

not watchful he is apt to lose sight of this very important fact, and vainly try to mould and turn them out, so to speak, alike. Now, we all know, that what is easy for one child, is exceptionally hard for another. For instance, one child may be bright in arithmetic and a pupil at his side find it impossible to make any advancement; yet children are often kept back for one or two subjects for which they have no aptitude and so lose the chance of development where they may have real talent. "The school was made for the scholar, not the scholar for the school," is a truism. While there is no system of teaching under the sun perfect, there is none that has a right to have laws or rules so unbending as to have no opportunity for the full development of the individuality of both teacher and pupil. In the ungraded school both teacher and pupil have fuller opportunities for this development, because the pupil is necessarily left much more to the exercise of his own tastes, and the teacher to her own discretion. This leads me to the troublesome question of grading or classifying in ungraded schools. I would not have you think I undervalue any subject on the course of instruction. I hope I fully appreciate the value of each. But here a difficulty arises in our grading system. A child is not up to the standard in one or more subjects and perhaps beyond it in others. Now, what is to be done? It would appear he ought not to go on, and really, he ought not to stay behind. I, for one, fail to see the benefit of keeping a pupil back because he is behind in one or even two subjects, for it is simply impossible for all pupils to be equally advanced in all subjects.

Take arithmetic, one of the most, if not the most backward subject in country schools. I have found while some children with a given amount of explanation and instruction could recognize the principles involved, and understand the operations thereon, and do good work; others, with double, yes, ten times the amount of help fail to grasp it at all intelligently. The fault is, apparently, not in the teacher, nor, truly, is it in the child, for I believe mental deficiencies are as much inherited as physical infirmities. Therefore, while striving to develop in every department, I would advocate special aid where the child has natural ability. To economize our time we must have as few classes as possible, and yet to follow no definite rule in grading our school would result in an increased number of classes and complications generally. And yet where are we to draw the line; for draw it we must, and follow the prescribed system in spirit, if not in letter, we must. The teachers who preceded me in the schools in which I have taught, have apparently wrestled with the same

difficulty, for I have found children reading in the fifth book who could scarcely work long division, much less solve simple little problems involving the fundamental rules. I am sure I speak for at least the inexperienced ungraded school teacher, when I say we would like all the light and assistance that this institute can possibly give, to help us to see the best possible classification under the present system.

Arithmetic is one of the principal subjects to be considered in classifying, and it is a subject which is lamentably behind in ungraded schools (at least I have found it so). There appears to be too much mechanical work. Perhaps lack of sufficient time has led to this result, but it is to be regretted. For what value is it to a child to know that 9 times 6 are 54, if he cannot apply it and tell you what 9lbs. of sugar would cost at 6 cents a lb.? It seems very slow work sometimes, this process of leading a child to think and reason for himself, and I am afraid with the pressure of work we hurry, and thus defeat the wished for result, by doing too much of the work ourselves. I am afraid also that even our practical work has not enough variety. We do not supplement our text book enough with original devices and questions to develop their reasoning powers to the extent possible, for even so-called practical questions oftentimes become merely mechanical ones from too intimate acquaintance. I think, perhaps, if our primer and junior classes received more attention in this regard, there would be less trouble in the advanced grades. Composition is another subject to which I should like to refer. It is a subject to which we can scarcely attach too much importance, for, taken in its full signification, it means broad culture. It is a very practical subject, for it includes so many departments of the work, from its mechanical arrangement and execution to the subject matter under consideration. Language lessons or oral composition should begin with the first day of school, and should assume written shape as soon as practicable. This work should become more comprehensive as the child advances in the grades. To be able to express one's thoughts clearly, correctly, and in the best possible taste, either verbally or in writing, is an art only to be acquired, in most cases, by constant practice and persistent effort, both on the part of the teacher and child. It is strange but none the less true, that despite the fact that the parents complain that our work is not practical enough, and, that, while all are agreed, that there is nothing more useful to the pupil than that he be an adept as a letter writer, we find that our pupils fail to bring composition required as home work, giving as a reason that their parents do not see the good of it. Who