Geo N. Shattuck

From
A. J. Osborn
As a slight recognition of many courtesies Extended
July 12, 1905.

NOTICES OF THIS WORK.

[*From Silliman's Journal of the Arts and Sciences.*]

This work is a development of the system of Carstairs, for many years well known and extensively popular in England and France.

Carstairs' system is the *only* one within our knowledge that presents any thing like a philosophical view of the art of writing. The great advantages which this system possesses, and the success which has uniformly attended its introduction, are abundantly proved by numerous and highly respectable testimonials.

MR. FOSTER'S account of it is clear and concise, and is in many respects *superior* to the original work of Carstairs. We hope ere long to see this work introduced, and this system taught, not only in our elementary schools, but also in our higher seminaries.

[*From the Albany Argus.*]

MR. FOSTER'S "Development" is drawn up with conciseness and perspicuity, and is well designed to convey a just notion of this improved system of penmanship. Of the Carstairian system, as taught by Mr. Foster, we have taken some pains to inform ourselves; and we conceive that we discharge only a duty in recommending it to public attention. It produces a remarkably neat, flowing and uniform hand, in a period so short as to bear no proportion to the years of labour and application under the old systems. The present work is designed for the use of heads of schools, and others desirous to teach or learn this art; and it cannot pass into too many hands.

[*From the New-York American.*]

The public testimonials in favour of the philosophical system of Mr. Carstairs, have confirmed its adoption in the first literary institutions both in England and upon the Continent. In England, it was several years ago recommended to the public at large, by a meeting in London, at which many of the most eminent men in the kingdom were present; and in France, the Royal University has taken this system of chirography under its especial patronage. Some explanatory work upon the subject has hitherto been wanting in this country; and the thorough manner in which MR. FOSTER has accomplished this object in the volume before us, will, we have no doubt, effectually recommend to the public both the system itself, and the work in which it is so ably developed.

[*From the Troy Sentinel.*]

Mr. Foster, teacher of writing in the Albany Academy, has published a very useful work, entitled Practical Penmanship, being an exposition of the celebrated system of Carstairs.

The peculiar merit and great excellence of this system are found in the complete and accurate analysis of the *movements* of the arm, hand and fingers, employed in the formation and combination of letters; in other words, it is the

only system yet offered to the world which teaches the right use of that natural writing machine, the human arm, with its equipment of thumb and fingers.

Nobody, prior to Carstairs, has taught, in a philosophical and demonstrative way, the principles upon which a uniform, easy, graceful, and *rapid* handwriting could be acquired and permanently retained. The object of Mr. FOSTER's treatise is to teach this system. His work is well executed, and eminently deserving of attention.

[*From the Albany Evening Journal.*]

The system detailed in this work is radically different from any other hitherto published, and is designed to lead the learner from the simplest elements of penmanship to the most finished business hand. It is founded on rational and self-evident principles; and is destined, in our opinion, to supersede all other systems now in vogue. It abbreviates the period of study; reduces the amount of labour; and increases, beyond all other methods, the easy and correct attainment of this useful art. In Europe, notwithstanding the deep-rooted prejudices it was destined to encounter, this system is now very generally adopted.

[*From the Albany Daily Advertiser.*]

We would invite the attention of teachers to this work. It supplies what had always been a desideratum in this country—a method of teaching with facility, *rapid* as well as fine writing. With a modesty which does credit to the author, this work professes simply to be a "development" of the system of Carstairs. His deference prevented his saying, perhaps even from thinking, what we think and shall therefore take the liberty to say, that MR. FOSTER has given a more practical elucidation of this system than any previous writer, not excepting Carstairs himself. The directions are so plain and ample that the system may be introduced into our schools and academies with entire success. The system of Carstairs is founded upon philosophical principles, and if generally adopted, will effect a complete reform in this art.

[*From the Albany Literary Journal.*]

It would be a work of supererogation to dwell upon the utility of the art of writing, and little better to urge the claims which an honest and thorough reformation in the manner of teaching it has upon public attention. It is a truth which every one who has examined the system of Carstairs must acknowledge, that all other methods are founded in error. This we acknowledge is saying a good deal, and perhaps will be called *wholesale* condemnation. It is nevertheless true, and is not said without competent knowledge to judge. We have examined Carstairs' system as laid down by himself, as explained by various French authors, and as illustrated in the still more complete and practical treatise of MR. FOSTER; we can therefore speak safely and confidently of its merits. Of all the volumes that have been published on the same subject—we believe we have seen all of them—this of Mr. Foster's is the most complete, and the best fitted for the purposes of instruction; and as such, we feel safe in recommending it.

2nd Combination

Bold and free writing performed
at once without lifting the pen
as it best answers the design
for use and beauty as it has
been always most encouraged
and recommended by men of
business

PRACTICAL PENMANSHIP,

BEING

A DEVELOPMENT

OF THE

CARSTAIRIAN SYSTEM:

COMPREHENDING AN ELUCIDATION OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE FINGERS, HAND AND ARM, NECESSARY IN WRITING; THEIR COMBINATIONS AND APPLICATION, WITH REMARKS ON THE IMPEDIMENTS WHICH RETARD THE PROGRESS OF LEARNERS, AND THE ERRORS RESULTING FROM THE COMMON METHODS OF TEACHING.

Illustrated by 24 Engravings;

SHEWING THE POSITION OF THE FINGERS IN HOLDING THE PEN;—THE PROCESS OF PENMAKING,—AND A SERIES OF PECULIARLY NOVEL AND INGENIOUS EXERCISES, CALCULATED TO IMPROVE, SPEEDILY, THE IMPERFECT WRITING OF ADULTS, AND TO LEAD BEGINNERS, ON RATIONAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES, FROM THE SIMPLEST ELEMENTS OF PENMANSHIP, TO THE ATTAINMENT OF A FREE, RAPID, AND

ELEGANT CURRENT HAND.

By B. F. FOSTER,

Accountant, and Teacher of Writing in the Albany Academy.

ALBANY:

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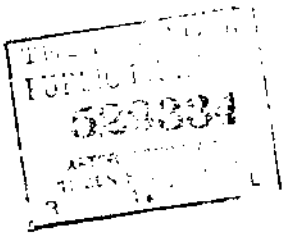

PREFACE.

No art which contributes materially to the convenience and happiness of mankind is beneath the attention of the most exalted intellect. It will not be denied that writing is such an art, and in proportion to its utility should be the pains taken to come at the right method of practising it.

No apology will therefore be required, by the candid and intelligent, for the present attempt to point out important deficiencies in the prevailing methods of teaching the art of writing, and to suggest the means by which those deficiencies may be supplied.

The following are Mr. Carstairs' remarks in relation to his system :—"Had I been able only to descant on those common modes and principles of penmanship by which the school-boy, after the labour of many years, is enabled to write a slow, stiff, and formal hand, I should have refrained from obtruding my studies on the notice of the public; but having, in the course of my professional labours, been led to the invention of a new mode of writing, facilitating to an almost incredible degree the acquisition of the art, and communicating to the youngest scholar the freedom and despatch that were formerly considered the desiderata of the art; I am not without hope that my appeal to the public will be encouraged as demonstrating only a proper and honourable enthusiasm in the propagation of a system which has already proved of general and invaluable utility."

It is believed that the instructions contained in this publication will enable the heads of schools, and all persons desirous of learning or teaching the art of writing, to do so upon correct and scientific principles, and as this system is founded on the unvarying laws of nature, as developed in the anatomy of the arm, hand and fingers, the author doubts not that it will eventually, in the necessary progress of society, triumph over every prejudice and be universally adopted.

The work is, with confidence, respectfully submitted to the good sense of a liberal and enlightened community.

B. F. FOSTER.

Albany Female Academy,
April 10th, 1830.

CONTENTS.

