

Now, this is almost precisely the system that obtains at present under the statute; with this difference, that the annual meeting of the officers of Mechanics' Institutes is presided over by the President of the Association. Such a convention would necessarily have to elect a presiding officer and a secretary, probably also a treasurer, since a society without funds is ever a helpless, powerless, inchoate body; a properly organized body would require of necessity an executive head or committee, and by establishing the same we would again have a body very similar to the Executive Committee of the Association.

That booksellers who supply Institutes with books should not be directors of the same, is according to a sound principle in law, that no person can purchase from himself, that prohibition is in the municipal law in regard to councillors, in the School Act respecting trustees, and is generally acted upon by the Court in all similar cases. Giving members of Mechanics' Institutes, when visiting other Mechanics' Institutes, the privilege free of charge for a certain limited period, is similar to a system which obtains among many other societies, and is commendable. The recommendation that for the payment of the Legislative Grant a system similar to that which is in use in the Education Department for the payments of books purchased by school trustees from local booksellers be adopted, and that payment to booksellers and teachers be made direct from the Education Department, is probably the most objectionable, impracticable and unpalatable of all Doctor May's numerous recommendations; and if it is desired to make the gentlemen who manage the affairs of the Institutes at present feel perfectly disgusted with such red-tapism, such cumbersome machinery, such guardian-like system, a sure way to do so will be to inaugurate that system proposed by Doctor May. It may be that some of the same gentlemen who are Trustees of Schools are also Directors of Mechanics' Institutes, and that they in their capacity as trustees do submit to the present rule of signing certificates, attaching the school corporation seal, and making a declaration to a simple account for prize books or for school library books, but certainly they do so unwillingly. However, as many school boards or school sections do not keep a school library, or do not annually purchase library books or prize books, and those who do seldom oftener than once a year, school trustees are seldom required to comply with those rules, while with Mechanics' Institutes the matter stands quite differently. They have annually several accounts to pay for books, periodicals and teachers—some Institutes probably more than fifty or sixty such different accounts. To require, as the Doctor proposes, that booksellers fill in their accounts in printed forms supplied by the Education Department, showing the classification of books, prices, etc., to require these accounts to be signed by the officers—which means in some cases nine Directors, a President, Vice-President, a Secretary and Treasurer—and