

of the best class of literature in the country districts, where a well stocked public library is an impossibility, was inaugurated in England by the well known journalist and social reformer Mr. W. T. Stead. Like most of the enterprises that gentleman has undertaken, the peregrinating library has proved a success. We have been hoping for a long time that a journalistic or other genius would arise on this side of the Atlantic and follow his example.

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Mr. Stead realized, as all observers have realized, that one of the surest means of checking the city-ward migration of the younger generation of the country born, is to bring within reach of the rural population as many as possible of the advantages enjoyed by their friends in town and city. It is a fact established by observation both in Canada and in England, that a large proportion of the exodus from country to city has its genesis in a desire to find greater opportunities for intellectual enjoyment and mental expansion than those obtained on the farm or in the hamlet; coupled with this not infrequently, and sometimes greatly exceeding it in magnetic power, is the feverish desire to travel what is fondly, and how often erroneously (?)—imagined to be the shortest road to riches.

We are not at the present moment going to expatiate upon the fatuous folly of those who think city and success are synonymous terms. Our firm conviction is that ninety per cent. of those born and bred on the Canadian farm will find the brighter future, a more assured competence, and by far the greater measure of contentment, in making the all-producing land the willing servant of their intelligence, instead of seeking to

“Grasp the skirts of chance.
And breast the blows of circumstance.”

as these prevail in the larger haunts of industry and commerce. The young man who “quits” the farm animated merely by the sordid motive will not be deterred from his folly by a dozen different remedies of the kind we are advocating; he must be allowed to go his way

and learn his lesson in the school of experience. But to the more numerous city-seekers whose discontent is with the scarcity of opportunity they have in their leisure for intellectual pleasures and social enjoyments, the placing of the country district almost on a level with the town or city in the matter of accessibility to books and periodicals, would be a veritable boon and go a long way towards killing the desire to leave a sphere which in so many respects is most congenial to them.

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MR. STEAD'S method of operation in brief is this: He makes up a box of 50, 100, 200, or more volumes of various kinds; for instance a “100” box of “A” class may contain 50 volumes of standard works of fiction; 10 volumes of a scientific character; 10 historical volumes; 10 volumes devoted to the arts; 10 dealing with politics and economic questions; 10 volumes for the special use of the theological student. A similar sized box of another class will contain a larger proportion of works of fiction; while the contents of that of another class will be almost entirely educational; so that the predominating literary taste in any village can be satisfied. A box is loaned to ministers, Sunday School superintendents, Y. M. C. A. Secretaries, Mechanics' Institutes, where these institutions exist, or to reliable country booksellers and other storekeepers, for a period of three, six, or twelve months, the cost being from \$6 dollars upwards according to the size of the box and the period for which it is required. In the case of Sunday Schools and kindred institutions, where it is not customary to make a charge for access to their library shelves, the authorities find themselves in a position to maintain a constantly varying supply of the best kind of literature at a cost within their means, and which could only be purchased by institutions more richly endowed than those in most country districts. To the bookseller and other enterprising business men the opportunity is presented for maintaining a really high-class circulating library without the extensive outlay of capital which would otherwise be necessary.