DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF EDUCATION

BULLETIN, 1918, No. 26

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

REPORT OF THE
SECOND ANNUAL MEETING AT KANSAS CITY, MO., FEBRUARY 27, 1917, AND OF THE THIRD ANNUAL MEETING AT ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., FEBRUARY 26, 1918

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1918

ADDITIONAL COPIES
OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE PROCURED FROM
THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.
AT
5 CENTS PER COPY

CONTENTS.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PRIMARY EDUCATION.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS AND REPORTS READ AT THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING AT KANSAS CITY, MO., FEBRUARY 27, 1917.

TIME ALLOTMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

By Miss Florence C. Fox,

Specialist, United States Bureau of Education.

This report shows the time allotment in a representative city in each of 18 States, as follows: New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, Washington, Indiana, Iowa, California, Mississippi, Illinois, Michigan, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, and Nebraska.

A questionnaire was sent to the primary teachers of these cities asking them to state the time actually spent by them in teaching each subject. Handwork included (1) modeling, sand or clay; (2) drawing, blackboard and crayon; (3) painting, ink and water color; (4) cutting, white and colored papers; (5) making, cardboard sloyd; (6) building, on the sand table; (8) stenciling.

Under play were included (1) games, directed and free; (2) dramatization, posing and acting.

Music included (1) singing, (2) dancing, and (3) rhythm. Nature study embraced three forms of activity, (1) excursions, (2) field lessons, and (3) experiments.

Minutes per day devoted to the several subjects in the primary grades of 18 representative cities.

Daily time schedule 300 minutes.

Subject.	Grade I.		Grade II.		Grade III.	
	Minutes.	Per cent.	Minutes.	Per cent.	Minutes.	Per cent.
1. Reading	62	20⅔	58	19	44	14⅔
2. Phonics	26	8⅔	16	5⅓	12	4
3. Spelling	11	3⅔	20	6⅔	20	6⅔
4. Arithmetic	16	5⅓	30	10	40	13⅓
5. Language	25	8⅓	27	9	36	12
6. Drawing	14	4⅔	14	4⅔	14	4⅔
7. Games	13	4⅓	12	4	13	4⅓
8. Nature study	12	4	12	4	75	8
9. Music	12	4	16	4⅔	17	5⅔
10. Handwork	11	3⅔	11	3⅔	11	3⅔

NOTE.—This table comprises a partial list only of the subjects in the daily program. It is intended to show the average daily time allotment accorded the primary activities in comparison with that given to the five fundamental subjects.

It was found that the subject of reading absorbed the major portion of the time on every program, taking up 20 per cent of the time in the first grade, 19 per cent in the second, and 14 per cent in the third. Handwork comes at the bottom of the list in all the grades, receiving 3⅗ per cent of the time allotment, or a fraction over 11 minutes out of 300 minutes for the entire day of school. Games, nature study, music, and drawing fall into this lowest group and divide the honors with handwork at approximately 4 per cent. In the third grade nature study receives 5 per cent of the time, with approximately the same for drawing and music. In other words, the child reads on an average over an hour a day in five hours of attendance at school in the first grade and is occupied with handwork for 11 minutes. He works arithmetic examples 16 minutes and sings 12 minutes. He spells 37 minutes, including phonic exercises, and draws 14 minutes. He devotes 25 minutes to language exercises and plays games 13 minutes.

In the second and third grades the proportion changes, especially with the subject of arithmetic, which assumes a new importance and is given a much larger amount of time. Some other subjects are also recognized as more and more important, but handwork remains at the foot of the ladder throughout the primary years and receives its paltry 11 minutes in all the grades alike.

ADJUSTING PRESENT CONDITIONS TO THE CHILD'S NEEDS.

By ADA VAN STONE HARRIS, *Pittsburgh, Pa.*

When one is confronted with the problem of teaching the children of a great city one can readily understand why so much time must be put on the schedule for reading. The basic subject is English, and the oral language and spelling are the backbone of the work. In the cities we have children of all nationalities. English is the important thing for them to learn. No time allotment should be made until the third year. When you come to the actual working over of the day's time schedule you have another problem. I find that in the lower grades it is better to give more time to the school activity. It seems to me that we ought to make a scientific study of this in order to get at the bottom of it. We ought to know the relative importance of the subjects we are handling.

Everyone should be concerned in finding more practical educational material in the primary grades.

SPECIALISTS IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

By MARIE ANDERSON, *Port Arthur, Tex.*

A different kind of organization is needed to enable the primary schools to realize the full significance of the special activities which we usually designate as handwork, nature study, play, music, and

literature. We need a more efficient organization, so that all the time that is necessary may be secured for children's varied activities as well as for the more formal school work.

We need teachers of formal work and we need teachers of special work in our primary schools.

We need classrooms for our regular work, special environment for the special work, and playgrounds for the recreational activities. This is the day of specialization, and we need specialization in our primary schools as well as in the secondary schools, but not to the same extent. The subject matter in the primary school curriculum can be organized in larger units than in the secondary schools; for instance, one teacher can handle all of the regular subjects, another teacher all or part of the special subjects, with still another teacher to develop the recreational activities on the playground.

The right kind of organization will make this possible. It will also solve the problem of the teacher's latitude. If regular teachers are selected who know how to teach the formal work better than anything else, leave them alone to develop the work. If teachers of nature study and handwork are chosen who have specialized in those lines, give them all the latitude they need to develop that work. The same thing may be said of the other special subjects and playground activities.

When our whole primary school is organized properly there will be time for varied activities as well as time for the formal work. The teacher who is a specialist may have the privilege of developing her field unmolested and the children will get as much of all kinds of work as they individually need.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT.

By Miss Day, *Cincinnati University.*

I wonder whether we should organize our forces so that the child is under the supervision of the teacher every moment of the day or whether we should give the child an opportunity for self-development. It seems to me that at seat work children have the time to develop their own initiative. Sometimes the child begins to build by feet work instead of seat work. Give him a chance to use the mind that God has given him. Give him a chance for self-expression, and we shall not have so many troubles when we try to suppress him.

DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION.

By Miss Metz, *Kirkwood, Mo.*

We are trying to organize our schools somewhat in the way suggested by Miss Anderson. One teacher is in charge of recitation work and another attends to drill work and hand work. After the

recitation work in reading I send the children to the other room for drill work and another group comes to me for a reading lesson. This makes the children progress faster. In the middle of the year we had two teachers to take charge of the recitation work and one to take charge of the drill work. Now we are planning to add a fourth teacher, to take charge of the music, art, and physical work. We have all of these activities going on at the same time. One teacher has a small group for intensive work in reading or some other subject, while another teacher supervises drill work and other seat work with a larger number of pupils. This seems a better plan than having the children sit in one room all day.

FREEDOM AND PROGRESS.

By Miss Day.

We tried an experiment with a first-grade class and allowed the children to do as they pleased. The teachers started with 18, but that number was later reduced. The children were allowed to come in the schoolroom and begin at whatever thing they wanted to do. Along two sides of the room, on the wall, were shelves. On one shelf was some clay that children could use and would enjoy playing with. A little farther along there was a work bench, saw, hammer, frame for sawing, and a little table. In another corner of the room were bookshelves, and so on throughout the room.

As to the method of reading, a little group came to the front of the room, where there were some pictures which had been separated from the rhymes belonging to them. Presently another group joined and all seated themselves in a semicircle. All were interested in the pictures and the lines describing them. They began fitting the lines to the proper pictures. The work went on, and not one of those children in the semicircle was distracted by the other sounds in the room. The success of this method was such that at the end of the year these children could read as well as most of the second-year pupils.

LATITUDE IN THE DETAILS OF METHOD.

