

**THE BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH AND SOCIETY OF
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT,
JUNE 12TH AND 13TH, 1895**

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The bi-centennial celebration of the First Congregational church and society of Bridgeport, Connecticut, June 12th and 13th, 1895 by Charles Ray Palmer

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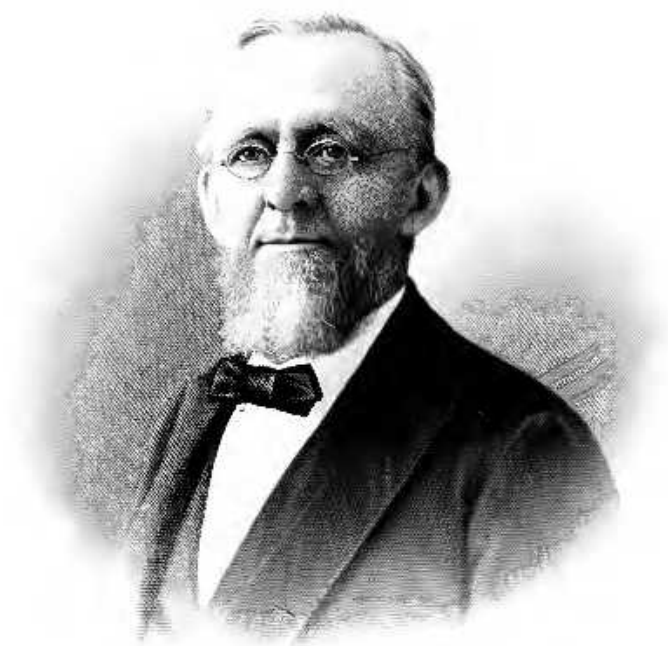
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PREFACE.



The First Church and Society of Bridgeport—originally the Parish of Stratfield—looked forward to the two-hundredth anniversary of its organization for some years previous with increasing interest. The celebration was carefully planned and most successfully carried out. The decorations of the church were extremely effective; the weather was perfect; the attendance of interested and sympathetic audiences was from beginning to end as great as could be accommodated; the music—rendered by the combined choirs of the First, the Second, the Park Street Congregational Churches, and the Presbyterian Church—was admirable; in short, the occasion seemed to those most concerned to be a delightful one in every particular. It appeared desirable to preserve a permanent record of it. As far as practicable, to do this is the purpose of the present volume.

One feature of the celebration was of necessity an incident of the occasion only. By dint of much research and labor, and the contribution of many willing hands, a remarkable loan-collection of relics was gathered and exhibited in the Chapel. The Committee take this opportunity of tendering their hearty thanks to all who lent their aid toward this most valuable and interesting illustration of the history which the celebration commemorated.

The proceedings in the several services were stenographically reported by Mr. F. G. Fowler. The lists of members have been compiled by the sub-committee constituted for the purpose—among whom it is not invidious to name Mr. Richard B. Cogswell. While the result is avowedly and

inevitably incomplete, his indefatigable industry has accomplished a task to which few could have proved equal, which many will count invaluable. This volume has been edited for the committee of arrangements, at their request, by its chairman. The frontispiece has been added by their direction. The editor hopes that the result of his endeavors will be accepted by the dear friends he has served for so many years with the gracious consideration which he has always experienced at their hands, and that one abiding fruitage of the Bi-Centennial may be an increased consciousness on the part of the citizens of Bridgeport of the inspiration to be derived from its honorable history.

CHARLES RAY PALMER.

New Haven, Sept. 10, 1875.

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