

Pastoral Letter.

TO THE MEMBERS AND ADHERENTS OF
THE ST. GABRIEL CHURCH.

My dear brethren,

Reviewing the past year, I feel profoundly moved by its events and experiences. The Lord's hand lay heavily upon us as a congregation. Many homes were saddened by the departure of loved ones from them. Not a few of those who have been taken away were of my own age, and had been long associated with me in the anxieties and labours of my pastorate. I cannot but feel keenly their loss. But I must not murmur, since it is the Lord that hath done it. Rather am I bound to give thanks to God for sparing them so long, and enabling them to take so active a part with me in christian service.

Apart from the heavy losses by death sustained by the congregation, the past year has been one in which I have had much encouragement in my work. The very sorrows of our people have helped to beget a spirit of earnestness in church circles, which has been a wonderful help to me; for every influence prevailing in the pews reacts upon the pulpit. I have been very sensible of an eager desire on the part of many of our people to come more fully under the powers of the world to come, and I have been borne up in my work by this consciousness. I count the year, therefore, as one of the most fruitful in my ministry. The closing months of 1899 will be hereafter probably cited as having witnessed a new departure in the character of the pastoral visiting of the congregation, and this has been one of the telling influences which have helped on the unusually satisfactory situation to which I have referred.

But it is to the circumstances which surround us in the new year upon which we have entered, that I wish specially to call attention. It ought to be regarded in every sense by us as "a red letter year." It is a privilege we enjoy whom God has called upon the stage of activity in the last year of the nineteenth century that we must not