

PREFACE TO VOLUME XIX.

The close of another volume, with which the Magazine completes its "teens," and the retirement of the present Editor, seem to constitute a fitting opportunity for recalling the salient points in its history, with which only a minority of its readers can be acquainted.

To begin at the beginning of Canadian Congregational Journalism :—There was published for two years, 1842 and 1843, at Montreal, a monthly periodical entitled the *Harbinger*, edited by Rev. J. J. Carruthers D.D., then pastor of Gosford Street Church. That gave place the next year to a more ambitious weekly, the *Christian Observer*, of which Rev. Richard Miles was editor, but which perished within a twelvemonth from too small an income and too great outgoings. Later on, an attempt was made by Rev. J. Roaf to establish a weekly at Toronto, *The Christian Statesman*, but it never saw the light. A similar fate befell *The Congregational Magazine*, projected by Mr. George E. Thomas of Toronto, with Rev. Dr. Lillie as editor.

At the first meeting of the amalgamated Congregational Union of Canada, in Montreal, June 1854, Rev. K. M. Fenwick, retiring Chairman, said in his address :—

"The want of a denominational organ has long been felt. At the very first meeting of the Congregational Association, which met in Hamilton, November, 1837—an Association which preceded the Union of Canada West—the subject was discussed, and declared by all present to be exceedingly desirable. Seventeen years have nearly elapsed since then. Ever since the thing has been kept in view. Why has it never become a fact? . . . With union, the thing will easily be done."

Thereupon, a Publication Committee was appointed, Rev. W. F. Clarke nominated as Editor, and in July, the first number of a semi-monthly 8-page quarto appeared from London, Ont. The Committee reporting a deficiency at the end of the year, special subscriptions were raised to cover it, but the Union felt compelled to decline further pecuniary responsibility. Individual pledges, however, were given to Mr. Clarke, and he consented to continue it for another year, changing the form to that of a newspaper. Before its close, however, being encumbered with the entire care of the undertaking, for the sake of which he had actually bought a printing office, he transferred the financial part of it to Mr. George E. Thomas, of Toronto, and the literary to Rev. F. H. Marling. At the close of the third year, Mr. Thomas retired, not without loss, and Mr. W. Mellish, of Brantford, took his place. He, too, was a loser, and at the end of the fourth year, June 1858, it was decided to change the semi-monthly newspaper into a