, and Churches and Bibles, and Sunday Schools,—of charities for the poor, the aged, the orphan, the deaf and dumb, and of that blessed asylum where they “minister to the mind diseased, and pluck from the heart the rooted sorrow.” And as to our soil, it produces enough and to spare. Our waters swarm with fish innumerable. Our rocks yield the precious metals in abundance, rivalling California or Australia. Out of our hills our people dig something better than brass,* namely—that which not only warms the dwellings of man but keeps the commerce and factories of the world in motion. And then, best of all, we have PEACE in our borders. No contending armies trample down our smiling fields,—burn our flourishing towns and beautiful villages,—desecrate our churches,—render families homeless,—murder our wives and children,—and apply the torch to our barns, filled from floor to ceiling with the fruits of the earth, which God had blessed and man had reaped and gathered in; all which you know has been the lot of thousands in the neighbouring scenes of horrible warfare. Our favoured land has thus far been a stranger to evils like these. “Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.” But let us not be high minded but fear.† Not for our righteousness, but according to His unmerited mercy, has God been pleased to spare us. Perhaps He is only letting us alone for a little while, to see if we will bring forth more fruit or no.‡ Let us not try His forbearance and long suffering too far. Let us humble ourselves before Him for our manifold shortcomings as a community and individually, “and show forth His praise not only with our lips but in our lives, by giving up ourselves more entirely to His service.” Notwithstanding all our mercies and all our religious advantages, iniquity abounds in our midst. Too many are swearers, Sabbath breakers, impure, hinderers and slanderers of God’s word. Intemperance still has its deluded votaries by the hundred or the thousand,—leading numbers every year to an untimely

* Deut. VIII. † Psalm CXLIV 15. Romans XI.

‡ General Thanksgiving.

end,—blasting the fondest hopes of parents and friends, and robbing society of many who might otherwise be its brightest ornaments. I earnestly entreat you, my dear friends, to come forward and aid in the expulsion of this great engine of Satan from amongst us. The seven devils that were in Mary Magdalene cannot have been worse than the demon of intemperance,—the love of intoxicating drink which possesses too many of our old and young. Let us pray the Lord to cast this APOLLYON out from our land. His name is Legion,* for *many* are the vices and abominations with which he invests the soul of his victim, rendering him willing to “commit all iniquity with heediness.”† There is no depth to which that monster vice may *not* lead its slave, even to robbery, suicide, and murder itself. Is there not a cause, then, for every christian to gird himself to the fight with “this enemy of all righteousness”?‡ Shall we stand by and see the flower of our community blasted by this fell-destroyer, and not lift up our hand against him? Shall we say in the spirit of Cain, “am I my brother’s keeper?” Let him go on as he likes, I can’t help it.” Rather let us try what our advice, entreaty, and above all, our example, may do. “Let us exhort one another daily while it is called to-day lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”§ “A word spoken in due season, how good is it.”|| Let us deny ourselves what we perhaps might temperately use, for the sake of some weak brother who has not equal power over himself, according to the spirit of St. Paul, who said, “it is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumblith or is offended or is made weak.”¶ If you are thus enabled to secure one single soul from the road to ruin, surely you will reap a rich reward, far, far, exceeding the cost of your self-denial. I have been a temperance man for thirty-three years, i. e. I have for that period abstained, for the sake of others, from what I might have used innocently myself; and though, in other respects, when I look back I find, alas! too much to lament. I have ever had cause to be thankful that I was led to take this

* Rev. IX. 11. Mark V. 9. † Eph. IV. 19. ‡ Acts XIII. 10.
§ Genesis IV. 9. || Heb. III. 13. Prov. XV. 23. ¶ Romans XIV. 21.

method of successfully helping many a weak brother into the right road. I hope you may feel it your duty and your delight to do the same, and you will not be sorry for it when you come to die. "Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days."* Perhaps the fruit of your exertions in this, or other ways, may appear only when you are passed away.

Turning to our own Congregation, we find many causes of thankfulness. Through the goodness of God we have enjoyed, uninterruptedly, the public ministrations of the Church, since I last addressed you; and our only difficulty has been, to find room for the crowds which press in, each Sunday, to join in our worship. But we hope that, by God's blessing, this difficulty will ere long be removed, by the erection of a suitable building of brick or stone, and of sufficient capacity to contain at least twice our present numbers. Some noble contributions have already been obtained; and I have no doubt, that a work so manifestly designed to promote the glory of God and the spiritual welfare of the poor and the stranger, and indeed of the community at large, will be so blest of Him, as to meet with merited support. I trust, especially, that you, who have for nine years, through the kindness of your Bishop, enjoyed the benefits of a Free Church for yourselves and your families, will now show your estimation of such a privilege, by contributing, to the very utmost of your ability, to the great and good object which he has taken in hand. "If you have much (I know that this is not the case generally with you) give plenteously. If you have little, do your diligence gladly to give of that little, not grudgingly nor of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."† If there be a willing mind, there ought to be, in the aggregate, a very respectable amount contributed by our present congregation, to this building fund, especially when it is known that it may be paid by instalments in two years. I hope you will all look to this matter at once, and conscientiously set apart such portion of your earnings as you can spare, for what is to benefit you and your children in all time coming. It will encourage others to help you if you are found helping yourselves. It will be a great com-

