

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.
NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS.
ADDRESSES AND PAPERS
PRESENTED AT THE DIAMOND
JUBILEE, 1827-1902, MAY 11-14**

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First Congregational Church. North Adams, Massachusetts. Addresses and Papers Presented at the Diamond Jubilee, 1827-1902, May 11-14 by William Lawrence Tenney

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WILLIAM LAWRENCE TENNEY

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NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS

ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

PRESENTED AT THE

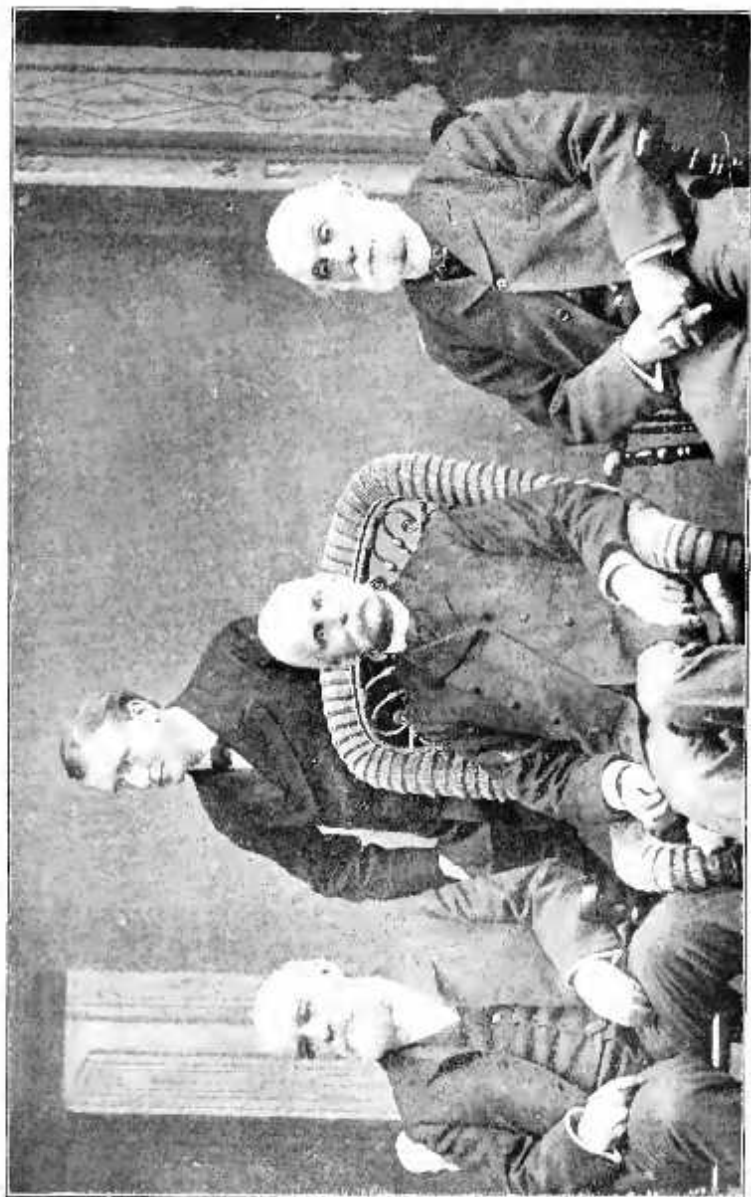
DIAMOND JUBILEE

1827 - 1902

MAY 11-14

"Remember thy congregation, which thou has purchased
of old; this Mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt."

[1903?]
 MBS



Giddien

Tenney

Pratt

Manger

PASTORS PRESENT AT THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

INTRODUCTION

Long must the memory of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the North Adams Congregational Church linger as an inspiring influence in the hearts of all who participated in it.

Careful preparations had been made for the celebration of the anniversary. A committee had been appointed over two years before to gather materials for a history of the church. As the time of the anniversary drew near special committees were appointed to look after details and they did this work most faithfully. The weather was ideal throughout the anniversary week. The Berkshires were clad in their freshest and most beautiful garb as if to welcome our returning friends. Every living pastor of the church was present. From widely different sections former members of our church family returned. The days were crowned with the happiness which comes from the renewal of old ties of friendship and affection.

The feeling of the community and of the denomination at large can be best appreciated in the light of the following extracts from the local and denominational press, which the anniversary committee request me to insert in this introduction: The North Adams *Daily Transcript* of Saturday, May 10, said editorially:

"The event will be one to command attention not only of the religious world, but of every denomination and those of no denomination in North Adams. The history of the city has been closely associated with that of the religious

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societies which have grown up with it, and the city cannot afford to underestimate the influence thus exerted.

"Much will be said during the celebration of the ability and fame of those who have been at the head of the church, of the pastors who, both here and in the churches to which they have gone from here, have taken high rank in the religious life and thought of the country. But most of all there should be remembered at this jubilee time those who, sitting in the pews on Sunday, have taken part in the business life of the community on the other days of the week. For it is the influence of the church on the daily life of the community that makes the anniversary an event to be heeded by North Adams as a whole.

