

TO THE MEMBERS AND ADHERENTS OF ST. GABRIEL CHURCH.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Through the good hand of our God upon us, during the year 1886, I am able to address you in this Annual Report of the Congregation in a different strain from that which characterized my words to you, through this channel, for several years past.

The Lord hath done great things for us, on account of which we praise His Holy name.

The Centennial year gave us a double Jubilee, indeed. We had a delightful series of fraternal gatherings in our venerable Church in St. Gabriel Street, in the month of March last; and then our way was opened up to us most unexpectedly to enter in and take possession of this beautiful House of Prayer, without the worry and toil and heavy outlay attending the work of building a new Church, to which we have been looking forward for several years.

It was a delightful issue to our anxieties in this connection, when we were enabled to commence our Congregational life here on the 26th of September, 1886, the very next Sabbath after we took farewell of the old edifice in which our fathers and we had worshipped for nigh a Century.

There was a sinking of many hearts on Sabbath evening the 19th of September, 1886; but there was a corresponding uplifting on the evening of the 26th.

It has seldom been the lot of a Congregation to have its difficulties so easily and happily solved as ours have been. There were, indeed, misgivings in some minds as to the wisdom of the step taken in the purchase of this property; but I think all are now fully satisfied that we have been singularly fortunate in securing it, on terms that will not be at all burdensome to our finances.

The success that has immediately followed our removal to these premises has justified the sanguine views of those who took the lead in the movement to acquire the property. And now it remains for us all to put our shoulders to the wheel, and make the best possible use of our advantages of situation and other favorable circumstances, to extend the Congregation's influence in the community.

Let it become a greater power for good than ever before. The first concern of every one of you should be to grow in grace yourselves, and be constant in your waiting upon the Lord in His house, at all the seasons fixed for His worship. A most gratifying improvement has already taken place in this regard; the Lord make it grow. The children have now a recognized place in every morning service; see that they are allowed to take advantage of it.