* Eccles. XI. 1. † II. Cor. IX. 7.

fort to me, in the closing years of my ministry, if I am permitted to see, in place of the "hired house" in which we have hitherto met, a substantial edifice of our own, and to find myself in it, breaking the bread of life to an increased number of anxious followers of the Lord,—“rich and poor meeting together”* before Him, on equal terms, without money and without price. Meanwhile, dear brethren, continue to come, with unfailing regularity to *Salem's Courts*, where I trust not a few have 'ere this, found a blessing to their souls. Otherwise, we have “run in vain and laboured in vain.”† Come to both services if you can. I have often spoken of the neglect, by some, of the morning of the Lord's day. Again I would remind you of the loss you sustain, and of the injury you do unto God, if you absent yourselves from His church in the prime of His day, and only put him off with an hour at its close. “Remember to keep holy THE Sabbath day,” the whole, and not a part of it merely. Of course I do not allude to those, who are unavoidably hindered by the care of their families from attending both services. But let none of you think you do your duty to your God and His Church, and to your own souls, if you willingly lounge away the early Sabbath morn, and begin the sacred work of the day, when darkness is setting in. I believe some are kept at home because they have to prepare the meal which ought to have been got ready on the Saturday. Let your rule be, *never to leave anything to be done on Sunday that might have been done the day before*. Remember too, that your servants have souls to save as well as you, and that you are bound to avoid putting more upon them on the Lord's day than is “just and equal.”‡ I am afraid that there are many domestics in this city, who are never allowed the opportunity of attending the morning service in our churches. Then, again, our Wednesday night service might be much better observed than it is. I have always felt that such a pause in the business of the world, midway between the Sundays, helps to keep the heart from being overcharged with the cares of life, and tends to preserve the impressions produced by the exercises of the pre-

* Prov. XXII. 2. † Phil. II. 16. ‡ Col. IV. 9.

vious Lord's day. And such, I find, is the experience of many who attend on the week days. Let me hope that the New year will find more of you thus seeking in God's house the renewal of your religious feelings, amid the bustle and engagements of your daily life, which are so apt to blunt the edge of your affections for better things. Suffer the word of exhortation also, in reference to the holy Communion. True, our communicants increase every year; but feeling the sacredness of the duty and the greatness of the privilege of doing as our blessed Lord has commanded, almost with his dying breath, in remembrance of his cross and passion, and his precious blood-shedding; feeling, too, that, leaving this undone, we lack a most important and indispensable item, in the work of our salvation—I cannot cease to put you in mind of your duty in this particular also. Where are those who have been confirmed at various times in our Chapel? Many have not yet "returned to give glory to God,"* and seek strength to perform their vows, by closer communion with the great author of spiritual life. How often do we say to you, in the beautiful words of the Church, "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 will be partakers of this holy communion."† But, alas, too many hear these searching calls in vain, and we see the backs of far more who turn away from the heavenly feast, than faces of those who remain. May the Lord hasten the time when we shall no longer lament that "so few come to the solemn feasts"‡ of the Church, and may this new-born year be a witness of the desired improvement in this respect also. But while thus urging you to greater attention to outward duties, I trust I will not be misunderstood as dwelling too much on the "form of godliness,"§ to the neglect of its life and power. I hope I need not say that spiritual, vital godliness, is our constant theme; and you will bear me witness, I think, that from our pulpit "Christ crucified" is held up as your only foundation, His righteousness as your only sufficient robe, and His spirit as all essential to every thought, word and work of your whole

* Luke XXII. 18. † Comm. Office. ‡ Sam. I. 4. § Tim. III. 5.

lives. Without this, all outward observances will be as "the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal."* But still, we *must* have the outward form in our public intercourse with God, to give expression to the inward spirit, with which He imbues our souls, and thus we may "glorify God with our bodies and our spirits which are His."† And now, dear friends, be mindful of the three great things,—Death. Judgment and Eternity,—the greatest that can engage the thoughts of mortal man. Prepare to meet them! To this end watch and pray,‡ and then you will be ready for anything. What God hath joined together we must not put asunder. Begin, continue, and end each day of this new year, and of all that follow it, with prayer to the Father of lights. You can never prosper, for time or eternity, if you neglect this great privilege, which Christ has purchased for us. God is more ready to give than we are to ask. And pray in your *families*; it will be to them as a morning and evening sermon; it will promote regularity and love in your household; it may influence generations to come; it will bring down the favor of God, who "blesseth the habitation of the just."§ At every meal, let that blessing be invoked, and thanks given to the great Provider. Would that every house in this city were an house of prayer. Then "the Lord would keep the city,"|| and watchmen would be needed no more. And "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."¶ Search the Scriptures."¶ In these days of rebuke and blasphemy stick to your Bibles. That book is "given by inspiration of God."¹ It is the charter of all our hopes for eternity. It is our only safeguard through the snares of this sinful world. It is a "light to our feet and as a lamp to our paths."² It is TRUE as the God who gave it. It is "more precious than rubies, and all the things that can be named are not to be compared unto it."³ Its saving truths will outlive the world, and accompany us through eternity; hold it fast; cherish it in your souls; devoutly read it every day of every year; and do this every one of you, "old men and maidens, young men and

* Cor. XIII. 1. † Cor. XI. 2. ‡ Matt. XXVI. 41.