By G. Ethel Walley, *Kansas City, Mo.*

A primary teacher should have great latitude in the detail of method, so that every child can be reached. To meet the needs of children of different ages, of varied experience, of all kinds of home environment, and the whole group, which varies from year to year, she must be allowed the greatest freedom.

The work in the primary grades deals with the mechanics of reading, of writing, and of number, in themselves very uninteresting. The quick automatic use of all the symbols of those subjects must be

acquired. To avoid a distaste for them and to create a desire for them the teacher should be allowed to change the time as well as method of procedure in teaching them. A great variety of games and drills must be used to meet the demand for activity natural to all children. Mechanical or inexperienced teachers can not reach each child, since they stay close to one method or text. The teacher must be larger than her text.

Originality, adaptability, appreciation of values and present needs and conditions, a keen interest in life and its need for full enjoyment at each stage of development are qualities absolutely necessary to all good teachers.

COOPERATION BETWEEN SUPERVISOR AND TEACHER.

By Miss Barnum, *New York City.*

I do not feel that the type of work that we should aim for in the primary department can come altogether from the supervisor or superintendent. The teacher must know the conditions under which she works and must know her children. She is there to teach the child, and I have a very strong feeling that the salvation of our schools must come from the classroom teachers. We need strong teachers who know what to do and who are free to use their judgment in matters of detail. In the past the plan has been to impose the program and course of study upon the teacher, who in turn has imposed these upon the children, endeavoring to get results which may "pass muster." If the work in our schools is to be properly adapted to the children, the classroom teacher must be responsible for it. She must constantly check up results and have the courage of her convictions to follow up and ask for changes that she feels are necessary. That she must work *with* those in the supervising positions, not *for* them. The supervisor must keep the perspective clear before the teacher; the teacher must keep the supervisor in close touch with the child's interest and point of view. It is an easy thing to sit in the office and make a course of study which considers everything excepting the child; it is the duty of the classroom teacher to keep the child's need constantly in the foreground

FREEDOM FOR PUPILS; RELAXATION FOR TEACHERS.

By Mr. Kerr, *Superintendent, Kirkwood, Mo.*

In our schools we have emphasized activity. Every boy and girl in the grades is given 30 minutes to play in the morning and 30 minutes' play in the afternoon during the school hours, under intelligent direction. There is freedom in the school both for the children and for the teachers. The boys and girls can go about the building with

exactly the same freedom you teachers have in this hotel. It is no sin if boys and girls talk to each other. If you make a rigid system where the boy and the girl are under a police system, there is no relaxation.

Every grade teacher has two periods of relaxation during the day. In the upper grades the teachers get three 30-minute periods for that purpose. As a result, we have better teachers. We are not doing that for the teachers only; we are doing it for the boys and girls, for by this plan we have a set of teachers who are at their best all the time.

The teachers themselves are allowed to work out their own plans of organization, the primary teachers as well as the upper-grade teachers. From the third grade to the fifth grade no lessons are assigned. The class coming into the room takes up the work where it was left at the last period. Each pupil is expectant and work proceeds with enthusiasm.

REORGANIZED TRAINING CLASSES.

By Miss GAGE, *Western State Normal, Kalamazoo, Mich.*

At Western State Normal we have determined upon a forward movement which we believe will have important results. After this year we hope to make no distinction in the training of kindergarten and primary teachers. All who are preparing to teach little children will be given the same course, including both kindergarten activities and primary subjects.

THE DEMONSTRATION ROOM OF THE FIRST GRADE.[1]

By MARY K. MULLER, *First Grade Critic Teacher, Fort Wayne (Ind.) Normal School.*

Our demonstration room was established in the first grade with the beginning, or 1B, children. Our first step was to set aside one corner of the room as a play corner. We placed a rug on the floor and soon the children had provided a toy piano, bed, dresser, cupboard, dishes,

[1] In the summer of 1916 a group of primary supervisors studying in New York met several times in conference and discussed ways and means of establishing progressive methods in public-school classes. They recommended that "demonstration rooms" be arranged for the purpose of adapting new methods to local conditions before incorporating them in the regular work.

Through these demonstration rooms it would be possible for teachers to observe the work and become familiar with new methods before attempting to use them. It was suggested that the teacher of the demonstration room be relieved from the requirements and obligations of the regular course of study in so far as they were in conflict with the methods tested. Methods proved successful in the demonstration room could then be adopted for general use without disturbance of normal conditions.

The National Council of Primary Education was asked to undertake the direction of this movement. The first demonstration room was established in Fort Wayne, Ind., under the direction of Miss Gail Calmerton.

table, and chairs. These were all large enough for the children's use. There were 42 screwed-down desks and 30 little kindergarten chairs in the room. Twelve Moulthrop desks and two kindergarten tables were provided. After these arrived and the children were permitted to use them, they no longer cared to use the screwed-down desks except as a place for materials. We had the desks removed and lockers made for the materials. This gave us room for games, to form a circle of chairs, or to work in groups in any part of the room. The children have a chance to be normal children, and they are delighted with the arrangement.

We found it necessary to eliminate a time program with the exception of time for work in the gymnasium, etc., which is fixed by the time schedule of the building. We dismiss half of our class at 11 and the remainder at 11.30 in the morning, reversing the order from 3 to 3.30 in the afternoon. This gives us a chance for more individual work.

We used the following program:

I. Activities: (*a*) Playful activities: 1. Directed play by the teacher or children; 2. Folk dancing; 3. Dramatization; 4. Music; 5. Apparatus work in the gymnasium and on the playground; 6. Other activities such as free play, games, etc. (*b*) Constructive activities: 1. Construction in wood, clay, textiles, paper, cardboard; 2. Sand-table work; 3. Picture making, drawing, painting, cutting.

II. Modes of expression: (*a*) English: 1. Conversation on (1) daily activities of the children, (2) interests of the children; 2. Stories, poems, and rhymes; 3. Reading; 4. Dramatization. (*b*) Music: 1. Singing of rote songs with pure tones (especial care given to tone and daily work with monotones); 2. Appreciation of good music by the use of the Victrola, etc; 3. Rythm, i. e. games and dancing with music. (*c*) Applied number as the children need it in daily work, games, etc.

III. Nature experiences: (*a*) Daily observations; (*b*) Excursions; (*c*) Pets; (*d*) Plants; (*e*) Gardens; (*f*) Hygiene and care of self.

The keynote of our work has been real motivation. We have made our work fill the need of the children as it came from them, by having the necessary materials ready and accessible at all times. We use the following materials:

Blackboard on four sides of the room with crayon for drawing and writing.

Water-color paints, crayons, and stick printing for illustrating, decorating, etc.

Clay for marbles, beads, dishes, and illustrating stories at sand table, etc.

Paper for books, paper folding of baskets, etc., free cutting for illustrating, making and dressing dolls, construction work, etc.

Cardboard for construction work and printing.

Paste and scissors.

Wood.—Type forms for building houses, etc. Van Arnam blocks—tongue-and-groove construction for making toys, furniture, etc. Small pieces of wood of all sizes and shapes—scraps from the manual-training department, large spools, hammers, dowls, and nails for making toys, furniture, etc.

Textiles.—Cotton roving for hammocks and rugs. Seine cord for marble bags. Eight-ply Germantown yarn for caps, hats, muffs, scarves, etc., for dolls.

Cotton, wool, and silk scraps of all sorts provided by the children for making doll clothes after the pattern has been cut from paper to fit the doll. Materials of all sorts for making furnishings for beds, curtains, etc. Textiles of all sorts for making costumes used in dramatization.

Superior price marker for printing signs, tags, etc.

Superior type No. 17 used in making puzzles, books, etc.

