

Practical hints

How shall I
Catalog my
Library?

Group your books roughly into classes before you begin to classify. This is much easier than classifying each book as you come to it in the midst of books of other classes.

In determining the classification of a book, examine first the table of contents, then the preface. If these fail to enlighten you as to the exact subject, read a few pages here and there.*

Get the real subject. Do not depend on the title. "History of Mathematics" is classified under Mathematics, not under History.

If a book treats of two or more subjects, classify it under the most prominent, but make a catalog card for each subject.

Keep your classification consistent.

Remember that classification is not an exact science, but a continual compromise. Few books belong absolutely in any one class. Any classification that gets the books on any one subject side by side, and those on kindred subjects near one another, is a good one.

*The "Catalog of A. L. A. Library" published by the Bureau of Education at Washington gives the classification by the decimal system of an ideal popular library of 5,000 volumes, and will be found of great assistance by the amateur classifier. It is sent free on application to the Bureau of Education.