"Few communities have been built up more exclusively by men who were devoting a part of their attention to the church as well as to other interests than North Adams. At the present time to a large extent those who are prominent in the community life are prominent also in church work. It is this which gives the event so much more than a denominational significance, and makes it in the broadest sense a community affair."

An editorial in *The Evening Herald* for May 12 used these words:

"The anniversary celebration of the Congregational church is of interest and importance to the entire community.

"If there is one thing that strikes a stranger who comes to this city more forcibly than another it is the existence of a concord and co-operation among the various church denominations, such as is seen hardly anywhere else in New England.

"If we are not mistaken, this is largely due to Gladden, to Munger, to Coyle and to Teuney. If this friendly feeling continues to grow as it has in the past, in 75 years more all denominations, Catholic and Protestant, will be united.

"Another thought that strikes us forcibly in a hurried glance at this diamond jubilee is that whilst in itself that

period compared to the breadth of time itself is like a grain of sand on the seashore, yet it comprehends a most momentous epoch in history. When this Congregational church was established, communication between towns was by means of common dirt roads. Seventy-five years ago was a time of unhygienic dwellings; of bungling surgery and unalleviated pain; of human slavery; of toothless old age; of unlighted towns; of ox-wagon teams and stages; of tallow dips. Magazines, books, carpets, curtains, pictures, gas, coal and bathing appliances were luxuries. The wonders of electricity were unknown. In most respects there had been little advance over the centuries and centuries preceding. Thus the 75 years which the church has existed have been the most momentous of any similar length of time in the world's history.

"Another thought that perhaps may be appropriate to the occasion is the fact that the church has not always had smooth sailing. It has seen its troubles, its hardships and its extremities. And in the case of institutions, like that of individuals, these develop character. The church or the person who has always had material prosperity knows very little about life and is scarcely fit for its duties and responsibilities.

"And one more thought. Few cities indeed have had the rare advantage of having both a Munger and a Gladden in their midst. Some have had the one, and great cities of course have many preachers of the highest eloquence, but none can boast of having two such gifted men. Their enlightened knowledge and teaching and their progressive thought have made its impress upon the entire city and no one can fail to observe it. Moreover the present pastor is a man of the same pattern as were the others. It is a record that has hardly a parallel.

"One more thought and the last. This anniversary celebration is another proof of the truth of the remark that the good men do lives after them and is not always interred with their bones as Mark Antony said. The portraits on the walls of the church and the tender allusions to former

church workers are the best evidences of the value of a well spent life. These honored names left something better and more lasting than wealth and it is gratifying to know that their work has not been forgotten.

"North Adams ought to be proud of the Congregational church ; proud of its history, of its faith ; proud of its work under difficulties ; and proud of the men it has had as pastors, no less than of its broad and scholarly present pastor, whose heart beats for humanity, Rev. Mr. Tenney."

The *Congregationalist* for May 26 printed a picture of the four living pastors upon its cover and under the title "A Notable Church and Pastoral Succession" said :

"When a church has builded itself into the life of a community to the extent that is true of the Congregational church in North Adams, Mass., its diamond jubilee becomes an occasion from which all the churches of our order may draw wholesome lessons. Elsewhere we report it more fully, and on our cover page we place a picture, taken last week, of all the living ministers who have stood in pastoral relations to the church. Any church might be expected to prosper which has had in succession as its leaders Washington Gladden, Lewellyn Pratt, Theodore T. Munger, the lamented and brilliant John Patterson Coyle and William L. Tenney. Differing widely in their personal characteristics, these men were one in their large conception of the function of a church. As a result the North Adams church has exerted a continuous and powerful influence upon the city. The hospital, the library and the rare spirit of Christian fraternity among all denominations are due in no small part to the breadth of the faith and the constancy of ministry to human need which this church has always illustrated. It is not a case where ministers alone have made the church strong and useful. It has been blessed with good timber in the pews in such men as Judge Robinson, Colonel Bracewell and Deacon Perry. The North Adams church stands today as a convincing proof of the possibility of yok-

ing liberal theological opinions with warm spiritual life and intense zeal for the world's salvation."

Not alone will this anniversary volume be a visible memorial of this most important event in the history of the church. The children of Dr. Yeomans, Dr. Russell, Dr. Crawford, and Rev. Mr. Paine have presented their fathers' pictures to the church and the pictures of the remaining pastors will soon hang upon the walls of the chapel as a token of the love of those to whom they ministered.

A beautiful memorial window to Dr. Yeomans, illustrating his favorite text, "Behold the Lamb of God," has been generously given by his one surviving child, Mrs. Louisa Yeomans Boyd of Harrisburg, Penn., whose gracious presence at the anniversary was such a source of happiness to those who revered the memory of her father.

Mr. John Parkhill of Fitchburg, as a token of his appreciation of his visit to his old church, has presented the church with an individual communion service.

But with all these abiding tokens of the chastened joys of anniversary week, let us pray that the stronger faith and completer service of the church which is to be, may be the most enduring memorial of the heroic faith and Christ-like deeds of the men and women whose lives have been made so real to us by means of our Diamond Jubilee.

May the record which this volume contains awaken in our children not only a righteous pride in the church of their fathers but also courage to battle for the church of their children.

WILLIAM LAWRENCE TENNEY.

The Parsonage, North Adams, Mass.

November 20, 1902.