APPENDIX.

REPORT

OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE

ALBANY INSTITUTE

To examine the System of Writing invented by

CARSTAIRS.

It may be proper to state that in addition to the other testimonials which are produced in favour of this system, the following is worthy of a careful perusal. The Albany institute is one of the most scientific bodies in the United States. Many of its members have appeared before the public as authors and are known as the patrons of literature and the fine arts. A favourable report from such a source is, therefore, highly flattering and deserving of the most attentive consideration.

A committee consisting of Dr. Lewis C. Beck, S. DeWitt Bloodgood, Esq., and Dr. Philip Ten Eyck, was appointed to examine the system of Carstairs. Mr. Bloodgood, in behalf

of the committee, prepared the report, and at a subsequent meeting of the Institute it was read and unanimously adopted. It should properly be inserted in the transactions of that society, but it has been kindly transferred to the pages of this work. The author tenders his thanks to the Institute for their kindness in permitting him to make use of it on this occasion.

ALBANY INSTITUTE, February 1830.

The committee, to whom was referred the system of Penmanship as taught by Mr. FOSTER, on the principle of Carstairs, beg leave respectfully to report, as follows:

REPORT.

HOWEVER common-place the assertion may be, and however familiarity with the fact, may lessen the sense of its importance, the art of writing has been one of the most useful, that ever ministered to the wants or happiness of mankind. It was the first by which the boundaries of human science were enlarged, for language could only preserve within the narrow limits of its immediate application, the facts and the ideas which human reason pronounced worthy of remembrance, and then only during the occasion which called forth its exercise.

The art of printing, has, it is true, diminished the advantages of a written character, substituting in its place its more easily read pages, and preserving an entire and beautiful uniformity in its copies throughout the wide range of its utility.

Yet still there are and ever must be occasions constantly occurring when Writing can alone be resorted to, times which demand its instant use, and forms of business to which it is alone applicable. It must ever hold therefore, a high place among those prerogatives of humanity which render life advantageous to its possessors, and tend to secure to them its enjoyments and its blessings.

Many of the ancient heathen writers considered it as a gift vouchsafed to man by the gods themselves, and many enlightened Christians suppose that it was first revealed to man from Sinai's awful mount, amid the thunders of the law and the testimony.

It may not be amiss to give a brief sketch of the origin and progress of writing. The examination of a great many authorities has led us to notice some of the following opinions upon the subject.

By some persons it has been maintained, that the art must, in some degree, have beeen familiar to Adam, our great progenitor, since he named the created objects about him and must have endeavored to perpetuate their names upon the earth. St. Augustine and Josephus incline to this belief. Two pillars were said to have existed in Syria in the time of the last mentioned

author, on which writings and engravings executed by the sons of Seth the grandsons of Adam, still remained. Modern critics have ascertained that Josephus here committed an errror and that the Seth of whom he speaks must have been the Sesostris of a later time. The theory of Josephus was advocated in a celebrated work, called the Vatican Library, composed by Mutio Pansa, the Librarian, and published at Rome 1590.

Among the heathen nations, the question of its origin was warmly debated, and the Egyptians and Phœnicians, contended for the honor with zeal and ability. In the third book of the poem Pharsalia, the poet alludes to this controversy,

> Phœnices primi famæ si creditur ausi
> Mansuram rudibus, vocem signari figuris.

which is freely translated by Rowe in these lines:

> "Phenicians first, if ancient fame be true
> The sacred mystery of letters knew,
> They first by sound in various lines designed
> Exprest the meaning of the thinking mind.
> The power of words by figures rude convey'd
> And useful science everlasting made."

It is generally conceded that Cadmus, the Phœnician, introduced letters into Greece about 1500 years before the Christian era, and that they were then only 16 in number, to which four were added by Palamedes and four by Simonides the celebrated elegiac poet of Cos. It is a fact worthy of being remembered that the first step in the education of Grecian youths according to Aristotle, was, to trace the forms of letters with elegance and facility. From Greece letters were brought to Latium by Evander and if he was honored as a God after his death, and an altar was erected to him on Mount Aventine, amid the temples of Juno and the Bona Dea, it was a tribute as much to his scholarship as his piety. The forms of the letters thus brought from Greece, continued for some time nearly the same, and capital letters were almost exclusively used as is evident from the inscriptions on monuments and coins.

It is even said that the forms of all modern alphabets may be traced to the letters of Cadmus. The manner of writing was different in different countries. The Greeks originally wrote from right to left and left to right alternately, the Hebrews and Assyrians from right to left, the Chinese from the top to the bottom of the page.

The materials which the ancients used in writing were very various, billets of wood, metals, skins, wax, and the bark of

trees. A very interesting field of inquiry here presents itself for examination, and not only in the respect alluded to, but in many remarkable peculiarities, attending the practice of the art. Some of our most pointed and elegant allusions in composition, may be traced to the manner in which the ancients executed their writing. Even the forms of society, and the permanence of ancient governments might be advantageously studied, by referring to the progress of writing and the readiness with which it was executed. These considerations are perhaps not within the sphere of our present duty, and, however reluctantly, we must therefore for the present omit them.

With the changes which followed the transfer of the Roman Empire to the East, literature changed its character. The arts were perverted to abuses, and the gloom of the dark ages followed the perversion. The scenes of classical renown, were covered by the mists of error and ignorance, and it remained for the later period of the moderns to rescue even the tomb of Cicero from the oblivion which covered them.

Mr. Astle the celebrated English antiquarian, gives it as his opinion, that the Britons were not acquainted with written characters until the time of St. Augustine, who visited England during the fifth century. From this period down to the eleventh century very few persons were able to write. The great Charlemagne was unable to write his name, and he only began his studies under the celebrated Alcuinus, at the age of 45 years.

Louis 4th of France, who had the benefit of a residence of 13 years in England, was not more skilful in the art of writing than his cotemporaries and predecessors, and on the occasion of his ridiculing Fulk, Count of Anjou, for some display of his literary attainments, he received from him the sententious reply of *Noveritis Domine? ut rex illiteratus est asinus coronatus.* The latin classics were scarcely read, and contracts were made verbally for want of notaries capable of drawing them up. In 992 scarcely a person could be found in the city of Rome, who could explain the principles of writing, nor was there at this period a clergyman in England who could write a letter.

The very few persons who could do so, adopted the Saxon hand which is spoken of as being when well executed, of a very beautiful character.

In the 11th century however the world began to bestir itself; yet even as late as the time of Frederick Barbarossa, the first men of the age, himself included, were ignorant of the Art of Writing, and learning was chiefly confined to princes, from the circumstance that it required in those days the treasures of a

nation, to purchase even the few books which were known to scholars. The invasion of England by William the Conqueror, caused the introduction of the Roman hand-writing in that country. But not until the 13th century, was the world of letters in a better condition. The Art of Writing, by the force of precept and example among the learned then began to be exercised. Copyists were now attached to the principal universities; in the city of Milan fifty copyists found employment at one time in transcribing the works of the ancients. Every monastery of note had its apartment called a scriptorium, which was reserved for the business of copying. But notwithstanding the revival of letters, a library of 2 or 300 volumes, was in those days a treasure beyond the reach of most monarchs. The recovery of a MS. says an Italian author was at this time more regarded than the conquest of a kingdom.

The art of printing however soon gave a new turn to the fortunes of philosophy and the progress of the arts. The wooden types of Laurence Coster effected during the 15th century a complete revolution in literature. The art of writing, without abating its importance has since been applied to the practical and every day purposes of life, while printing steps in to preserve and multiply the productions of its sister art.

The purposes of commerce, of epistolary correspondence, and the constant necessity of rapidly setting down our own thoughts as they arise and before they are forgotten, must ever make the Art of Writing one of inestimable value to mankind. And indeed printing requites the obligations she is under to her, by disseminating the methods now adopted, to improve the hand-writing of merchants, men of business, and men of letters.