Stamp-craft books, pictures, and reading puzzles.

Cuttings from magazines for illustrating stories and rhymes.

Sand table and one-fourth-inch sticks of various lengths for working out stories and incidents.

Needles, thimbles, and thread used in serving for dolls and houses.

To get the best results we found it necessary for the children to form a circle or group at the beginning of school in the morning and afternoon. As the children arrive in the room after 8.30 they have the perfect freedom, and work or play with that which is of most interest to them. At 9 o'clock, the beginning of school, the class is ready for the morning exercises, which consist of the prayer, Bible reading, songs, conversation on things of most interest to the children, stories, poems, etc., pertaining to the class and season. The children naturally divide themselves into three groups, according to ability, and the teacher works with one group at a time when she is not working with the entire class. While she works with one group, the rest of the class are permitted to do the work of most interest to them with materials in the room. No child must interfere with any other child in the room. To be successful there must be perfect democracy. Each must do his share in working for the good of all. If in any case a child interferes, that child is asked to sit quietly by until he learns how to work for the good of all. This is decided by the class.

After the children have finished their work, it is discussed by the class. They judge the work. The best is selected and the children whose work it is show how it was done. Where help is needed it is given. The teacher guides the children in the choice of work and materials suited to their mental development. The children are very eager to receive this help, as they realize why it is being given.

From a class of 38, 35 were promoted into the 1A in February. They had not only done much more work than any previous class had done, but the results were much better in every line. In addition to this the children have been happier and more enthusiastic than any other class I have ever taught.

REPORT OF THIRD ANNUAL MEETING, AT ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., FEBRUARY 26, 1918.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a. m. by the chairman, Ella Victoria Dobbs, assistant professor manual arts, University of Missouri.

TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION.

THE RELATIVE VALUE OF THE BETWEEN-RECITATION PERIOD.

To what extent—
- Shall its occupations be definitely outlined by the teacher?
- Shall it allow opportunity for projects initiated by the pupil?
- Shall it be filled with applications of the lesson just taught?
- Shall it be seat work or shall it allow projects which involve moving about the room?

What ideal shall dominate the work of the period?
- Is it necessary only that the pupils may be profitably occupied while the teacher gives attention to other groups; or
- Is a period of free activity of essential value in the child's development?

THE CHAIRMAN. This is our third birthday. We were organized in Cincinnati in an informal way, and more definitely at Detroit. Our purpose is to encourage a greater use of activities in the primary school, greater freedom of method for the teacher, and a closer cooperation between the work of the kindergarten and the primary school. We all know that there has been and still is a gap in many places between the work of the kindergarten and the primary school, and one of our great efforts is to overcome that uncomfortable situation. The way in which we hope to do that is not to make of the primary school an advanced kindergarten, but to carry over the good things of the kindergarten into the primary school.

We believe it is not well for little children of six to be set down in rows of wood and iron seats and bidden to fold their hands, face front, look at the teacher, wait for the teacher's direction, do nothing except as the teacher bids them, and reduce themselves as promptly as possible to a very close likeness to those wooden and iron seats in which they sit. In some of our modern schools we are getting a long way from this, but in many of our schools that condition still prevails.

I am happy to welcome the masculine element this morning, because I take it you are nearly all superintendents. Many times

when we have been discussing these questions among ourselves the remark has been made, "Oh, if only my superintendent were present to hear this. I believe all these things, but the trouble is to get him to move." Of course, the men who are here this morning are progressive people, who are moving already; but will you please take back the message to your less progressive brothers that a good primary school is not one in which you can hear a pin drop; it is not one in which the children are sitting in straight rows and minding the teacher all the time. Other elements enter in, and it is those elements that we want to talk about this morning.

Last year in our discussion it was suggested that a committee be appointed to study this very important between-recitation period. We have been at a little loss to know what to call this period. We have talked about "busy work," but long ago we discarded that term. It is not usable in polite society any more. "Seat work" will not do, either, because seat work means sitting still and doing what you are told to do, a very quiet, passive, sort of work. Finally, to cover the whole field, and to be sure to include all the elements that ought to enter, we have been calling it the "between-recitation period," which means all of the time in which the child is not actually taught very definitely by his teacher, and of that period we are to talk this morning.

There is one more feature of the primary council to which I would like to introduce you before the meeting begins. When we first organized we agreed that we should have no set program, but that we should come together for informal discussion. We felt that it would be good for us to exchange our opinions, one with the other, and in that way really come to know what we believe. Therefore, after a very brief introduction of these topics, the meeting will be open for general discussion.

Miss Faddis, of St. Paul, will take up the first division of the first question: "To what extent shall the occupations of the between-recitation period be outlined by the teacher?"

Miss Faddis. I am sure that those of us who read these questions and reflect upon their meaning will fall into a reminiscent state of mind and compare the past with the present. Then, as we view some of the achievements of modern education and compare them with our childhood experiences, it will make us feel that we want to go forward with an optimistic determination to spread the best things we know over a constantly increasing territory.

For several years I have been asking teachers, particularly those taking summer courses, to recall their childhood experiences with the materials about them that they have used in school and out of school. Some of these teachers have had no experience and others have had much. The purpose of these questions is, of course, to find

out what permanent impressions are made by the occupations that involve the head and heart and the valuation that the teachers put upon those occupations. In this way we hope to make it impossible for any teacher of children to say "Take the next lesson," or, "Work all the examples on the next two pages." We know that there are still many teachers who went to school 25, 30, 35, 40 years, and even more than a half century ago, who are requiring the children now in their charge, these boys and girls to do the same things that they did in their own childhood. They say they have no time for anything else.

In a recent report of the educational conditions in New York State, there is a statement that there are 3,000 teachers in the rural districts of that State who have never gone beyond the eighth grade, and have had no professional training whatever.

Here is another reason why the traditional practices hold; there could not be anything but traditional work with such teachers.

The old notion that the acquisition of book knowledge is the all important goal is still responsible for a great deal of drill for drill's sake, for reviews without a glimpse of a new view, and for depression in the name of discipline. We wonder how anyone who knows what education is can look into the faces of growing girls and boys and half read their thoughts, or see them outdoors at play, and be willing to "keep school." As a possible explanation of the tenacity with which old practices are held, I have often thought of what Hamilton Wright Mabie says in his talk on self-realization, that the majority of people in life use life as the artisan uses his tools, and only a small proportion use it in a creative way as the artist does. The artisan may be sincere and diligent and fairly skillful, but he is imitative, conventional, and devoid of creative power; while the artist is free and constructive, and he sees the higher possibilities in the material which he commands. He discerns new meanings and divines unexpected powers, and reveals fresh feeling, and he gives the familiar and the commonplace a substantial value by recombining it and reforming it.

Many teachers who believe that learning and doing go together have put forth great efforts to make their schoolrooms veritable laboratories in which the material and the tools used prove that experimentation has an important place in all of their plans. One of these wise teachers of first-grade children says that she wants her children to know that the world is full of interesting things to be done, and she wants them to be able to fill their time with good work without the what and when always coming from somebody else. This teacher, like a good many others, feels that she must give especial attention to the "between-recitation period" work in the first months of school life when manipulation of material and the

educational value of the mental activity are very important, because they are the beginning of the formation of habits for later study. This teacher and many others proved that applications abundant, numerous, and real, take the place of much drill.

A second-grade teacher who is in the habit of taking a good part of her recitation time to help the children determine what they shall do in the next period is apt to say to them, "I think you can do harder problems than we have done in class with the blocks." The blocks stay in sight and they visualize. They look at them and find out what problems they can make, and go up and move them if necessary. These children do unusual work in making their own problems. The blocks stand for different things that they have collected.

