

The Teachers Monthly

Rev. E. Douglas Fraser, D.D., Editor
Rev. J. M. Duncan, D.D., Associate Editor

Vol. XXI.

Toronto, January, 1915

No. 1

COME OF AGE

The "volume number," changing at the beginning of each year, will remind its readers that the **TEACHERS MONTHLY** has now come of age. Vol. I. was issued in 1895, and this issue is the first number of Vol. XXI. The **HOME STUDY QUARTERLY**, which began its career along with the **TEACHERS MONTHLY**, has therefore also now reached its majority.

There was a Teachers Leaflet,—a little four page affair—and a two page Home Study Leaflet for a short time prior to 1895, but the growth and development of our Canadian Presbyterian Sunday School publications is practically comprised in these twenty-one years.

This growth and development sprang from beginnings, in one sense, quite insignificant, for the publications were small and the circulation quite limited. In another sense, the beginnings were most significant, for both as to the conception of the purposes of periodicals of this sort, and as to the ability with which these purposes were given expression, these publications were quite conspicuous from the first. Rev. Dr. T. F. Fotheringham, then minister of St. John's Church, St. John, N.B., now in California, was the originator and first editor. Dr. Fotheringham was the convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Sabbath Schools, and it was under the direction of this committee that the venture was made. It is interesting to turn back to the pages of the first volumes, already yellowing with the passage of time, and to find almost every most modern idea of Sunday School work embodied in them, including provision for the Home Department, Teacher Training, and home study and week-day work on the part of the Sunday School scholars.

Up to the time when these publications were undertaken, our Sunday Schools depended entirely on foreign sources for their Lesson materials. Dr. Fotheringham's ability and zeal brought our church to realize, on the one hand, the need of Lesson Helps of her own, and, on the other hand, the possibility of supplying the Lesson Helps required.

New periodicals are likely to cost in their first years more than they earn. Those of our church were no exception to the rule, and, in 1897, the General Assembly, as a measure of economy, transferred the struggling periodicals to the care of Rev. Dr. E. Scott, the Editor of the *Presbyterian Record*. Dr. Scott did a valiant year's work, and produced a small balance on the right side of the ledger. But, feeling the task of caring for these periodicals too heavy an addition to his duties in connection with the *Record*, he asked the General Assembly to appoint a Committee of Sabbath School Publications. This was done, and at the close of the year the work was transferred to Toronto and to its present management.

The problem before the new Committee was not an easy one, namely to develop the thirty-two page **TEACHERS MONTHLY** and the two **QUARTERLIES** and two Leaflets then printed into an adequate series of Lesson Helps for all the grades of our Sunday Schools, and also to institute an adequate series of Illustrated Papers; and this without any capital, or any financial assistance whatever: the development was to be done from the earnings, and from these alone. This arrangement, it may be mentioned, still holds.

It is not necessary to recount the stages of that development step by step. Sixteen years have passed. Our Sunday Schools and churches have stood by the Committee of Publications and have justified each forward step by their hearty cooperation. The teachers and scholars