To produce uniformity, ease, and rapidity in the construction of written characters, has been the aim of the scientific in all refined nations. The attention of learned bodies has again and again been directed to the subject, and in our own day the philosophical system of Mr. Carstairs is receiving the critical notice of the learned in Europe and America. Before we proceed to an examination of his system however, which has been introduced into this city by Mr. Foster, let us notice some of the individuals who have made this subject their study from the time of the restoration of learning to our own era.

The first authors on this subject of any note are John Baildon and John de Beauchesne. They published a work in quarto at London in the year 1570, which they styled "a book of divers sorts of hands." It contained a set of copies of the various hand-writings then in use, which, according to Mr. Astle were

the set hand, the common Chancery and the Court hands partly Gothic and partly Norman, and were used in records and judicial proceedings. The Secretary hand in use for other purposes first began to be popular about this period. Beauchesne was a schoolmaster at Blackfriars, and his work was principally an illustration of the French and English secretary hands, the Italian, Court and Chancery hands, with the just and true proportions of the capital roman letters. This book opened lengthwise, and for that reason, was considered very remarkable and probably our modern copy books have been constructed on a similar plan, without their authors' knowledge of the reason.

The next author of note was Peter Bales a celebrated Writing Master born in 1547, who published in 1590, a work called "Brachygraphy or the writing schoolmaster in three books teaching swift writing, true writing and fair writing." This work went through two editions.

To Peter Bales we owe a passing tribute for his superiority as a penman. Indeed he occupies quite a distinguished place in biography, because in 1575 he wrote the Lord's prayer, the creed, the ten commandments two short prayers in latin, his own name and motto with some other things, within the circle of a penny and had the honor of presenting it in person to Queen Elizabeth at Hampton Court. His great dexterity with the pen recommended him to Secretary Walsingham, who employed him to imitate hand-writing for political purposes, in which he was remarkably skilful. Proceeding upon the doctrine of too many ancient as well as modern politicians, that the end justifies the means, this statesman was enabled by the "counterfeit presentment" of this Peter Bales, to baffle the design of his own and his country's enemies. Bales is also remembered for a trial of skill with another writing master of the name of Johnson, for a prize of a golden pen worth £20 sterling, which was awarded to him by the umpires. It is stated that when his work on writing was published he received no less than eighteen different complimentary addresses in poetry, and some of them were written by the most eminent men of the time.

William Kearney followed with a "new book, containing all sorts of hands usually written in christendom with the true proportions of the roman capitals." This was published in 1590, but it was thought to be a mere copy of Beauchesne.

At this same period and in the same year a learned Neapolitan, John Baptist Porta gave the world a work called, "*De occultis notis literarum*," in which he described 180 different modes of secret writing.

In 1617 a Jesuit, Herman Hugo of Brussels, published a work (*prima origine.*) on the "first origin of writing." This underwent a translation into German in 1738, by a person named Trotz, and was again translated into French and published at Paris 1774. Of the merit of this work we judge favorably from its being twice translated.

In 1662, David Brown a Scotsman, published a work called "New Invention or Calligraphy the art of fair writing;" also another work which he styled the "whole art of expedition in writing," which appeared 1638 in a quarto form.

About this period Sir Wm. Petty, who died in 1682, published his work on double writing, which we suppose was on the principle of the pentegraph, or manifold writer of our own times. It was undoubtedly a mere plan for copying, but it led the way to his subsequent advancement in life.

The celebrated Edward Cocker, whose arithmetic is a byword, and whose morals are a proverb, was the next writer of note. He was born in 1631, and died 1677. He published his copy book of "fair writing" in an octavo form 1657. This, with his other works called Cocker's Urania or the Scholar's Delight, and his sentences for copying, which still maintain their ascendancy in modern copy books, known in his day as "Cocker's morals," have preserved his remembrance to our own time.

Daniel Richard followed Cocker in 1669, with a Compendium of the most usual hands of England, the Netherlands, Spain, France and Italy.

The Mathematician, Edmund Wingate, born in 1593, and who died 1656, is the next author worthy of notice. He left a work called his "Remains," or Tutor for Arithmetic and Writing. The latter was however of the Cocker school, and by no means original. Wingate was a friend of Cromwell, took part in the civil wars, and was a member of Parliament.

In 1682, a person by the name of William Mason published a treatise called "an exact lineal, swift, short, easy method of writing," of which the title alone has reached us.

Claude Comiers, a canon of Embrun who died 1693, published a work which he called a treatise on Speech, Language and Writings, and which has been re-published at Paris, Brussel and Liege, and is still rare and difficult to be obtained.

In 1734, a very curious publication made its appearance in London, of which David Casley was the author. It contained "150 different specimens of the manner of writing in the different ages, from the 3d to the 15th century." This work must be very valuable, affording the precise information which would be useful in tracing the progress of the art.

A celebrated penman, Joseph Champion, who was born 1709, next caused a sensation among the lovers of penmanship. He published a variety of works on the subject, complete Alphabets of Characters, Copies of Engrossing Hands, Living Hands, Comparisons of Hands, &c. He was in great repute, and his schools were filled with scholars, many of them people of consideration and high standing in England.

In 1763, William Massey, the principal of a Boarding School in Surrey, published a work from the London Press, shewing the origin of letters, which contained an account of writing from the earliest periods, as also the the lives of the most distinguished English Penmen.

The celebrated D'Alembert did not think the subject beneath his notice, since in 1760, he published his reflections on the history and different methods of writing.

In our own day, King, Robert, Scott, Brayly, Milns, Butterworth, Thomson, Smith, Tomkins and Hodgkin, have each published something on the subject. Thomas Astle, keeper of the records in the tower and an antiquary of reputation, has published a very beautiful work on the origin and progress of writing, which was printed in 1803, the year of his death, and contains information of a peculiar character. A copy of this work is to be found in the State Library.

Carstairs, whose system is now to be considered, published his Lectures on the Art of Writing, a new system in 1814, and his Tachygraphy or Flying Penman, in 1815.

Before we enter into the particular examination of his system, it may be well to glance at those which have been promulgated by some of our own countrymen.

Jenkins appears entitled to preference, at least for seniority. He published his system in 1791. He does not go into the principles of combination in words and sentences, except in large hand. He is entitled to the merit of having given a very correct analysis of letters, useful rules for their formation, and directions for the position of the body. He gave no practical rules for the attainment of a running hand, but left the pupil t subsequ ..t practice for executing it rapidly and freely. Dean's Analytical Guide is perhaps the most shewy work we have had in this country. It made its appearance in 1805. It has much to say about a large hand and the Mathematical forms of letters, but contains little that may be reduced to every day practice in this otherwise interesting work. The principal part consists of extracts from Astle's "Origin and progress of writing." Several other works have been published from time to time,—Wrifford's on a plan some-

what similar to Jenkins in 1810, and a larger work in 1824, in which he advocates two motions for the hair stroke and shading. Huntington's, in 1824, also destitute of originality,—Guernsey's 1820, in which the sharp angular hand is taught, and which is not permitted in those Counting Rooms where business is carried on with precision,—Hewett's, Rands', Town's, Noyes', Jackson's, Gould's and Clarks', which appear on examination to be mere copy books, and do not aspire to the character of systematized works.

A work called Chirography published by the Chirographic society in Boston, 1825, is merely an abridgment of Writford's, and permits the lifting the pen from paper in the formation of letters. We must not forget to notice one or two European Writing Masters of late date, whose copies are known, if not used in this country, and who may be classed with those we have just enumerated. Telfair, of Belfast, Ireland, published a beautiful work as late as 1822, which, however, is merely a set of copies, and may be passed over as being impracticable of execution with any degree of despatch.