Another second-grade teacher says that children may have a good deal of choice in this work, and that they may do the tasks in the way that suits them. If there is an established standard in the room for seat work, and if the children are held responsible for everything they do, the children compare their results with each other and express their judgments with eagerness.

A third-grade teacher feels that much of the locational geography may be taught in an incidental way. The globe is there and the children locate any place in their reading lesson and in the stories they have heard. It is remarkable how much these children know about directions; usually they locate in relation to their own home environment.

It behooves us all to see what we can do to make a freer atmosphere. I went into a room a few years ago where the children were sitting in straight rows. I was examining the lower grades in phonics, and was giving exercises to test the children or asking the teacher to do so. In this case the teacher thought the exercise would be more orthodox if she gave it, so she called the children up to the board, and when they were there in a straight row she told them to do just what they were told to do. Then she began using the phonic "im," and they said "grim, prim," etc., and then took their seats; I could not bear to leave the room without finding out whether these children could be anything but grim and prim, so I began to talk to them about the sounds I heard on my way to school that morning, and about the chickens. I did not have a sound of response when I asked them if they had chickens at home, and finally I said, "You know what chickens say, don't you?" There was no response, and the teacher said, "They do not; they have not been informed."

I want to ask all of you to encourage a freer atmosphere, to induce the teacher to think first of the children, and to realize that book-learning is not the all-important thing, but that experience is most worth while.

Miss Hanckel. When I looked at the first question I could not make up my mind to what extent stiffness and formality would follow if the teacher definitely outlines the occupations. Of course, I believe that she should let the children know definitely what they are going to do, or the children will definitely tell her what they are going to do; but I do not want it outlined so definitely that the children are not given some independence and freedom in what they are doing; and that suggests the second division of the topic; that is to say, the projects should be initiated by the pupils in 9 cases out of 10. I have found many teachers rather autocratic and no democracy at all in their schoolrooms. Such a teacher would have the board covered with figures, and the children would be set down either to study a lesson or else to manipulate those figures. I did not like that, but the poor teachers had no material for handling, so I said, "If we must have formal subjects, at least let us put a little liveliness in them." I said to the children, "You know what a table is, don't you? You know the second table and the fourth table?" and they answered, "Yes." I said, "Let me see if there is a child here who can arrange them five different ways." Those children began to take notice, and although I had thought only of writing them five different ways, the children themselves thought of 14 different ways of writing them. Before that they hated tables, but by such methods we have gotten them to teach themselves in formal subjects, and I think that is far more valuable than having the teacher drill them.

As to the projects, we are trying to get the young teachers to find out where they can find materials. For instance, if the window box from last year is somewhat stained, when the children look around in the springtime to see what they can do for the room, the project they choose may be the painting of those window boxes. It would never do, of course, to get paint all over themselves, so the children may then decide they must make aprons with which to cover themselves. We always have plenty of newspapers on hand, so the children may cut their own patterns. From the project comes the planning, done by the children, and the executing, done by the children, too. Then, when they get through we say, "Do you think that is a good apron?" and the children judge as to whether it will drop off or whether it will stick on; that leads to the invention of some remarkable fastenings. So I think that the project should be initiated by the children, and the children should be taught only where they show that they can not execute without some suggestion.

Miss Brady. "Shall the period be filled with applications of the lesson just taught?" Filled? No; decidedly not. Not filled; but, "Shall there be any application of the work of the regular schoolroom?" Yes. In our large city schools, where in one room after

another you will find two groups of 25 to 30 children, making from 50 to 60 in a room, with one little teacher from 9 o'clock until 3.30, some things are apt to be done that are not ideal. But in spite of all this, there is opportunity for freedom and for the exercise of initiative; the seat-work period should not be filled by an assigned task. Time should be left, and considerable time left, for what we call the self-chosen task. There should be some of both.

It is common in primary schoolrooms to-day to find a class of children not reciting, but moving about the room, disturbing nobody. They have finished the work assigned by the teacher. You will find some at blackboards writing, drawing, and doing some work they choose to do in arithmetic, perhaps two working together or individuals may be working alone. You will find others at a shelf or table on which have been gathered a number of miscellaneous books, selecting the books to read and going off with them; two may be looking on together, disturbing nobody. You will find children in the lowest primary rooms going to a shelf on which have been gathered inexpensive toys—a doll, games, puzzles, or a printing outfit. Another group may be at the sand table. A number may be working with scissors and paste—about the only material most of us have—making things to use on the sand table or making furniture for a doll house. That kind of work gives opportunity for freedom and initiative.

We are not working under ideal conditions yet and we can not do yet all the things we know to be the ideal things.

The CHAIRMAN. When we first sent out our statement concerning the organization of the council and asked teachers over the country to express their opinions as to what work should be attempted, the first answer that came back was, "We are heartily in sympathy with the ideals of the council, but how can we have more activity in the primary school as long as we have such large numbers for one teacher? Will you not ask the primary council to speak long and loud for a reduction in the numbers of the children in first and second grade classes?" Will everybody please take that message home to the superintendent who is not here to-day and does not realize that because the children are little the teacher can not manage twice as many of them?

In sending out the outline for this discussion we asked, "If you can not be present, please send your answers to these questions to the chairman." One of the letters received began this way: "I have been teaching primary classes for 32 years. In all that time I have never had less than 50 pupils in my class and have often had over 60. If I had had an ideal enrollment, probably my methods would have been different."

I wonder if one of the things that we shall learn from the war will be the conservation of children and better care of them in the primary school, so that when we begin to discuss a question of this sort teacher after teacher will not have to say to us, "We are doing the best we can under the conditions." Is not this American Republic able to educate its little children? If we can raise millions and millions of dollars for making munitions and for the relief of our wounded soldiers, can we not make this need so plain to our people that they will find the money for it also?

"Shall it be seat work or shall it allow projects which involve moving about the room?" Of course, that question is closely connected with the number of pupils in the room. Miss Gail Calmerton, supervisor of primary and kindergarten education in Fort Wayne, Ind., will speak to us on this point.

Miss CALMERTON. I hope that there are many principals here as well as superintendents, because the supervisor certainly needs partnership with the principal. A teacher can do much, but there is much more that she can not do unless she has the moral support of her principal as well as her supervisor and superintendent.

Why should the child not move about after he has completed his work? He might be at the board an entire period; he might be at the sand table; he might be out in his garden; he might be at the library table; or he might be in a play corner; but if he must stay there during an entire period he will not be able to use his initiative when he has completed the assignment. I think of the thrill that went through the United States when we heard that the first gun had been fired at the enemy, and in Indiana we were proud because it came from a red-headed gunner from South Bend. If the assignment for these gunners had been made as a lesson is assigned, that young man would probably not have fired the first gun. He used his initiative. The assignment was specific but in carrying out the assignment he had liberty of action.

I want to tell another story. One of our reporters who was in Europe when the war began said that, as he stood at the front and beheld that mass of German soldiers moving as one man down through Belgium, he looked at their faces, and saw that all seemed to have the same expression, like dumb, driven cattle. Then he said, "This blind, unthinking obedience has not come about in a day. This ability to move a mass of men like so many cattle has not come about in a day. We must look back to the German school to see the reason for it." We can not begin too young. We can not begin when a child is 12 to give him the habit of using initiative. Away down in the kindergarten is the time to begin, when we first have the children in school. The reporter said: "You know in

the German schools the knapsack (the school satchel) is strapped on the back of the child so that he will become accustomed to carrying that knapsack, and he feels very proud, because he is like his soldier father. Then when he goes to school, instead of playing pull-away and games of that kind in which initiative may be allowed, he simply marches a great deal of the free recess time under the direction of a man teacher."

