

**THE TRAINING OF
SUNDAY SCHOOL
TEACHERS AND OFFICERS**

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The Training of Sunday School Teachers and Officers by Franklin McElfresh

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FRANKLIN MCELFRESH

**THE TRAINING OF
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TEACHERS AND OFFICERS**

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Modern Sunday School Manuals

EDITED BY CHARLES FOSTER KENT IN
COLLABORATION WITH JOHN T. MCFARLAND



The Training of Sunday School Teachers and Officers

By
FRANKLIN McELFRESH

Secretary of the Committee of Education
International Sunday School Association



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I

THE NEW DEMANDS UPON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

The Magnitude of the Demand. Three hundred thousand new teachers and officers will be enlisted within the coming year in the ranks of Sunday school workers. Many of these are young men and women of education, but many more are urged into service with little information or training for the duties before them. While many training schools and classes are offered them through the varied agencies, denominational and interdenominational, yet all of these united fail to meet the need for a trained teaching force. Even were all of these new teachers well equipped, they are not sufficient for the great work. A full half million are needed to meet the responsibilities pressing upon the churches for the religious teaching of childhood and youth. Within the last three years there has been an increase of one million in enrollment in North America, and even this number could be enlarged by hundreds of thousands if a sufficient number of competent teachers would answer the call of the Church. Childhood, quickened by all the alertness and

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eagerness of the modern life, stands eager and expectant at the door of the Sunday school. Boyhood and girlhood, trained in the freedom of the spirit of the day, are willing to enter when we offer them the friendships and leaders that appeal to their restless hearts. Men and women turn to the Sunday school as never before. The adult classes must find social and intellectual leadership which will put them face to face with life's problems in a way to command their deepest loyalty, or they will turn back again. The Sunday school of the past, with its great services and its noble spirit, cannot command the situation of to-day. United Protestantism must awake to the fact that the old order has changed, giving place to the new.

A World-Wide Demand. A recent editorial in the Sunday School Journal says: "Nor is the movement confined to our own country. In England there is an agitation in favor of better church schools through the gradual waning of religious education in the day schools. The Bishop of London has recently issued a manifesto on this subject, and the London Times has taken the matter up, being clearly impressed that the complete command of the educational machinery of the public schools once possessed by the Established Church has gone forever. We are beholding the striking phenomenon of this great secular

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newspaper (perhaps the greatest in the world) calling on the people of the Church to arouse and undertake with enthusiasm the work of teacher training and Sunday school organization. It says: 'Church people must be prepared to spend money on their Sunday schools. Besides the expenses incident to the improvement of the plant, the preparation and printing of syllabuses, and other necessary literature, there must be found adequate stipends for qualified inspectors or instructors, and possibly for a nucleus of fully trained professional teachers. The zeal and devotion of amateurs, upon which the Church has hitherto relied for her Sunday schools, is no longer sufficient in itself.' It is felt in England that there is to be a forward movement for better schools all along the line, and that the Free Churches are ready for it now. We have seen this coming for years, and are more than ready to welcome it. We are glad to know that there is an awakening in the mother country as well. When 'The Thunderer' begins to hurl its big bolts, something has begun. A grand overhauling and reenforcement of the whole work of religious education would do more for our churches in this country, and for the country itself, than any other work that we might undertake."

The Educational Demand. "The most important phase of education is now left to the Church and