A recent work of Mr. Burgoin, a French writer, depends entirely upon the motion of the fingers for success in teaching the art, and in our view of the subject is imperfect, as will be perceived by reference to the system of Carstairs. Another, compiled by Ermeler, and published in 1818, contains a great variety of continental hands, and is really a beautiful work. It gives no method however by which to direct inquirers.

Having thus glanced at every author and every work of note on writing, which might elucidate our subject, or interest the student, we shall now proceed briefly to examine the celebrated method invented by Carstairs.

It may be said of the old systems, that they uniformly produced a number of bad consequences, such as the cramping of the wrist, the turning over of the hand, crooked instead of parallel lines in writing, and required the labor of years for the acquisition of even tolerable skilfulness.

Mr. Carstairs discovered according to the information given us, a very early attachment to the art he afterwards so successfully improved and taught, and was made an assistant at the age of fourteen in the Free School at Wickham, in the county of Durham.

From that period to the present, he has been indefatigable in the instruction of youth in all the usual branches of education.

A vacancy in 1800 occuring in the Counting Room of a Merchant, he was an applicant for the situation. It was that of

a copying clerk, but he found himself unable to write with the rapidity required by the transactions of the house.

The consciousness of his inability, drove him to a seclusion from business for three months, during which time he began to perceive some glimmerings of the system, which he afterwards perfected. Finding that he improved in his own practice, he offered his services to the public as a Teacher of Writing, and his success was such, that in 1803, he began to be known as an eminent professor of the art.

In 1809, he first communicated its principles in a paper published at New-Castle, upon Tyne, and in 1816 one of the Royal Dukes attended a meeting in London, at which many of the most eminent men in the kingdom were present, when the system was approved, and recommended to the public at large.

At the present day, it is the most popular one in Europe, and as it has been recently introduced into this country by Mr. Foster, it is certainly worthy the attention of our men of business, and the consideration of our scientific institutions.

We will now examine this system somewhat more minutely, leaving however the natural inferences to be drawn by those who choose to interest themselves in the further consideration of its merits.

Carstairs, proceeded upon the idea that an easy and flowing hand required by the exigencies of business, could only be produced by a correspondent ease in the motion of the limb or member of the body executing it, and that the greatest ease was not to be acquired by the use of any single part, but by the free action of the several parts which were found connected together, and which made up the human machine for writing.

This idea strikes us as being perfectly philosophical. It is the same principal of combination, which led to the construction of that part of the Steam Engine, called the parallel motion, by which an easy stroke has been given to the piston rod attached to the end of the lever beam, and which beam itself describing in its alternate movement, the arc of a circle, would naturally have thrown out of the perpendicular line.

He therefore considered that to obtain the greatest facility of execution, the joints of the fingers, wrist and elbow, should all be brought into play, and the arm itself should be the great producer of the combined motion.

He considered the movement, therefore, that of the arm, the fore arm and the hand.

The arm was to impel the hand along the line rapidly and

uniformly, and to execute the capital letters, and horizontal movements in general.

The fore arm was by its lateral movement along the paper to execute the letters and words in sentences, and the oblique movements connected with their production.

The hand was by the aid of the fingers to execute the smaller parts of the writing, and to aid as an auxiliary to the other free movements.

Out of these three, he produced all the combinations required for practical penmanship.

1. The arm and fingers are thus used in forming the capital letters, as B.

2. The fore arm and fingers, the fore arm resting equally on its lower side, and held up at its extremity by the third and fourth fingers to execute words without capitals.

3. The arm, fore arm and fingers to form words and sentences combining all the varieties of writing, as in the word Baltimore.

The mode of teaching upon these principles is as peculiar as the combination of movements.

Mr. Carstairs found that the elements of letters as written, consisted of several parts, and according to his plan, the pupils were first placed near a black board or a slate, with a pencil or a piece of chalk, and thoroughly exercised in forming the O; it being the first elementary constituent on Carstairs plan This is done to give freedom to the arm; and the facility of construction, not its nicety is regarded. The regularity of form is kept out of sight, the pupil being in this stage of the process only required to execute freely.

The forms of letters are next explained, and while these are taught, the fingers are confined by an invention of Mr. Carstairs, which ensures their exercise according to his system, corrects any former bad habit of holding the hand or pen, and leads to an entire alteration in these particulars. A ribbon is tied round the thumb and the first and second finger, to compel the pupil to use his arm, and another round the third and fourth to bring them under the palm, so that the fore arm may rest on their tips, and the hand be carried along smoothly upon the hard substance of the nails.

This position being secured, the next exercises consist of the formation of other elementary parts of the letters in perpendicular columns connected by loops, and then of letters and words connected in a similar way. This ensures freedom of manner, and facility of execution. A sheet of paper is also prepared, by being divided by a diagonal line running from cor-

ner to corner. The pupil is directed to write a particular word in parallel lines beginning at the widest part of the triangle formed by the diagonal line, and continuing to write it until the lines approach the bottom of the page. By this plan, the writer is forced to vary the size of his letters as he descends the page, and it brings into play all the movements required by the system. Nothing similar to these ingenious exercises is to be found in any work which has come under our observation.

The construction of ovals made in all directions, is also taught to exercise the fore arm; and lastly, the use of the fingers as auxiliary thereto, is taught by the construction of the remaining elementary parts of the letters contained in ll's, t's and ff's.

The style of writing thus produced is exceedingly neat and flowing. It recommends itself to the most casual observer for its excellence of character, and to the most prejudiced mind by the facility with which it is executed. It is the only system we know of, which can be acquired within a limited number of lessons. There is evidence of the fact, that while the old systems require years of practice to bring about the attainment of a practical hand, this of Carstairs has produced the result so desirable in every respect, in the space of one month, provided the pupil gave it the usual attention, demanded by any other studies.

Twenty lessons of one hour each, have been sufficient to correct the most illegible hand writing.

The engraved specimens, and the written copies of the pupils who have pursued the system of Carstairs', are highly satisfactory, and in our opinion, conclusive as to its merits.

The public testimonials in its favor in England have already been mentioned. In France, the *Royal University*, to whose supervision the public education of the country is entrusted, appears to have taken it under its especial patronage, and although it has been there known hitherto by many as the American system, we believe it is now justly and properly appreciated, both with regard to its origin and utility.

The society for elementary instruction, as late as June 25, 1828, made a report, in which it received great praise, and was recommended for general adoption.

It may be well to remark, that the hand writing in use in our judicial proceedings, requires amendment, as well as that taught in our schools. It is well known that the Court of Chancery in this state has been forced to make a rule on this subject, by which a legible and fair hand writing is made preliminary to

the filing of any papers by the Register of the Court.

In this enlightened age, an admonition of this kind seems to carry with it a severe satire upon that system of education, which is so defective as to make a provision of the kind necessary.

Every nation has a peculiar mode of writing, and our own should be distinguished for its business like character, its freedom and uniformity of appearance. To produce such a change, the improvement must commence with individuals, and by them be extended to others. Institutions of a literary kind must interest themselves in promoting inquiry in relation to the subject, and it is due to the system which we have had under investigation, that it should be generally known, and examined, and this committee cannot hesitate to recommend its general adoption.

INTRODUCTION.

The utility of the art of Writing will not be called in question by any member of an enlightened community. And whatever has a tendency to facilitate its acquisition and contribute to its improvement, cannot be destitute of interest. Such, in the opinion of the author, is the System invented by Carstairs, which it is his object, in the present treatise, to lay before the American Public.

