

## Introductory

The Committee to whom was committed the task of preparing this historical sketch of the congregation, in issuing it in Souvenir Form, do so in the hope that it may be of interest to those who have served the congregation in the past, and an inspiration to those who shall carry on the work in the future.

The Committee wish to express their appreciation of the help that has been given by those who knew the congregation in its beginning and who are still working in our midst.

Owing to the inability to find in full the earliest records of the congregation some important events and names may be omitted. For such omissions we ask forgiveness, as they were not intentional. We have endeavored to do the best with the material at hand.

## Fifty Years' History

THE parable of the mustard seed has been exemplified in the case of Presbyterianism in Forest. Starting in very small beginnings she has been steadily growing for over fifty years, her umbrageous branches forming a shady relief for many a weary soul along the highway of life. Who can measure the mighty influences, the hallowed associations, the sacred, tender memories that have swept from Presbyterianism in Forest during the last fifty years, into the souls of men and women, boys and girls, who are here, there, everywhere, on Earth and in Heaven? This calculation belongs to the mathematics of Heaven.

As far back as 1866 Presbyterianism in Forest was occasionally ministered to, by students from our colleges. The first meeting place was in a large frame building, used by all denominations of the time, situated on what is now the John Marshall property. There these sturdy Scotch Presbyterians poured forth their souls in worship, and praise to God, for his great loving kindness and tender mercies to them and loving care

over them in these early wilderness days. They were ministered to by such men as W. T. Murdock, Winters, Bruce, McLennan, James Cameron and McKay of Formosa.

In January 1868 the Rev. Robert Scott, of Camlachie, and the Rev. Peter Goodfellow, of Widder, now Thedford, met with the people and in accordance with the instructions of the Presbytery of London, organized the congregation of Forest, and in connection with it, and on the same date, the Congregation of MacKay settlement. The congregation began its career with a membership of twenty-four and of that first band there still remains residing in the town and vicinity, Mr. and Mrs. William Lochhead, Mr. William Scott, and Mrs. Neil McColl.

Other worthies, who, for the most part have departed from our midst, are to be found constituting the Presbyterianism of early days in Forest, such as:—

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Wichmann  
Mr. and Mrs. James Conklin  
Mr. and Mrs. James Ferguson  
Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Martin  
Mr. and Mrs. James McLaren  
Mr. and Mrs. John Sharpe  
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Bradley  
Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Buchanan