§ Psalm CXXVII. 10. || Col. III. 16. ¶ Prov. II. 33.

(1) II. Tim. III. 16. (2) Prov. III. 15. (3) Psalm CXIX. 105.

children."* Let no scoffs or jibes make you ashamed of your bible, or afraid to read it, lest its author be ashamed of you in the day when the books shall be opened for judgment of your souls.† That blessed book will never die. It has survived the attacks of the infidel in ages past. It will outlive them still. It is translated now into 150 languages, and goes forth by millions for the conversion of the world. Thank God for your Bibles!

In concluding these plain and unpretending pages, which may be the last that I shall be permitted to send among you, for your edification, allow me to say one word to each of the classes under which you are all comprised. To my older brethren, who, like myself, are reminded by grey hairs, if not by our infirmities, that our race is nearly run, I would say, "gird up the loins of your mind,"‡ trim your lamps, look back, for cause of humiliation, forward for awakening and solemn subjects of thought, and upward to the Lamb of God, whose blood alone can wash away the shortcomings of the long years that are gone, and inspire the hope of acceptance for your souls. "Be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." My younger friends, of whom so many of both sexes throng our Chapel, "be sober minded, fulfilling your duties, as sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, as these are laid down in Holy Scripture."§

Parents! "bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Leave them not to themselves, as too many do, but train them by precept and example (the most powerful teaching) in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it. Insubordination, disobedience to parents, self-will, restiveness under proper authority, are too prevalent among us, and they are evils to be traced, perhaps, to the too great slackness of parental control. The sons of Eli made themselves vile *because he restrained them not*. See that your children fail not in their attendance at the Sunday school, and at Church; and keep them, as much as possible, from that worst of all schools—the streets—full as, alas! these are, of sights, and sounds, and companions, destructive of all that is good.

* Psalm CXLVIII. 12.

† Rev. XX. 12. ‡ Titus II. 2. § Ibid 6.

Husbands and wives! Do not forget your mutual vows, to love and to cherish, in sickness and in health, even until death. Aim at a connexion, not merely for the few days of this mortal life, but for the endless ages of eternity. Be helpers in the road to heaven,—to which end it would be conducive to read over, now and then, that beautiful service which consecrated your union, perhaps scores of years ago. And, for all of you, old and young, married and single, my heart's desire and prayer to God, is, that you may be saved. I would have you all, wholesome examples, in every relation of life, lovers of your country, lovers of one another, adorning the doctrine of God, your Saviour, in all things. But, above all, I most ardently desire that each of you, whose eyes are turned towards me, in our Chapel, from Sunday to Sunday, may there be trained for Heaven. I often, in all seriousness, ask myself the question, as I see you passing out of those doors to your homes—"Have these dear people been duly fed to-day? Has even *one* good and christian thought been awakened in their souls? And are any now carrying away from this sanctuary of God, one profitable impression? Ours is the duty of sowing the seed, yours it is to see to it that you be "doers of the word, and not hearers only."

May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord lift up the light of His countenance, and make His face to shine upon, and give you peace, now and for evermore, is the earnest prayer of

Your affectionate minister,

J. C. COCHIRAN.

HALIFAX, New Year's Day, 1865.

The Bishop's Free Chapel in Argyle Street (Salem) was opened on Sunday 2nd September, 1855. The following statement of duties since performed, in connexion with it, may be interesting to the reader, and will shew the practical results of this first experiment of the Free Church system in Halifax:—

	Baptisms.	Burials.	Marriages.	Pastoral Visits.	Public Services.
Total to the end of 1862, } as in my last address }	523	172	76	12,992	1818
In 1863.....	101	31	14	1,952	207
In 1864.....	93	34	32	2,211	288
	<u>717</u>	<u>237</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>17,155</u>	<u>2313</u>
Communicants in 1856.....					31
Do. Dec. 31, 1864.....					200
Sunday Scholars on the books.....					270
No. of Teachers, male					10
Do. female.....					15

H Y M N .
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Time hastens on ; ye longing saints
Now raise your voices high,
And magnify that sovereign love
Which shows salvation nigh.

As time departs, salvation comes,
Each moment brings it near ;
Then welcome each declining day,
Welcome each closing year.

Not many years their course shall run,
Not many mornings rise,
Ere all its glories stand revealed
To our transported eyes.