Do we want our children to grow up and do the will of others? Why, a slave is a person who does the will of another. Poor Russia does not know what to do with her liberty. Why? Because she has never had liberty before. Individuals have never had it; they have had to stay put somewhere according to the direction of others. They have great love for liberty, but they do not know how to use it. They think that liberty is merely license. And that is the condition we must avoid in the schoolroom by giving our children a full measure of liberty and teaching them how to use it.

Everyone here, I think, has spoken about the great numbers in the primary room. Superintendents and college men are apt to feel that we can handle as large classes in the primary grades—even larger, they think—as in the upper grades. Now, the baby in arms has to be carried around by its mother. It requires constant attention. The little one of 2 or 3 requires somewhat less. When they get a little older they require still less attention; but the little children in the primary rooms can not button or lace a shoe; they can not make a knot. To say that we can teach as many or more in the primary grades as can be taught in the upper grades is beyond comprehension. We ought not to think for one minute that it can be done. Instead of herding our children in masses and putting 35 to 40 into one grade, we should remember that the younger a child is, the more help he needs.

To permit a child to use initiative does not mean that he is to be left to do just what he wants to do; that he is to run around aimlessly; that he is to be as noisy as he pleases; that he is to flit here and flit there like a butterfly, and grow up lacking in concentration. No; instead of a butterfly he should be like the busy bee. The bee is busy all day long. He has no time to waste. The boy who is a busy bee has no time to be noisy because he is interested, and when he does a thing he goes straight to the point. If he is going over to a table to get something, he makes a bee line there and he comes back. He has an object in view, and he is not aimlessly flitting and lacking in concentration.

If the child feels free, he will think less of the subject matter and more of what he wants to do. You know that Froebel soon found that his ideas could not be carried out in Prussia. The Prussian Gov-

ernment saw that any plan that allowed initiative in the children would never do in their military form of government, and Froebel had to go to Switzerland to work out his ideas.

Then another objectionable thing is uniformity. Everyone doing the same thing at the same time and in the same manner discourages leadership. What are we going to do to train for leadership? We should encourage departure from uniformity, instead of thinking that there is merit in it. The merit is not in uniformity, but in the system which allows liberty with a purpose, a goal.

The assignment, then, should be specific, so specific that every little one, no matter how slow his thinking, knows his purpose. The assignment need not be given by the teacher. Someone said that in 9 cases out of 10 it is worked out by the child, possibly with the teacher's help. But in working out this assignment there should be great freedom. Someone may want to work it out on the sand table; someone may want to do some work at the library table; and so on. It would depend upon the child.

A great danger, when we are trying to allow liberty, which is not license, comes in day dreaming. No one plan is sufficient always to avoid it. If we were trying to make machine operators, and if everything were to be the same day after day, we would need nothing but machine operators and one plan would answer. In giving an assignment to the children, in order that they may know what they are going to do, your assignment may be "Find the reading that you would like to do." Let them go over to a table and find the books that they would like. We are past the time when everybody must read the same book at the same time.

So I should say that the school is a busy hive of free little people, that the assignments should be specific, but in carrying out the assignments give as much liberty as practicable under our conditions, which are not ideal, but are working toward the ideal. If we never try progressive methods in unideal conditions, we shall never attain the ideal conditions.

Miss Leighton. May I have one minute to give the teachers a few words on what was said in Chicago. I am chairman of the committee on citizenship in elementary schools for the National Security League and have been released from the Passaic public schools by the board of education to help the teachers. I want to show that a primary-school teacher out West did something which Bainbridge Colby said is the most helpful thing any teacher has done for the Government. The teacher wrote on the board, "Our country needs ships," and the children themselves of their own initiative went to work. They made ships that day, they drew ships, they cut ships, they molded ships, and they went home with the thought to their

people that our country needs ships. When Mr. Colby heard that in Chicago he said, "Splendid; if the primary teachers could only take one thought at a time from the Government, emphasize that one day at a time, and let that message go out to our people, the little children would be helping the Government in the best possible way." I want to ask you teachers to let all your war work be constructive and not destructive. If we can help you in any way, call on the National Security League, which is helping the National Council for Defense, and we will give you all the material and all the help that we can possibly give. The last word is, *constructive work, not destructive war work.* No making of guns and that sort of thing, but the making of the things that are helpful.

THE CHAIRMAN. Not so very long ago a group of teachers were discussing this between-recitation period and the idea of busy work or seat work, and the question was asked, "Why do we have it?" "Oh, it is necessary." "Well, why is it necessary? Is it necessary for the teacher or is it necessary for the child?" "Oh, it is necessary because the teacher has so many things to do." And that seemed to be the idea. For that reason we have brought to you this question: "What ideal shall dominate the work of the period?" "Is it necessary only that pupils shall be profitably occupied while the teacher gives attention to other groups, or is a period of free activity of essential value to the child's development?

MISS ANNIE E. MOORE (Teachers' College, New York City). I could not resist placing that word "only" in another position in this statement. As the topic reads it is this: "Is it necessary only that the pupils may be profitably occupied while the teacher gives attention to other groups?" I could not resist taking the "only" out and making it read this way: "Is it necessary that the pupils may be profitably occupied only while the teacher gives attention to other groups?"

I think we have a perfect right to inquire whether the children are always the most profitably occupied when the teacher is giving them her strict and undivided attention. I think also that we ought to ask always, not, "Are the children simply profitably occupied," but "Are they the most profitably occupied?" Now, with the free organization that we have heard so much about this morning, this matter of children choosing what they shall do implies a great deal of individuality. It implies that all the children may not be doing the same thing at the same time. Things look ragged when you go into a schoolroom and see here and there children who appear to be doing nothing. In my experience I have never gone into that sort of a schoolroom without occasionally seeing one or two children who were apparently wasting their time. That is, the children were not

doing anything very much. But you go into a schoolroom organized on the old plan, in which there was one group out with the teacher, apparently very closely concentrated upon the lesson in hand, the recitation, as we choose to call it; and you see other little children sitting quietly at the seats, all doing the same thing, and your snap judgment would be that those children were all profitably occupied. The probability is that in both groups there would be a considerable number of children who were not profitably occupied. It shows up more clearly in the free organization. You can spot the idle child more readily when children are busy in groups—some groups very busy, very much concentrated on what they are doing. I merely call attention to the fact that you must get down beneath the appearance of things to know whether the child is really doing anything that is worth while.

I went into a classroom of a teacher who is a very strong primary teacher, whose work is very much above the average standard; but she had the same difficulty that almost all primary teachers experience of keeping the children profitably occupied. In the group that was not working with her—and their exercise was one that was also above the average of the old type of seat work—there was one little boy who worked more rapidly than the other children and finished what had been given him to do. There was nothing else. The room was not equipped so the child could go and get something else that was profitable and interesting to do, and he got into mischief. The teacher turned to him and said, "Have you finished your work?"—the assignment; we have been speaking of assignments this morning. He said that he had. "Well," the teacher said, "it wouldn't hurt you to do it again, would it?" showing clearly that all she wanted was that the child keep busy, doing something, whether it was profitable to do it over again or not.

I think that Miss Dobbs has outlined the evolution in the topic that we have been working on for three years. She indicated an evolution in her statement of it. I think we must take another big step in that evolution and get rid of the idea of the between-recitation period. In the first place, we have too many periods, and we have entirely too many recitations. Our program is so chopped up that the child has not time to get started in anything that is profitable, either with the teacher or without the teacher, and to keep at it long enough to prove that he can do something in it. We must think more of the work of the day, we must think of it as a day's work, all of us together, sometimes working in small groups, sometimes working in large groups, sometimes working with the teacher, sometimes working without the teacher; sometimes one or two children working in the hall on something they are going to bring in after a while and do in the class; but

think of it as the day's work. Here again we are constantly appealing to the people in the audience who are not plain primary teachers. Here again the teacher needs help from a higher authority in the system in getting rid of this little chopped-up program, 10 minutes for this and 10 minutes for that, and 10 minutes for the next thing.

