

a lock and key, and so carefully packed that it could be safely shipped by freight. It was provided with a complete but simple system of blank records, so that it could be placed upon a table or counter, unlocked, and be ready for as effective and methodical work as any larger circulating library. In order to insure good care for the volumes and a continuous local interest, the libraries were only sent to communities which organized a local library association of twenty members who agreed to care for the books and to place them where they would circulate freely under the simple library rules prescribed. Each local association elected a secretary, who acted as its executive officer, and each paid a fee of one dollar for each library as a partial payment of the transportation charges.

Twenty-six libraries in one county were sent out in this way. They were visited about two months after by Mr. Hutchins, and he found them even more popular than had been expected. The most interesting accounts are given of the avidity with which the young especially seized the books. The movement is yet too young to allow of accurate statistics, yet they have proved that in Wisconsin, as in New York and Michigan, they supply an urgent need that has not been supplied by any other agency.

They have carried into hundreds of homes new thoughts and information, higher aspirations and ideals, new forces that are making for a better individual, family and social life. Their books are warmly welcomed by families whose doors are closed to the reformer or the missionary. Hundreds of small communities in Wisconsin have attempted to do such work for themselves, but have nearly always failed. They have raised money by entertainments or private subscriptions, and have started libraries with high hopes. In most cases their selection of books has been unfortunate, and when the few entertaining books have been read by most of the patrons and no new volumes are added the popular interest dies, and the library is either put in an obscure place or its volumes are scattered.

By the new system only wholesome and entertaining books are bought, and they are constantly appealing to new readers until worn out by use, and not merely shelf worn. Every six months a library is new to some public, and its arrival is a matter of comment and draws new interest to the library station. The books are bought at the lowest, and substantial editions are selected. They can be occasionally examined and repaired, an important economy, for with books as with clothing, a "stitch in time saves nine." In the making of rules and regulations a wide body of experience can be drawn upon, and in the printing much economy exercised.

Finally, it practically takes the selection of the reading of great numbers of untrained readers from the hands of blind chance, and puts it in the custody of trained experts, who can draw for assistance upon the library experience of the world. Our great and costly system of public schools works unceasingly to teach children how to read and then leaves too many of them to go through their adult lives without using that power to the best advantage, because of lack of opportunity.

The travelling libraries offer an unexpectedly cheap, efficient and practicable method of broadening our educational system to include in its beneficent purposes every one who goes out from the brief course of our common schools, and to enable them to pursue a life-long system of education.

Such a system as has been described seems feasible in Ontario. No part of the Province is beyond reach by rail or steamer, and in no part need there be lack of readers. Our school system, by providing school sections of moderate area, each with its school-house and teacher, seems to have placed the machinery ready to hand. In Wisconsin about one-third of the libraries are kept in the postoffice, one-half in farm houses and the remainder in small stores. But with the school master as librarian and the school-house as the distributing post, the most widely-scattered farm population could be easily reached, while the results of the daily tasks would be more satisfactory. By supplying also in this way the smaller existing Public Libraries, which are barely able to add to their collections, boxes of 100 new books