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**THE BOY'S LIBRARY.**

Boys, what have you done with the books that you read when you were little fellows; those books which you do not care particularly to read again? Almost every boy has several such, beginning with picture primers and illustrated stories in short easy words. I recently saw a history of Robinson Crusoe in words of only one syllable, with finely colored pictures, so beautiful that I felt as if I had been cheated a little in not having had such an one when I was reading words of one syllable. I am writing to boys who have taken off aprons and have given up tops.

"Peep Show" and "Chatter-box" are full of stories and information that was entertaining to you once, but you have now begun to read magazines, newspapers, and often books drawn from a library. Some of you are in the high school; soon you are going to the business college. Some will go to a preparatory school where you will stay two years; then you will go to college where you will remain four years. That means six years of constant hard work with books that will crowd children's books such, as "Arabian Nights," "The Swiss Family Robinson," not to speak again of "Chatter-box," and "Peep Show," off the shelf. I am thinking of certain shelves that I often look at—a long row of "Rollo Books," "Abbott's Series," "Oliver Optic's stories," "Paul du Chailly's tales of Africa" and many others. They belong to a young girl who is yet reading children's stories, and I am not talking of books that are being read, but of those that have been read. I am talking to boys who, because of something else to do, must leave this kind of reading. By the time you are released from the high schools or college your boy stories will be in the garret, or will have wholly disappeared, perhaps as waste paper. There are stacks of children's magazines and delightful papers that will meet that fate without being passed into the hands of other children, as they should be. Better that the second company of readers should destroy the books in using them than that they should not be used and finally become waste. There are some grown people who cannot buy many books who would enjoy the reading of good

juvenile literature. I read every juvenile book that is good enough for a child to read, if I have the time, and for the sake of many intelligent children whom I know, I grudge the garret fine literature. I do not mean just very poor children. Many children have a few books; but grown people do not buy all the books they read, they found libraries which give them their choice free, of all books that are published. Sometimes the people in a small town club

together, make out a list of books they would like. Mr. A. will buy one of these books. Mr. B. another, and so on through the alphabet. When Mr. A., B., and C. have read their books, they put them in a library with the books the others have read, and Mr. A. can draw Mr. B.'s or Mr. C.'s book, and Mr. B. can draw Mr. A.'s or Mr. C.'s book, and so on. But young people cannot do this very well, nor would it benefit the readers I am thinking about.

Do this. Make a list of your outgrown books, those that you once liked to read—not those that you did not like. Go to all the book-reading boys that you know, tell them you are going to start a free public library with your surplus books. Show them your list. Ask them to contribute the outgrown books they liked. If some of the books they will give are like yours that will be well, every library has duplicate copies. Give the boys time to think.

After you have asked once ask again, ask the third time pleasantly. Go look at their books that are already shelved. To those who say they have no use for their holiday books, but they must not give them away because they are presents, tell them the meaning of Edward Everett Hale's story of "Ten Times One." If you yourself do not know it, nor of the hundreds of Ten Times One societies of boys and men that have grown out of it, ask till you find out. No boy is intelligent who does not know that.

When you and one other boy make up your minds to have a free library for children you can have it. You can accomplish it alone if you have in you the stuff that success is made of. As soon as you can collect a dozen books, starting at Mother Goose (which I read every time I see it) you can make a beginning. Go to some one who has charge of any respectable public place to which boys can go, it may be a store or school or temperance room, and ask if you may put a case of books there. You can make the case yourself. It will need a lock. Then invite children to draw books free. When they come to do that, question them about their own laid-aside books, and ask them to contribute to the library stock. Count it a success if in some weeks you have a very small library and very few readers. Some boy must be a librarian. He will come once a week and give out books and charge them, take in books and credit them, and report those not brought back.

If you are persistent, by the time school opens you will have so much interest in your work and others—grown people—will be so much pleased, and men and women will help you.

Call your library "The Children's Free Circulating Library." Make its motto, "Ten



ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON. (See next page.)

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