I have the utmost sympathy for the teacher who has the 50 or 60 children, and it is folly for us to recommend the same kind of organization for a primary classroom in which there are 50 or 60 children that we would recommend, and could say absolutely that it could be worked out successfully with a class of 25 or 30 children. But I do not believe that more than 1 out of 100 classroom teachers are doing the best that can be done even with the conditions as they are. We have said several times this morning that the teacher is doing the best she can. Doubtless individuals are, but there are many places in the country where even with a larger number of children than they ought ever to put into the hands of one teacher a different arrangement of the day's work would make it possible to give a great deal more of free activity.

A few weeks ago I was in southern California, and there, with that wonderful climate, that wonderful out of doors, those splendid school buildings—I have never seen such school buildings as they have in southern California—they are not using that out of doors. In fact, I found only a very few schools there in which they seemed to think it possible to turn a group of children into the open unless the teacher could go along with them. Let us get the idea of breaking up that class of 50 children into groups, some of whom might go out of doors and play if they could do no better. Let us get rid of the idea that they could not go out and work in the garden, could not go out and do something in the sand box out of doors, unless all went together with the teacher. We are not all doing the best we can with the conditions under which we are working.

This free period, it seems to me, is absolutely essential for the child's development. It is not merely a question of keeping him occupied, because it is during this free period that the child's own purposes have a chance to arise. Purposes can not arise, they can not come to the surface, unless there is a degree of freedom that will permit the child to use those materials in some way that is different from the way any one teacher would think of working out.

We can not work out exactly the best uses of clay for all of the children. I saw the other day in a first-grade room some of the most remarkable clay work I have ever seen. I would not believe three or four years ago, before this experimental work started, that first-grade children could do the work those children did. They worked individually, each on his own project. No teacher indicated

or assigned the work to be done with that clay, and wonderful things came out. I saw the children working, and I know exactly how they did it; it was absolutely their own conception and it was their work. As the finished work stood on the shelf, hardened with the beautiful colors the children had given it, it looked like majolica. It was artistic, creative work, and it was done because the children had had not 10 minutes or 15 minutes, but their periods out of recitation had been brought together so that they could have 50 minutes for that sort of thing. Consequently, more had been done and it had a unity and a variety about it that we do not see when the children all model the same thing. Out of that free period their plans and purposes had arisen.

It is only by having this free period that we can be sure that the children will be left alone for a little while. Even the teachers, who most earnestly desire to give the children an opportunity for better expression of themselves and more opportunity for their own individuality to arise, will acknowledge that it is often hard to restrain themselves from interfering when they ought not to interfere and to allow a child to go on working out his own little scheme. It is only by giving this longer period, in which the children may choose what they shall do, that we can provide for all types of children. All of you who have done advanced work in education know how great is the variation in individuals, and it is only by giving such opportunity that the various types and temperaments have a chance to assert themselves.

I visited a first-grade room a few days ago during the free period. The whole day was relatively free as compared to the old classroom organization, but this was the time when for 50 minutes the children were at liberty to choose what they would do. The room was well equipped with material from which to choose. It was provided with lockers, so that each child would know where to get his own materials and also the materials that belonged to the class as a whole. Two or three little girls were sitting at a table. One was finishing a charming little tea set which she had modeled. It was a project that had been going on for days with that child, until now she had four or five pieces finished, and she was coloring them. Another little girl was working on the typewriter, getting some captions ready for pictures that had been put on the wall. She was working on the typewriter for first-grade work, set with unusually large type. One little boy was working in his shop. He was off in a corner of the room where there was a workbench, and he worked for the whole 50 minutes. Another boy was coloring his cannon.

Three little boys were working on an aeroplane. It had been the conception of one of the children; the others had joined him. He

had started it at home and brought it to school. Different suggestions had been made until this aeroplane had reached marvelous proportions. The serious problem was how to get it to fly. Some of them had seen a marionette show a week or two before and conceived the idea of operating it by means of strings and wires, so they strung a pulley up in one corner and attached another pulley low down. The day before, it seemed, they had used some cruder method and there had been an accident. The aeroplane fell down and hit a little boy on the head. They decided then to have a danger sign, so when they started the aeroplane one little boy got a sign that said "Danger" and put it on a stick and stood with it in the most dangerous situation. The little girls working on their tea set were absolutely oblivious, except that when the boy came out with the danger sign they moved their table a little farther away and went on with their work.

Can you conceive of any greater activity than an aeroplane flight in a schoolroom? No reading was going on at this time, although it did occur later in the morning. The project itself would never have arisen if there had not been a free period. It was just in the day's work.

The word "ideal" is used here. What ideal shall dominate the work of the period? It seems to me that one of the ideals is the greater faith in the children. We have been afraid of our children. We have been afraid of little 6-year-olds; afraid to give them an opportunity to initiate things. We talk about it a great deal, but we are afraid to let them do it half the time.

Our ideal will be better equipment. We must have something more than sticks and shoe pegs and toothpicks and tablets and pencils in our classrooms. If it is going to be a workroom, we must have more things. It does not have to be extravagant equipment, either. We must remember that we are not only training for initiative and training for leadership; we are also training for cooperation. When we break up these artificial groups which we have formed we must lead the children into forming other groups for themselves, and they will do it.

Do you know how little freedom primary children have in our schools the country over? By actual time measurement it has been discovered that in 12 leading cities in this country the average time in 118 first grades when those children may speak freely in actual conversation, using language in the natural everyday fashion, is less than five minutes in two hours, and out of the 118, 79 have either absolutely not one minute for that kind of oral expression or have somewhere about two or three minutes for 40 or 50 children.

Miss Abbie Louise Day (Cleveland Heights, Ohio): I want to take up for a moment or two the impossibility of having free work

in our classrooms as they now exist. I was asked recently to inspect a small system of schools, to see what was needed. In room after room, from first grade to the eighth, there were as many seats screwed to the floor as could be screwed down and allow the children the number of square feet per child, the amount of fresh air, and the amount of light required by law. We have very beautiful buildings all over this country in which the only space left for children to move about is between the desks and perhaps a little up in front around the teacher's desk. There is no equipment, no wall cupboards down low to which the children can go and get material in the manner described by Miss Moore. There are no drop-leaf tables screwed to the walls. There is no opportunity for children to stand and work, because if they stand in the aisle they are in the way of children passing, and if they stand by the desk their legs are cramped. People who have been studying hygiene tell us that 6-year-old children should be on their feet from one-half to two-thirds of the time. What opportunity is there in the average first-grade room for children to be on their feet one-half of the time, except at the blackboard or in the aisles?

We have failed to realize that you and I are now uncomfortable from sitting in these chairs. I wonder how many of us enjoy sitting in the same sort of chair all day long and in the same place, with our hands folded. I should like you to try that for a little while. I have been with principal after principal and superintendent after superintendent whose ideal classroom is the rigid row. A whole row stands and sits properly, and the whole class turns, marches to the board, and hears, "Don't pick up a piece of chalk, Johnny, until I tell you." I have yet to find more than three men in the school business to whom the ideal of school order and school discipline and school activity is not just that state of affairs. That is true not of the men alone; it is so with most of the supervisors. They like to have a "nice-looking" school.

