

CONGREGATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL AND PUBLISHING SOCIETY  
RECORDS, 1841-1917

21 inches

Restrictions: None

Accession No. 1993-11

Gift of the Board of Homeland Ministries and others

Congregational Library  
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by Barbara E. Austen

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Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society

Box 1

Series A. Administrative Records, 1841-1912

- Volume 1. Board of Managers/Directors Minutes, 1841-1891
- " 2. Board of Directors Minutes, 1891-1910
- " 3. Executive Committee Minutes, 1905-1906
- " 4. Executive Committee Minutes, 1906-1907
- " 5. Annual Meeting Minutes, 1841-1912
- Folder 1. Items removed from back cover, volume 5

Series B. Committee and Department Records, 1869-1910

- Volume 1. Missionary Committee Minutes, 1869-1889
- " 2. Publication Committee Minutes, 1873-1910
- " 3. Business Department. Business Manager Reports, 1896-1900
- " 4. Business Department. Business Manager Reports, 1900-1902

Box 2

Series C. Plant Transfer Records, 1908-1914

- Volume 1. Correspondence, proposals, financial statements, 1913
- Folder 1. Correspondence, proposals, 1914
- " 2-3. Financial Records, 1908-1914
- " 4. Printing Statistics, 1913-1914
- " 5. Blue print of printing plant, 1910 (stored in oversize)

Series D. Scrapbooks and Albums, 1892-1917

- Volume 1. Scrapbook, 1892-1917
- " 2. Photograph Album, 1900

## INTRODUCTION

This collection of records of the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society carries no provenance, with the exception of one volume. The bulk of the material was probably transferred to the Congregational Library some time after 1920, either in one body, or gradually over time. The transfer would have been natural as the library and the society had their offices in the same building. The most recently added volume, Missionary Committee minutes, was found at Pilgrim Place, a retirement community in California (probably among the papers of a former officer), given to the Board of Homeland Ministries, and then donated by the board to the library in September 1993.

## HISTORICAL NOTE

The Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society developed from the union of two earlier organizations: The Massachusetts Sabbath-School Society, and the American Doctrinal Tract Society. The former society was established in 1832, published literature for use in Sunday schools, and raised money to support Sunday schools in the west. The Tract Society, established in 1829, published doctrinal tracts for distribution. It incorporated in 1850 as the Doctrinal Tract and Book Society and changed its name to the Congregational Board of Publication four years later.

These two organizations joined in 1868 to form the Congregational Sabbath-School and Publishing Society. Its purpose was to "explain . . . and support the Congregational faith and polity" and to promote Sabbath-school organization and education. In 1870, the name changed to the Congregational Publishing Society. The missionary side of the operation was transferred to the American Home Missionary Society in 1873, but returned in May 1882 when the Publishing Society began failing financially. The name changed again a year later, back to Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society.

The Society gave literature to all Congregational Sunday schools and, on a limited basis, to colleges connected with the American Education Society, and to needy pastors. They published works in European languages, issued the Pilgrim Missionary, and provided "lesson helps" for teachers. The Pilgrim Press became the publishing arm of the Society in the 1890s.

For more information on the Society, see the works The Sunday School Century by William Ewing (Pilgrim Press, 1918) and "A Brief Historical Sketch . . . of the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society . . ." (1898), both available in the Congregational Library.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists primarily of administrative records and memorabilia of the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society, dating 1841-1917. Series A encompasses administrative records of the organization, both as the Massachusetts and as the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society, sometimes in the same volume. These records include minutes of the Board of Directors/Board of Managers, 1841-1910; minutes of the Executive Committee, 1905-1906; and minutes of annual meetings, 1841-1912.

Series B consists of records of two committees and one department, arranged chronologically. The Missionary Committee is represented by a volume of minutes, 1869-1889. The Publication Committee's minutes cover the years 1873-1910, and include minutes of the earlier Committee on Sabbath Schools Publication. The Business Manager's reports to the Board of Directors and the Finance Committee, 1896-1902, are also included in this series.

In the years 1911-1913, the society negotiated for the purchase of a publishing plant, and the records of that negotiation and "transfer" of property constitute Series C. Included are copies of correspondence with the owner, Arakelyan; proposals and counter-proposals for the transfer; reports; financial statements for the press before and after transfer; publishing statistics; and a 1910 blue print of the plant.

The final Series consists of a scrapbook of Society brochures and flyers, 1892-1917, and a photograph album presented to Samuel B. Capen, president and vice-president of the Society for 17 years, on his retirement. The album includes images of the members of the Board of Directors during Capen's tenure. The album may have come with other material from Samuel Capen and not with the Sunday-School Society records.

Series A. Administrative Records, 1841-1912. Board of Managers/Directors Minutes, Executive Committee Minutes, Annual Meeting Minutes. 5 volumes.

Series B. Committee and Department Records, 1869-1910. Missionary Committee Minutes, Publication Committee Minutes, Business Managers' Reports. 4 volumes.

Series C. Plant Transfer Records, 1908-1914. Correspondence, proposals, reports, financial records, statistics, blue print. 1 volume, 5 folders.

Series D. Scrapbooks and Albums, 1892-1917. 2 volumes.