

that a Winnipeg auctioneer of the palmy days had once held temptingly forth, as "Dant by Door," and she shared the Poet's hope that it would be—as it was—gladly lent, and carried across the island.

So, it was at once apparent that if one could not carry away doubloons and pieces of eight from this Spanish island of romance in the North Pacific, one had brought still better treasure there. From the borrowings that went on, from homestead to homestead that winter, grew the Community library work.

The Provincial Government having a travelling library service, it was decided to ask for regular shipments of books, and these were promptly and gladly supplied. The range in these libraries is wide, from fairy tales to the newest technical works, and an effort always made to meet the needs of each rural community sharing in the free service. When Quixotians, by their eager lists of wanted books, stood revealed as enthusiastic readers, the cases arrived marked "Special," surprising even the most childlike acceptor of Government supplies, by the quality as well as the large proportion of requested books.

The voluntary librarians take turns in work, on mail days. In winter, the fire in the church-hall is kept up, and a kettle boiling, so that visitors can be regaled with needed refreshment, while choosing from these books, and the Presbyterian Coast mission list. This last, chiefly fiction of the popular sort, is warranted to appeal to the "tired business man" of the adjacent logging camps.

Nominally, one sits over the card catalogue two hours, but who could be too particular as to time on "Quixote," where after all clocks are vague? As long as one is sure that it is morning or afternoon, as the case may be, the mere name of the hour does not matter. Of course, if the semi weekly ship to civilization must be caught (she being a craft with a well-known indifference to schedules) it is a good plan—perhaps—to keep one's timepiece wound in accord with the postmaster's clock, but as a general thing the librarian's two o'clock may be your one; or my "half past" either, so she waits till all likely patrons are served.

First, one day, dashes up the owner of the Dante, in his light wagon, with the new box of books, which he has hauled voluntarily, from the wharf. Someone else has thoughtfully come provided with a screw driver, and in a few minutes the case has been unpacked, and the books, many new, and in fascinating jackets, on the shelves, ready for all comers.

First comes a lady with a basket full of "Presbyterians" to return. One son had not been so pleased with Sabbatini's latest, and another wanted to renew "The Man from Glengarry." The father

of the family was of that same stock, and the boy wanted him to read the book on his return from the salmon fishing, next week. Her daughter would like a book on peony culture, her hopes having been stirred by a recent magazine article, so that she felt something more ethereal than poultry raising might be made to pay for her annual visit to "town," a hundred miles away. She herself had been thrilled by Tichnor-Edwards' "Lore of the Honey Bee," and felt that her part of the rancheerie demanded bees.

The Poet's wife arrives. Genius is burning on the Pre-emption, and the poet cannot leave his typewriter, but he'd like some Conrad, having discovered that his nearest neighbor had sailed the seven seas with Conrad, but had never read his books. She herself would like a practical book on baking, these Canadian stoves having ways of their own, and her Mrs. Beeton being much too lavish for wilderness conditions. But American measurements, which prevailed in the only cook book sent, this time, being beyond her, she accepted a neighbor's offer for a worn but trusty "Ladies' Aid" compilation.

A young girl returns an Ethel Dell with reluctance, extracting a promise that it shall not go out until her friend at the other side of the island, who snatched at a thrilling chapter with her, the other day, comes or sends someone for it. She departs with "The White Flag," and "Poor Man's Rock" and an armful of gorgeous picture books for the tinies of their family, who are too young to tackle the long rough trail to school. But the choice of children's books is hard to make, so fascinating are they all. Hans Andersen, Stevenson, Field Rose Fyleman, and all their goodly company, in handsome bindings, illustrated by Dulac, Rackman, and their peers, are giving to these babies in the wilderness all that the darlings of the most luxurious nurseries can have.

A small girl goes happily home with a brand new "Peter and Wendy," carefully folded into a clean sugar sack. An ex-missionary to India is delighted to find a much-reviewed book on that country. Her companion wants "Some pin light. We're busy folks," she explains "An' we ain't got time for no heavy stuff. What's this here "Rudyard," by Kiplin? It's big print. I'll take that." "Maria Chapdelaine" is returned as "too bloomin true" by a lady who has earned a right to say so.

An elderly man eases the heavy pack of groceries from his shoulders, and takes a cup of tea, with gratitude. He had rowed for an hour from his distant inlet to a trail trudging that for two miles before striking the main road, and then he has had three more miles, though easier

going, before reaching the post office. Now, after stocking up with mail and provisions, he is on his way back. With luck, he can sail home in this breeze, and reach his inlet before dark, where a solitary point of light, high up on the hillside, will mark his lonely wife's vigil. The only woman for miles, she fills her spare time with reading, so her husband adds double the regulation quota to his load. But his pleasure at finding "I can remember R. L. Stevenson" (for he can, too) is reward enough for the extra weight he carries.

The large and exuberant cook from a logging camp on the next island hurries in, and sinks into a protesting chair, with relief, plumping down upon the table a heavy book wrapped in paper.

"Say, that was the finest thing I ever read," she declared, emphatically. "I've kept it long overdue, but you oughta-a seen me an' two or three o' the boys at the camp! Couldn't get enough of them yarns. Say, an' I got it kinda mussed, lettin' it git damp, when I put it into the ole cedar at our cross roads fer Mrs. Neill to have a read of. If it's spiled, why, I'll pay, and be jest as glad, fer though me an' them fellers I was tellin' you of, has sent down to town to see can we git us some copies, it's doubtful if they'll have 'em in stock. It was wrote, you see, back in the ole days—in them historic times—but say, the guy that wrote it, he sure knew folks." She opens the parcel, and the intrigued librarian pokes forward to read the title of this marvelous thriller. "When Knighthood was in Flower," or some such thing she thinks. But—"There," exclaims the cook, "Works of W. Shakespeare" and *some Works*, believe you me!"

Everyone is not always pleased, however. Sometimes the supply of novels does not go around, and sometimes those that do go round are complained about. Comments range from the frank "Got no use for that heavy stuff" to the plaintive regret of the lady that found modern writers far too true to life. She and her sort were out for glamour, and somehow, could not see it, in the place in which she lived, though to some of her neighbours, it was "paradise enow."

As might not be expected, the settlers who haughtily declare that they have no time to read, are the people, who, as the years go by, get the least accomplished on their homesteads.

Magazines are carried miles, and exchanged in the library, and gradually Women's Institute meetings, and farmers' friendly confabs over the bookcase, are bringing a closer knowledge of neighbours, book friends, and the outside world to this community. And all because, one day, a poet wandered forth in search of Dante.