If we are going to give the children liberty, the first step is to give the teachers freedom. Our courses of study are dictated. Our time spaces and the study time given to the different subjects during the week are dictated. If there is anything more autocratic than a public-school system, I do not know what it is. The first thing we want to do is to get the teachers together. If you have a teacher who still wants to have children sitting in rows and rising and standing together, and you can not get her to see that things will be very much better if she will get into that classroom a real democratic spirit, then let her go on. You would not be democratic if you compel her to have a free school, and you are not democratic when you compel her to have the rigid school when she would like to have a free one.

A superintendent said to me: "Oh, the State law doesn't allow free desks, and it is against the fire laws to have movable furniture in the room." If it is the State law that children must be forced to sit in these seats fastened down in rows, it is time to call upon the legislature to change the law. It is not a very difficult thing.

I think everyone here has emphasized the difficulties of work with 60 children in a room. Last spring I was called upon to go to one of the schools in a large city to help a beginning teacher in the first grade. The teacher was not really doing anything. In the room were 60 foreign children, only about half of them able to speak the English language. There were seats for 40, and the rest sat on the floor, under the piano, everywhere they could be put. What teaching could the girl do? The only thing she could do was to keep them happy and out of a brawl, and that was about all.

A business man said to me not long ago: "Our schools are not doing anything for the children; they do not seem to have any common sense, and they can not do what they are told." Why is it? We have put them into rows of desks for eight years. When a boy must do any sort of work in a place where there are not rows of seats he does not feel at home, and he does not know what to do; and when he does not have somebody tell him just what to do, as the school-teacher has been telling him, he can not follow directions. Most of our teachers have become as mechanical as our desks. We must go back to our teachers' training schools for the reason. Go into the normal schools and city training schools, and you will find the students sitting in rows, learning something out of a book and reciting it to the teacher. We have a great many splendid places where that is not done, but it is generally so. Most of our teachers come to us trained to teach the children by saying: "Johnny, you learn this, and then I will see how well you have it." This is not a thing of the past; it is a thing of the present.

My principal aim right now is to get furniture of a new type and to get materials. You do not have to buy all of the materials. We can go out of doors, as Miss Moore indicated, but, instead, day after day we are seated on these benches inside because we disturb the grown-ups unless we do it in just that way.

THE CHAIRMAN. A few weeks ago a very fond aunt said to me, "I wish you would use your primary council to do something for the bright children. I hate to have my small nephew, who is an exceptionally bright little fellow, go to school and in a little while be slowed down to the pace of the average." It was just time then to send out the announcement of this meeting, so I wrote a circular letter and sent it with the announcement, asking what we were doing with the bright child and for the bright child. I am sure if there is

any child in the school that needs what we have been talking about, it is the bright child.

I asked a group of exceedingly good primary teachers what they were doing in this field. I said, "Isn't it true that you realize that you must promote at the end of the term a certain percentage of your class in order to keep your reputation? You realize that about 50 per cent of them can be dealt with in the average way; they will get the lessons from day to day. Another 25 per cent of them will get all you teach and more. They are the bright ones, who seem to learn things before you teach them. And then another 25 per cent are slower than the average, and you put your extra time on pulling up the laggards."

"Oh, yes," one of them said. "I never do anything for the bright ones. They will get up to the mark without any teaching at all. I never pay any attention to my bright children." Is that patriotic, is it democratic, is it human? Do we not need the best talents of the best children developed to their highest capacity just as much as we need to conserve all the energy that may be found in the subnormal children?

Miss Reynolds. A year or so ago there came into our school in September a little girl who had been in school one year before. In school she had patiently plowed through "The apple is red and the apple is green and the apple is good to eat." At home she was reading "Little Men," "Little Women," and books of that kind. Her mother brought her to school to see if we could give her a chance. We test the children who come in with a simple reading test. At the end of the second day the little girl went home and said, "They tried me in one group this morning and tried me in another group this afternoon, and I believe by to-morrow I shall be where I belong." It is encouraging to be where you belong; but if you have 50 or 60 children in a room, you can not find out where anybody belongs.

Miss Dunn (rural supervisor). I want to make a plea for the country child. I came to this meeting to-day because you were going to talk on what the child does when the teacher is not with him. Now, the primary child in the country school needs every one of these things that you have been discussing to-day. The first-grade child gets about one hour a day of teaching and he spends the rest of the time between 9 o'clock and 4 doing nothing, or doing busy work, which is the same thing. It is not impossible for the country child to be educated during all the six hours he is in school. The child comes to school to be educated, and we have not a right to pretend to educate him one hour out of that time and let the other five pass in stultifying him, because that is what it does. Exactly the same standards of efficiency, exactly the same standards of motive and

initiative and valuation should apply to that seat period or play period or free period as apply to the with-the-teacher period, and I want particularly to make an appeal for the provision for the country teacher of some material to make it possible for her to educate that child. A country school is usually one of the most barren of barren places, and because those children are thrown on their own resources five hours of the day out of the six they must have material which will stimulate them and lead them to develop projects of their own and to be educated six-sixths instead of one-sixth of their school life.

DR. MCMURRY. The subject I would like to hear discussed has not been touched here this morning, although I have been intensely interested in all that has been said. I was not quite sure whether there was a 1-hour period or a 50-minute period, or a free period that was under discussion, or whether it was the question whether there should be a free period and then a period for recitation. My question is which of those two is the bigger thing to which the other should be subordinated. Shall the recitation periods exist? Shall the recitation periods themselves be changed by their contribution to these other periods or are the other periods rather a relief from what you expect as real educational effort? I am coming to believe that the ideal situation is illustrated pretty well by the country school. I am in sympathy with what Miss Dunn says. The country school by force relieves the child from the immediate pressure of the teacher. I believe we ought to learn to judge the success of our work as teachers by the purpose of the children the moment they are free from our immediate control. If they can take a period following the recitation period and see things to do, and also follow a plan of procedure which is the result of thought, then our work is likely to be good. And my particular point is, shall not our recitation period find its purposes in that other period, so that we shall be teaching and preparing all the time for that other work? The recitation is not the thing to be worked up to as a climax of all the efforts. The recitation is to be measured by the work of the students outside, and it shall play into that work outside all the time, finding its goal there, rather than the other situation, having the outside work find its goal in the recitation period.

The whole equipment of the school, in our modern conception of children, has not been sufficient. In the thought of the public in general the smaller the children are, the more they may be unequipped. That is the controlling thought all the time. Since suffrage has come to women I feel that the whole situation may be very rapidly modified. In New York City, where there are probably now 10,000 teachers, the women will appreciate the work of the 6-year old child more readily than the men, and if they will assert their right, I think the matter of equipment may be solved.

MRS. WHITE. I am not a teacher, but I was in my young days. I have sat through this conference with the utmost interest, and particularly that part of it which related to the care of the bright child. The reference which Dr. McMurry has just made to the New York voter has brought to my mind the bright child in the aspect in which the voter has taken that question to himself. Last fall I visited one of the three villages for the feeble-minded maintained by the State of New York. That village is remarkable for its equipment. There are 98 buildings, including a theater building, and beautiful homes with hardwood floors and victrolas and everything you can think of. The educational part of it is housed in the poorest buildings of the group, but it is a perfect system with everything that can be desired. Three hundred and sixty feeble-minded children are kept there until fairly into adult life. Think of a State spending millions of dollars for defectives when our children in the public schools are herded in with one teacher for 40, 50, or 60 children.