Before proceeding to the immediate object of this publication, it may not be be improper to notice, briefly,

I. The errors in the common methods of teaching the Art of Writing.

II. The manner in which these errors are avoided or corrected by the System of Carstairs, and

III. The success which has attended this System in Europe and America.

I. Although there are many teachers of Writing who excel in the practice of the Art they profess, their mode of teaching it, is conceived to be exceedingly defective. It is well known that pupils, after having been placed for several years under the instruction of masters of the highest reputation, in our best schools, are still unable to write a good business hand. When a specimen of their penmanship is desired, it is frequently in their power to produce

a few lines executed with neatness and in just proportion; yet it generally has a stiff and formal appearance, and is destitute of boldness or freedom.—Should you be present during the preparation of such a specimen, you will find that it is a tedious and laborious operation, requiring ruled lines, several new pens, the drawing of every stroke with care, the frequent use of the scraping knife and India rubber, and the *painting*, as it is termed, of the parts that appear to be deficient in fulness and beauty.

Now it is evident that the concerns of business and friendship cannot be delayed for all these pains taking preliminaries. The clerk, who should make out accounts and invoices in this manner, would be at once discharged as useless. It is true, that a few, in proportion to the whole number instructed, seem to have a peculiar aptitude for the art, and make great proficiency, solely by the guidance of a good taste, and the improvement which results from constant practice. But what has just been described, is the extent to which scholars are generally brought upon the plan now pursued. When compelled to execute a specimen promptly and without the precautions adverted to, their hand-writing is often, very often, irregular and scrawling, if not quite illegible.* But

* The writer is far from asserting that there is to be found in the schools in this country any thing like a systematic attempt to deceive parents, with regard to the progress made by their children in writing Still, when the teacher, as is frequently the case, has bestowed much pains upon his pupil, it is natural that he should desire to receive sunable credit for his attention Unhappily, the mode that is adopted to show the pupil's proficiency, by the preparation of one or two specimens, to which a great deal of time and care is devoted, is as completely deceptive in its effects, as if it were resorted to with the deliberate purpose of deception.

The parent is pleased with the progress his children has made, and is soon no less surprised than chagrined, to discover that this progress, for all practical purposes, is only imaginary; and that the usual hand-writing of the child is little or no better than when he was first sent to school The following anecdote is related by Mr. Carstairs.

"A London merchant sent his son to a school at a distance, with the view of

it is conceived to be fully as important that the penman should be expeditious, as that each of his letters should be well formed. It follows, therefore, that one who has learned the common school-boy hand, can be of no service in a counting-house, as a writer; and hence it is generally found necessary to employ the young men who enter mercantile houses, for months or years in copying letters, &c., and thus to allow them to acquire an entirely new hand, before they are permitted to write a line in the Journal or Leger. It may be confidently asserted, that only a very few of those who are taught writing in our schools, are able to write well at the time of their leaving them. The remainder, though they may have learned to form the letters, and can distinguish a good from a bad letter, are utterly unable to write even a tolerable hand with facility. Nor is this all: not only is much time wasted in the vain attempt to acquire a good hand, but in many instances, bad habits of sitting and of holding the pen are formed, which it is difficult, nay, sometimes impossible to eradicate.

It cannot be doubted that, if the mode of Writing originally taught the pupil was such as is most easy and natural, it would ever after be more convenient

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qualifying him for the counting-house. At the end of six months, he was much gratified by receiving from him a specimen of writing, displaying the appearance of great improvement. This raised such expectations of his son's future proficiency, in an accomplishment for which he would have so much use in life, that he took occasion from it to recommend the school to his friends. Another half year expired: another specimen of writing, still more beautiful than the former, came home to the father; with which he was so delighted, that he extolled the school in every direction. One term after another passed away, with the manifest and increasing improvement of his son. At length, thinking him fully competent to business, he placed him in his own counting-house. He first set him to make out invoices; but, to his great surprise, he found him incapable of writing a single line well enough to go out of his establishment, without disgracing it." He immediately placed him under the tuition of Mr. Carstairs, where his improvement was such as to induce his father to send others of his family to be instructed in Mr. C's. new system.

for him to follow that mode. And if the habit of writing well be once acquired, it will seldom degenerate into that careless and scrawling hand, which we are so often obliged to decypher.

Since such are the effects of the prevalent method of teaching the art of writing, it may be safely inferred, that that method is radically incorrect. It is now about thirty years, since Joseph Carstairs, a teacher of Writing in London, arrived at the same conclusion. He was led by his fondness for the art, carefully to enquire into the causes of the evils above alluded to, and also into the means of removing them. After a thorough examination of the subject, he satisfied himself, that the evils of the old system arose chiefly from its insisting upon the use of the fingers alone, without a simultaneous movement of the arm. To this may be added the ordinary mode of giving lessons in this art. For this purpose, a particular hour is set apart once a day in some cases, and three times a week in others, during which the pupil is required to write from four lines to a page, in imitation of a line written by the teacher, or from an engraved copy-slip. More than this is not required, and is rarely allowed to be done; and the reason which is given for the adoption of this course, is to prevent the pupil from becoming wearied and disgusted with the acquisition of the art. But though weariness and disgust are to be avoided, if possible, it is evident that if an art is to be acquired with the least expense of time and labour, it should be made the chief object of attention. "*Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna*" is no less applicable to poetry than to the manu-

al art of Writing. But the prevailing mode of teaching, on the contrary, is to bring the pupil to his writing at long intervals, and to take him away before he has time to become interested in it; thus he often contracts, not only indifference, but dislike for the employment. Add to this, that the care of the writing-master ends with his hour or half hour, and in all the various exercises that may be required by other teachers, as for instance, the writing of French or Latin exercises, no comment is usually made upon the penmanship. The pupil, therefore, hurries through his exercise, attentive to that alone which will be criticised; and in the end comes off even worse than Penelope with her web, for she only unravelled at night what she had woven in the day, while the scholars of whom I speak, not only lose all they had gained, but acquire bad habits, which in many instances cleave to them through life.

The mode of teaching which has just been objected to, is adopted, it is said, to prevent the pupil from being fatigued and disgusted with that which it is necessary for him to learn. But if he were taught in that mode which should keep his body, as well as his arm and hand in an easy unconstrained position; and if at the same time he were to see clearly that he was making daily and hourly progress towards elegant penmanship, he would never be sensible of disgust or weariness.

II. But the defects in the old method of teaching penmanship, will be rendered still more apparent, by noticing the improvements which have been proposed and successfully adopted by Carstairs.

As in the other arts, so in that of writing, whatever is found to be the practice of those who arrive at the greatest perfection, is entitled to the attention of the candid enquirer. What an individual does every day in the year and every hour in the day, he is more likely to do well, than one who only pursues the same occupation at occasional intervals. The painter may naturally be presumed to have greater skill in handling the brush, than one who takes it up for temporary amusement; so also those who make beautiful penmanship at once their business and pleasure, will acquire greater facility in the use of the pen, than other persons. Mr. Carstairs remarked, that every elegant and ready penman, often, perhaps without being conscious of the fact, uses the fore-arm and hand, as much and as readily as the fingers; and that the more rapid the execution, the greater is the use made of the fore-arm. The reason is obvious: the muscles of the arm being much stronger than those of the fingers and thumb, are not so soon wearied, and the movement that is the least fatiguing is insensibly adopted by one who is constantly practising the art. Besides, as the words proceed from left to right, it is evident, that any one who depends on the use of the fingers alone, without a simultaneous movement of the arm or fore-arm, will be unable to write a word extending an inch or more upon the line, without having his hand gradually thrown over from left to right, in order to allow for the action of the pen upon the paper; the third and fourth fingers remaining fixed, while the other two are carrying the pen to the end of a long word, the hand and fingers

are painfully cramped and strained. On finishing one word, moreover, the hand is jerked along, and the under fingers made to take up a new position.—This they retain till the hand is again gradually turned nearly or quite over, and the fingers that hold the pen are again stretched as far in advance of the others as they can bear, when a new jerk is given to the hand, and so on till the writing is finished.

