

## ADDRESS FROM THE SESSION.

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*To the Members of the Gould Street Presbyterian Church.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—We again address you, according to our custom, at the close of another year of our congregational history. The year has been one of unusually severe trial to many of you. Even the outward aspect of the congregation shows us how many circles death has recently entered ; what bitter sorrow bringing with it, is known only to God. The tenderest ties which unite men have been severed ; in more than one case with a suddenness almost overwhelming. Many lives, not only full of promise, but, as it might have appeared to us, peculiarly needful to the members of their families, have been cut short, and the circles which their affection cheered, or their piety hallowed, left to mourn their loss. More than one of our own number have shared with you in these trying experiences. We can on this account all the better extend, as through this address we do, our sympathies to those of you who have felt the pressure of adversity or the bitterness of bereavement, while we commend you to Him “who comforteth those that are cast down,” and pray on your behalf “that you may be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all *patience, and long-suffering* with joyfulness.”

We are thankful that if we have had to witness during these past months the occurrence among you of very severe forms of trial, we have also been permitted to see the power of God's grace in sustaining under them, thereby lightening the pressure of afflictions that had else been all but insupportable. The calm and even joyous trust in the Saviour, with which some, who are to take part with us no longer in the worship of earth, have yielded up life, is not less a matter of devout thankfulness to us, as it must be to you also.

We are surely taught by these ever-recurring bereavements, not, indeed, to regard with less affection those whom God has given us to love, but to be increasingly solicitous that our affection for them should be of a Christian kind,—that while here we should be *one in Christ*. The lesson is also solemnly brought home to us : “Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.”