MISS MANN. It was just 12 years ago that I attended my first meeting of primary teachers at the State convention in Michigan, and exactly what has been said this morning was said at that time relative to the number of children in our classes. The teachers said: "If we could only impress on these school committees and the superintendent that the teacher can not provide busy work with 40, 50, and 60 children in the room." At that time the all-important problem was to provide that busy work which is now a crime. It seems to be a pity that 12 years later we must still be talking. I should like to know if two things can not be brought about. First, some kind of resolution emanating from this body that might reach the school committees directly. You can refer to the superintendents, but they are not the responsible parties. We need to reach the members of the school boards in some practical way, and we need to reach them with arguments from outside their local community. We require the help of such an organization as this.

MR. MERRIAM. If you do not think too badly of a mere superintendent, I should like to make a comment or two. I wish to emphasize Dr. McMurry's last remark and the remark from one of the teachers who spoke, namely, that perhaps men have not been considerate enough of children and that it would be a very good idea for the women primary teachers and supervisors to back up fully the recommendations of those venturesome superintendents who recommend new furniture, new equipment, and reduction in numbers instead of suffering in silence. I feel that very much can be accomplished, not wholly by a resolution, because resolutions are not taken to mean very much. Conventions are in the habit of making resolutions, but when they make them they have not discharged their

full function. A resolution is very good as crystallizing the sentiment, but it should be followed up. The last speaker suggested a resolution. Good. Follow up that resolution in all parts of the country by bringing pressure to bear upon the superintendent and the primary supervisor, who is usually a woman. And some of them need to have pressure brought to bear, for we learned from some one here that many primary supervisors like to see children in rows. Follow this matter up as to the numbers, as to equipment, and as to the following out of projects. I am very hopeful of this project method of teaching in the primary grades. I am very sure it is going to provide for the gifted child and for those not gifted.

Suggestion No. 2: If you have a room filled with seats screwed to the floor and you see no light at all, take out the middle row of seats across the room and that will give you an aisle 4 or 5 feet wide. Then if you have no place for cupboards around the sides of the room take soap boxes or any other boxes of that size and have the children paint them, put a little curtain in front and have those arranged next to the teacher's desk, and that will make a place to which children can easily go from all parts of the room to get materials or put them away. It will also add a great deal of space to the room for moving about, so that the pupils will not need to sit for so long. It can be done in any schoolroom no matter how crowded.

Lastly, one question. We learned from the supervisor from Missouri that there are from 50 to 60 pupils commonly in rooms there; from the supervisor from Fort Wayne that 35 to 40 pupils are perhaps too many. Miss Moore, of Teachers' College, intimated that 25 to 30 was about the number. I should be very much pleased to know what would be the opinion of some of the supervisors present as to the number of pupils in a first or second grade. Given the condition that the children have no language difficulty—that is, they are not foreign children—and are not backward, but in the average English-speaking first or second grade should the number be 25, 30, or 36? In my own school system I have absolutely limited the number to 36.

A DELEGATE. My first grades are limited to 25.

MR. MERRIAM. Is my number too high?

(Several delegates answered, "Yes.")

MR. MERRIAM. Of course, if you say "yes" we are confronted with difficulties as to the buildings.

A DELEGATE. Why do you take 36? Is it because it makes six rows with six seats in each row?

MR. MERRIAM. Just as rapidly as I am able to do so I am organizing first, second, and third grades with entirely movable furniture. In my new location, where I have been since the summer, I have suc-

ceeded in changing over three rooms only, but we shall have more than that before the year is out. If you say that 36 is too large a number, that would probably mean more building somewhere, and from the administrative standpoint, that is often a large problem. Oftentimes cities are limited in the amount they can expend, and personally I should rather see teachers' salaries go up, and have 36 in the first grades than to use that money to get more space somewhere and have 20 in the first grade.

If it is in order I should like to ask an expression of opinion as to the number. This society might perhaps have discussed it at some time, and there may be some information at hand.

A DELEGATE. Some of you may recall Col. Parker's answer to the question put to him by a teacher who was worried with 50 or 60 pupils. She asked, "Colonel, just how many children do you think a primary teacher ought to have?" He hesitated for a while and then he said, "Well, some ought not to have any." The colonel did not commit himself, and I am afraid we had better not commit ourselves unless we make it a minimum and maximum number.

DR. MCMURRY. I think there is a good chance for a good influence here. I think, instead of a recommendation passed by this body, a statement signed by persons who are well known all over the country would be the better method. If eight or ten persons who represent the various phases of interest here would sign their names to a definite recommendation, so that their opinions could be quoted, so that people throughout the country could write to them, if necessary, it would be a vital influence. The public is ignorant as to why it is so important.

I would suggest that the phrase that Miss Moore used, "A day's work," be taken—a day's work in a first grade, and in a second and in a third—and each case be worked out so that the real work that is ideal could be read with some illustration of the whole process that happens in one day in a first grade, where the equipment is proper. If that could be put into the hands of people here and there they would get the idea. It would probably be better than if it were offered in a logical manner.

A DELEGATE. Let me add to that, Miss Moore's experience contrasting the day's work under the present adverse conditions.

THE CHAIRMAN. Two committees were appointed to take immediate steps toward securing the information desired.

We are to have the pleasure of a few closing words from Mrs. Bradford, the president of the National Education Association.

MRS. BRADFORD. In regard to the particular question that has been under discussion, it seems to me that we can find an answer if we put to ourselves this question: Shall we continue to stress the "what and

how" of education at the expense of the "why," or shall we say, first, "Why?" and later "What and how?" In other words, we must come right down to fundamental grips with the reason that we have schools at all. We must come to a face-to-face conference with ourselves in reference to all phases of education in the present national crisis, as well as the fundamental purposes of education in a republic. We must ask ourselves, Why a public-school system at all? We know that a public-school system is to produce rounded human beings, with trained bodies and trained minds, and, as I believe, the instant obedience to that trained mind. There is something in here—you may call it the moral sense, you may call it the higher self, you may call it conscience. I like to call it the spark of the most high God that baptizes the body of each human being that comes into the world, making it the temple of the Holy Ghost. When we have the right kind of education this Nation shall be to the world the temple and spirit of love and the spirit of truth; and the spirit of truth shall work through free human beings, human beings who know the difference between mere liberty and actual freedom. In my own mind I always hold this distinction between liberty and freedom: Liberty is the absence of restraint; freedom is the power efficiently to do right. And that is the kind of thing that we want for our children in these free periods.

There can not be any question but that the free initiative in school is the one thing we must stress. We should always have stressed it, and more than ever now must we stress it because there is just one organization that the Government of the United States found in this country last April through which the spirit of America, voiced by the Government of the United States, could reach every home in the land; and that organization was the 750,000 teachers and the 2,250,000 children in the schools. And that system must be taught through the free initiative of the children, through the spirit of cooperation among the children, through the spirit of selflessness in the children. That system must teach that the United States is to take the leadership in the rebuilding of civilization throughout the world. To that end we must have an educated citizenry, a citizenry each member of which can think straight, will want to work hard, will always play fair, and will love mightily.

Primary teachers, you have the biggest task of all. You have the fundamental task. You get the soul when it is plastic. The rest of us get it when it is hardened. I salute you as those who build the image of the Most High in the Nation through drawing out the Divine Spirit in the little children; and let all of us, State superintendents, county superintendents, and principals, realize that the schools do not exist for us at all. It seems ridiculous to have to say that, but it is necessary, for some of us seem to think the school

system is for the teacher or that it is for the superintendent. Let us set the little child in our midst, build our civilization around the child, guaranteeing to the child his right to the trained body and the trained mind, guaranteeing to the child the right to have his mind developed so that he can think straight, and his body so that he can work hard, and his spirit so that he may want to play fair, and his soul so that he will know how to love, and we need not fear for the things that will come after the war, because it will mean love throned upon law and real civilization coming as the sunrise from the bloody cloud of war that now stains the eastern sky.