This then, Mr. Carstairs was led to consider as the origin of the many evils which result from the old method of teaching penmanship, viz:—*that the pupil is permitted or directed to rest the wrist, and generally also the third and fourth fingers, and to execute the writing with the fingers alone.*

Let any one whose hand-writing is very bad, observe his own mode of writing, and in nine cases out of ten, he will find that he bears the weight of his arm upon the wrist, and uses the two last fingers as a fixed prop. Thus the hand-writing of the person is uneven and crooked, and so long as he leans upon his wrist, how can it be otherwise? The radius of the circle of motion is very short, reaching only from the end of the third and fourth fingers, which are fixed to the point of the pen. The centre of motion is changed every time he lifts the wrist, and his writing very naturally takes the form of successive segments of small circles; to prevent which, he is obliged to make constant efforts to keep a straight line, which wearies and pains his fingers. Another person is sensible of the difficulties just mentioned, and to avoid them, he takes off the pen and moves the hand at the end of every downward stroke: the ef-

fect of this, indeed, is to keep the writing tolerably straight and uniform, but at the same time it is wanting in the appearance of gracefulness and ease. Besides, upon this plan, no person can write with rapidity; and hence it can never be adopted in the ordinary concerns of business or commerce.

The causes which have now been briefly adverted to, conspire to render the old method of teaching the art of Writing totally inadequate to effect the object for which they are intended: which is, to prepare the pupil for the concerns of active life. To attain this end in a more easy and certain manner. Mr. Carstairs recommends the following general plan:

1. To teach the pupil to form the letters of the alphabet by the movement of the *arm* alone, without a separate movement of the fingers.

2. To teach the movement of the fore-arm—the arm resting on the table near the elbow.

3. To teach the movement of the fingers.

4. The combination of these movements.

The manner in which these objects are effected, will be particularly explained in a subsequent part of this work.

III. The last point to which the author would briefly direct the attention of his readers, is to the success which has attended the System of Carstairs, and which, in his opinion, furnish abundant proof of the correctness of what has heretofore been said concerning it.

For upwards of twenty years, Mr. Carstairs has been engaged in teaching his system, in the city of London, with distinguished success. He has been

resorted to by persons of both sexes, of all classes, including many of the nobility, gentlemen, merchants and mechanics. And notwithstanding the deep rooted prejudices which the system was destined to encounter, its utility is now very generally acknowledged in that country.

But it is not only to a few private individuals that reference is to be made in behalf of the Carstairian System. Men of rank and of high public standing, have in the most public manner given it their unqualified sanction.

In July, 1816, a large and respectable meeting was convened at the Freemasons' Tavern in London, at which the late Duke of Kent, the brother of the present King, presided. Joseph Hume, well known in England and in this country, took an active part in the proceedings of the meeting. The object was, to satisfy in a public manner, those who might entertain doubts as to the practicability and value of the Carstairian system. To this end, the Duke of Kent informed the audience, that he had directed a number of poor boys to be placed under the tuition of Mr. Carstairs, in order that a fair experiment might be made of the merits of his System, and he could speak without hesitation of their rapid and extraordinary progress. Their writing books were also produced, so that all present might judge for themselves of the effects of Mr. Carstairs' instruction, by comparing the former cramped writing of these children, with the free, quick and beautiful hand which they wrote after only six weeks tuition. After a due examination, the assembly came to an unanimous reso-

lution, on motion of Mr. Hume, in favor of Mr. Carstairs' method, as "very superior to any now in use," and also as affording such a facility in the acquisition of the art, "as to be a saving both of time and expense." The resolution concluded with a strong recommendation of the System to public attention, and was signed by the distinguished individual who presided, and also by Mr. Hume and twelve other gentlemen, all of whom were of high standing. [See Appendix.]

To make his improvement more extensively known, Mr. Carstairs published a work on the Art of Writing, which contains the principles of his method of teaching. It is no small proof of the estimation in which this system is held in England, that this work has passed through six editions. It is the sixth edition, published in 1828, which has been used in the compilation of this treatise.

But the success of this System has not been confined to England alone. It was first taught in France, by one who had received his instruction from Carstairs. Its excellence soon attracted the attention of the French Society for the Encouragement of National Industry, who appointed a special committee to examine the subject. This committee made a detailed report upon the System, recommending it very warmly to the notice of the Society. The report was accepted, and at the suggestion of the Society, a translation of Mr. Carstairs' book was made into French, which passed through four editions. [See Appendix.]

In June, 1828, this System was also examined by

a committee of the Society for Elementary Instruction, under the presidency of the Duke of Doudeauville. This committee gave their unqualified sanction to the merits of Mr. Carstairs; who, in their language, "has rendered an important service to the Art of Writing, by his invention, and by the publication of his work." [See Appendix.]

In August of the same year, the System of Carstairs was examined by a special commission appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction. In their report, the commission assert, that without refusing the testimony in its favor, it is impossible to deny the advantages of this method—and they recommend its adoption in the Colleges of the University. And in November, 1828, this recommendation was complied with. Copies of the System of Carstairs, translated by Julien, were gratuitously sent by the Minister of Public Instruction, to the Rectors of the various colleges, accompanied with a circular, in which the introduction of the System is enjoined. Add to all this mass of testimony the fact, that upwards of twenty editions of works, all based upon the System of Carstairs, have been published in France, since 1825, and we cannot doubt for a moment the high estimation in which it is held in that country.

This System has also been tested by fair experiment in this country. The writer of these pages has had under his tuition, upwards of two hundred pupils, within eighteen months past; and during that experience nothing has occurred which has for a moment shaken his confidence in the correctness of the principles laid down by Carstairs. On the contrary,

every day has contributed to establish more firmly his conviction, that if the art of Writing were taught on the plan recommended by Mr. Carstairs, the proportion of good writers to bad would be increased ten fold, and the saving of time and expense in acquiring the art would be incalculable.

In conclusion, it is conceived by the author, that if any system is calculated to make good penmen—such as can write a rapid, elegant and truly mercantile hand, it is that whose general outline has been sketched. It may be truly said of it, that it is the only system which approaches to an analysis of the art; and in which the line is drawn between two things which ought never to be confounded, viz: the idea which the mind conceives of the forms and proportions of the letters, and the mechanical movements, commonly called "command of hand," by which these forms are expressed upon paper. But the greatest merit of Carstairs' System, consists not so immediately in this analysis, as in something which results from it; in calling the pupil's attention to the movements by which writing is executed, and thus inducing him to study and practice these movements, and not to confine his regard to the mere shapes of the letters. And it is respectfully submitted to the judgment of every candid and intelligent individual, whether the distinction thus drawn between the conception and execution of Writing be not a just one, and whether a more particular attention than has hitherto been devoted to the latter, would not be likely to produce better results than are generally obtained from the common modes of instruction.

PRACTICAL PENMANSHIP.

Section I.

DEFINITION.—ESSENTIALS TO SKILL IN THE PRACTICE OF THE ART.—FORMS OF THE LETTERS.—EXECUTION; DESIDERATA IN THIS.—CARSTAIRS' METHOD OF TEACHING.—WRITING SHOULD BE EXECUTED BY THE COMBINED MOVEMENTS OF THE ARM, HAND AND FINGERS.

PRACTICAL PENMANSHIP is the art of forming letters with a pen, and joining them into words by an uninterrupted series of marks, executed by the combined movements of the arm, hand and fingers.*

Two things are essential to skill in this art.

I. *A knowledge of the forms and proportions of the Letters.*

II. *The power of executing these Letters on paper.*

* It may be objected to this definition, that it excludes much beautiful writing, of the kind termed ornamental. If sketching or drawing the outlines of letters with a black lead pencil, and filling those outlines with ink, can be called penmanship, then may the engraver have equal claims to distinction in the art of penmanship, with one who excels in what is properly called writing.

