

If we wish to create an attachment by the farmer for his farm, to give an interest in life to his children in their surroundings instead of in the city, and, in other words, to lay the basis for a successful and pleasant country life, we must try to make his intellectual surroundings more attractive and profitable.

And this is not a new problem. Men who have had their country's good at heart have tried for years to meet the difficulty. The late Dr. Ryerson, as we have seen, attempted to make every schoolhouse in the country a centre of "light and sweetness" by the school library, but failed because the effort was premature, and because no effort was made to add to or exchange the books.

WORK IN NEW YORK STATE.

Since 1892 an effort has been made in New York State to meet it in a different manner. The State law of that year authorized the Regents of the State Library to lend for a limited time selections of books from the duplicate department of the State Library or from books specially given or bought for this purpose to public libraries under State supervision, or to communities meeting required conditions. Out of \$25,000 appropriated for free libraries, a portion was at once set apart to buy and prepare books to be loaned under these rules.

The rules then adopted provide that a selection of ten books may be lent for six months to the trustees of any Public Library in the State on payment of a fee of \$5 to cover the expense of cases, catalogues, stationery and transportation both ways. Where no such library exists the books will be lent on petition of any 25 resident taxpayers. Special collections of books may also be lent to the officers of a University extension centre, reading course or study club if properly registered. A later rule offers selec-

tions of 50 volumes for a fee of \$3. In 1893 the librarian at Albany began to send out a number of small libraries, of 100 volumes each, to such of the small towns and villages as were not provided with free libraries. One of these small libraries remained in the community but six months, and was then exchanged for another. Hence the name "travelling libraries," which has been applied to them.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The leading purpose seems to have been to incite communities to found permanent local libraries, but the scope of the work has been widened, and the system now provides smaller collections of books for rural communities. So successful has it proved that in 1895 the State of Michigan appropriated \$2,500 to buy books for a similar system, and in 1896 the State of Iowa set aside \$5,000 for a like purpose.

In the same year Mr. Hutchins reports to the State Library Commission that in two counties of Wisconsin similar work had been commenced by private individuals. He says that each small library was put up in a substantial case with double doors, 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