The engraver cuts the copper gradually, and so finishes his letters by slow degrees, and not by one stroke of the tool he uses; and the ornamental writers put on ink by degrees, to give shade or body to their letters and flourishes. By this process, some have employed many weeks in the production of a single specimen, and whole years in the completion of six or eight pieces. Such productions are, no doubt, frequently executed with an elegance and freedom truly admirable, and display a degree of good taste highly creditable to the artist. But it must be apparent to all, that ornamental writing is quite a distinct art from writing as applied to the purposes of commerce. The former is one of the fine arts, though not usually classed among them; the latter is strictly a useful art, and it is this alone which is the object of the present work. Still, to obviate censure for so limited a use of the word *penmanship*, the term *practical* is prefixed, thus confining the definition to that species of writing which is of service in the practical concerns of life.

It must be apparent, on the slightest examination of the subject, that both the above requisites, are indispensable to make a good penman. If a person be deficient in the *first*, although he may possess the most inimitable freedom and ease in the use of the pen, his performance will displease and disgust, from its want of just proportion and symmetry of parts. If he is wanting in the *second*, however correct the form of each particular letter, there will be no freedom or grace in the general aspect of his writing.

When a man would speak well, he must first conceive clearly the idea which he desires to express; and if he would write well, he must have distinctly painted on his mind the characters which he means to put on paper.

And to illustrate the second essential of good writing by the same analogy, however just and clear a man's conceptions may be, if his utterance be slow and timid, his discourse will be imperfect and unsatisfactory; in like manner if his letters be most nicely formed, but combined without ease or gracefulness, the writing will never be thought beautiful, or even pleasing.

With regard to the first of these requisites for good Writing, Carstairs, as I am informed, is the first of the English teachers of Writing who has simplified the art by reducing all the letters to a few elementary strokes. In this country, however, what he has done in this respect, has been anticipated by Jenkins and others. And there are at present many Systems of Writing before the public, in which the forms and proportions recommended for the various

letters are quite in good taste. Were it not invidious, it would be easy to mention some in which this branch of the art is carried to a very great perfection.

It is the other part of Mr. Carstairs' improvements, regarding the *execution* of Writing, which is particularly entitled to attention.

Let any one reflect a moment on the prevailing modes of teaching the art of Writing, and he will at once perceive, that the attention of writing masters is chiefly devoted to the first of these requisites of a good writer, to the great neglect of the second. The author has carefully examined all the Systems of Writing extant, of any note, and all those with which he is acquainted, small and large, from the modest set of copy-slips, up to "Dean's Analytical Guide," in a handsome quarto, are filled so far as they undertake to teach the art, with minute directions for the forms and proportions of each letter, while the whole subject of *execution* is despatched in a few lines; yet if either of these requisites be more important than the other, it is unquestionably the power of executing.

For a man may have a correct taste and judgment in writing, or in any other art, without being skilful in the practical exercise of the same art; and every day we may see persons who are very good critics in writing, who will candidly confess that they do not know how to write with tolerable correctness. But the power of executing well, generally presupposes a just idea of the thing to be done. For it is

natural that the attempt to execute a piece of writing, should lead the mind to reflect upon that which the hand executes, that is, the very forms and proportions of the letters. So that it is plain that one may have a knowledge of the forms of the letters, and yet be deficient in the power to execute them; but on the contrary, one is not likely to have what is usually called a *command of hand*—a power to execute well without combing with it a correct idea of the forms of the letters.

Execution, then, ought much rather to be the object of the teacher's attention and efforts, than the mere forms of the letters. The growing taste and judgment of each pupil will gradually correct the imperfect, awkward or fantastic forms he may have given his letters, but, it is not so easy to acquire a masterly command of hand* by solitary practice, where the foundation was not well laid in the acquisition of the easiest and most natural movements of the hand and arm; nor can it be doubted that this is the principal reason why many continue through their whole lives to write very badly, notwithstanding that they have a great deal of writing to do.

It is precisely here, in the execution, as was before intimated, that the great error exists in the prevalent methods of teaching to write. The following are considered *desiderata* in the art, which the present modes of teaching do not supply, and which must

* It is also worthy of remark, that when a *thorough* command of hand is once acquired, it may be applied with facility to any *style, text or character*, so that a person who has once gained this advantage, may, on the inspection of an Arabic or any other foreign manuscript at once imitate its characters with ease and elegance.

be supplied before any claim can be laid to the merit of fine penmanship.

First.—That the pupil should be able to move the hand and arm in all directions, with equal facility.

Secondly.—That an habitual movement of the hand and arm should be acquired, equally applicable to every letter of the alphabet, and producing, by its own tendency, the same inclination of the letters, and the same distance between them.

Thirdly.—That the pen should not be taken off in any single word, and may be continued, if required, from one word to another.

Fourthly.—That the pressure of the pen on the paper should be light and easy, to promote uniformity of motion.

It is confidently believed, because it has been ascertained by numberless experiments, that every quality of a good penman, which is acquired by the methods of teaching now prevalent, may also be learned from the system of Carstairs. But this latter system goes further, and by fully supplying the important desiderata just enumerated, does what the old methods have not done, and cannot do.

The general plan pursued by Mr. Carstairs in his own teaching, and recommended by him for universal adoption, is as follows:

I. A precise idea of the correct forms of the letters must first be distinctly fixed in the mind, by careful inspection; by imitation, with chalk, pencil or pen, by tracing or otherwise; by forming them in sand; by examination with question and answer; or

finally by two or more of these methods as they may be most convenient, till the object is attained.

II. The other and more essential requisite, the power of execution, is to be given to the pupil:

First. By teaching him freely to use the pen in forming any letters by the movement of the arm alone, entirely independent of the motion of the fingers. To effect this, the old method, by which the learner was for a long time confined to horizontal lines in joining hand, varied only by a difference of size, is abandoned (after the forms of the letters are once well fixed in the mind,) for a series of exercises in perpendicular columns, the whole of each column being executed without lifting the pen. This compels the learner to keep the arm light and moveable, and gradually leads him from a single easy letter up to to the longest and most difficult combinations, extending over a whole line, yet performed solely by the movement of the arm.

But as many persons, who might at once perceive how great an advantage they would gain by the habitual use of the whole arm, would be continually liable from old habit to use their fingers, it is necessary to prevent this by tying the fore and middle fingers to the thumb in such a manner as to keep them in one fixed position. Thus the letters will be formed entirely by the movement of the whole arm, and the pen carried forward upon the line by the lateral movement of the arm, after the formation of each letter.

To obviate the evil of making the third and fourth fingers a fixed prop, and all the cramped and painful

feeling that results from their being so used, it is found expedient to tie them also by a tape, which turns them under towards the palm of the hand, and is fastened round the wrist, so that the hand slips along the paper on the nails of these two fingers. This makes the movement of the hand on the paper much easier than it is in any other way.

Secondly. The movement of the fore-arm is next taught. To effect this, the pupil is permitted to rest the arm at the elbow; then the muscles of the fore-arm are brought into play, and gradually disciplined to the exactness and smoothness of penmanship, by exercises in forming oblique and horizontal ovals, and afterwards. letters and words. The capitals, may be formed with the greatest accuracy by this movement.

Thirdly. After the movements of the arm and fore-arm are obtained, the movement of the fingers is permitted. This is comparatively easy, from the great flexibility of the muscles of the fingers, so that it is in general only necessary to leave the fingers at liberty, and they will be sure to come in aid of the hand, whenever their aid is required. The use of the fingers is by all means to be taught; but being acquired by the pupil with much greater ease than that of the arm and fore-arm, it is better that the use of these should be first taught, and all use of the fingers in writing be postponed till the use of the arm becomes in some degree habitual. Even when the fingers are allowed to be used, they are not suffered to execute the whole writing. They only form the upward and downward strokes of the letters, while

the hair lines connecting the letters are formed by the lateral movement of the arm or fore-arm. Thus, when the fingers are used, the writing is executed, not by a single, but by a double or combined movement of the fingers and arm, or of the fingers and fore-arm.

Fourthly. The easiest, and most healthful posture of the body should be uniformly kept. Attention should also be paid to the position of the paper, and the making and holding of the pen.

Fifthly. It is highly important, that when a pupil undertakes to learn the art of Writing, he should devote himself to it assiduously as a principal object, till he has acquired it. *Six hours* every day are the least that should be occupied in practice, and twelve so spent, would give more than a double improvement.

Sixthly. In justice to the community, another thing should be added, which some teachers have overlooked in a too great eagerness to make money; the number of scholars should never be so large that the instructor cannot pay close and particular attention to each.

Section II.

CHOICE OF QUILLS.—MAKING THE PEN AND USE OF THE DIFFERENT PENS.

CHOICE OF QUILLS.

The first quill in the wing is small, hard, thick in the barrel, and of little value. It may easily be known by the feather; one side of which is very narrow, and of uniform width, from the barrel to the tip. The second is esteemed the best in the wing; is of good size; makes the finest and most durable point; and, if properly manufactured, is very elastic. The narrow side of the feather, about one third from the top, suddenly *dents* in, nearly to the width of that of the first. The third is hardly to be distinguished from the second, in any respect. The fourth is larger, somewhat softer, and more elastic than the second and third; but does not hold its point so well. The whole narrow side of the feather is a little wider than that of the second and third, and is not indented at all. The second, third and fourth are usually put, by the manufacturers, in the same bunch and are called first quality: all the other quills in the wing, except, perhaps, the fifth, are thin and weak, and fit for nothing but to form a feeble, timid hand.

MAKING THE PEN.

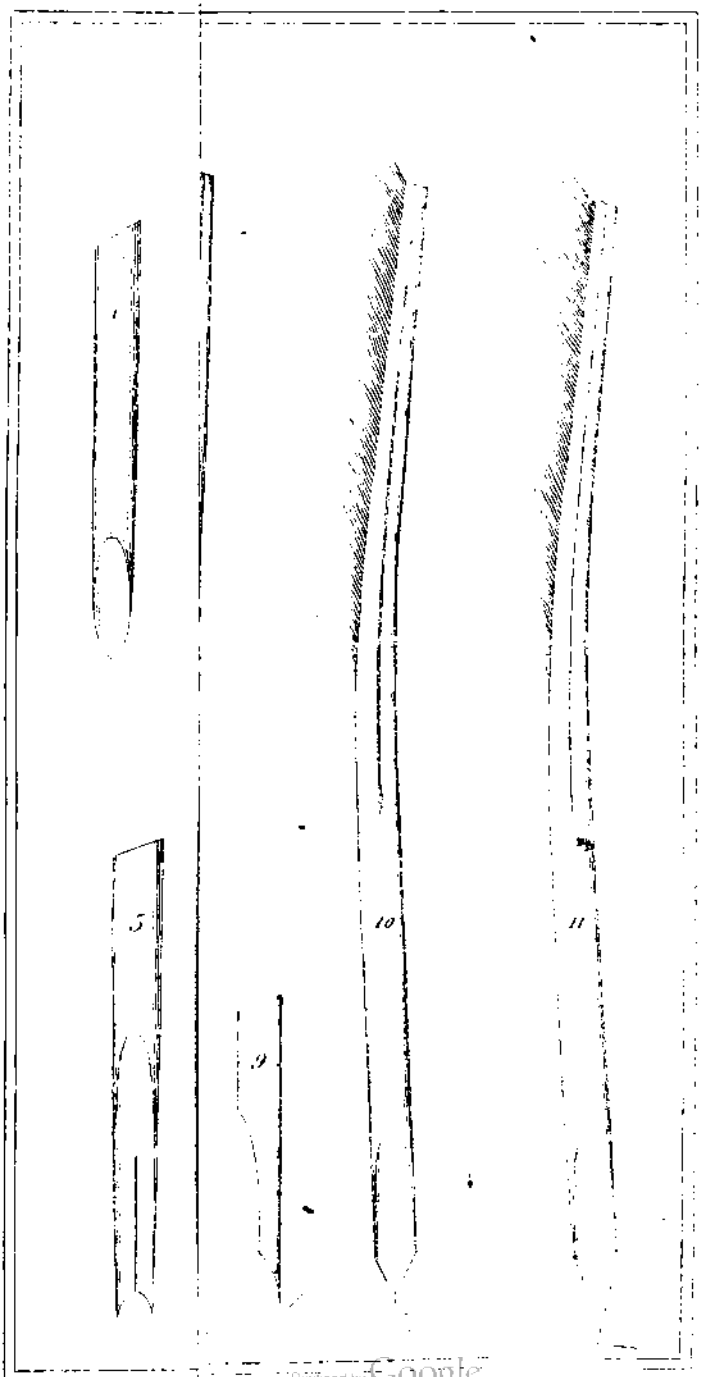
Plate 2.

It is impossible even for the most skilful to make a good pen, without a good knife; which ought to be kept exclusively for that use. The blade should be narrow, that it may enter the quill with the more ease, and the left side, as held when cutting, a little round or convex. Equally impossible is it to make good pens, without much practice.

The following directions I have endeavoured to make minute and complete; and doubt not, that they will enable any person, with proper attention and practice, to make a good pen. But the skill will be much sooner acquired, by nicely observing and imitating an experienced teacher.

As neatness in little things will form a habit that will extend itself to objects of greater importance, commence making your pen, by stripping the broad side of the feather from the stem, and cutting off three or four inches from the top. Then slightly scrape the quill, in the place where the slit is to be made.—Hold the barrel firmly between the thumb and fore finger of the left hand, with the back of the quill upwards, and the tip of the feather pointing directly in front of the body. Cut off half an inch from the end of the quill, in a sloping direction (fig. 1.) Turn the quill over, and make a similar cut on the other side; which will form two forked points (fig. 2.) Then cut away the same side an inch from the end, so as to take off about half of the barrel (fig. 3.) Now turn the

Pl. 2.



grooved part downward, and make a slight incision in the back notch, between the two forked points (fig. 4.): press the left thumb on the back of the quill, about three quarters of an inch from the end, at the point where you wish to have the slit stop: place the right thumb nail under, and in contact with the notch; throw it smartly up, and the proper slit will be produced, (fig. 5.) Then, with the grooved part still continued under, commence cutting on the right side, downwards; for large hand, from a little below the top of the slit; and for small hand, from a little above, which will form what is commonly called a shoulder: cut away the right side, in a straight line, sloping it more and more at every cut, and bringing it to a fine point, at the length you intend the slit to be, (fig. 6.) Then turn the quill over, and cut the left side exactly to correspond with the right; so as to bring both prongs, in equal width, to a point, at the slit, (fig. 7.) Place the thumb on the back of the point, and press it downwards, to make the slit close and firm for nibbing. Then take the quill between the first and second fingers of the left hand; lay the point (with the grooved part downwards,) on the left thumb nail, and take off, in a slanting direction, from about 1-16 of an inch above the nib, on the back of the quill, to the point of the nib on the inside, (fig. 8 and 9.) Then, continuing the nib on the thumb nail, place the edge of the knife across it, so as to make the knife and the side of the pen next the haft form an acute angle,* (fig. 7A,) and cut off a minute por-

* Many good penmen prefer nibbing the pen at right angles.

tion of the point, in a perpendicular direction. The right prong of the nib, as held when writing, will be a little longer than the other, for the purpose of making the hair stroke. The slit ought to be about a quarter of an inch long, for a free running hand; and still longer for large hand, in proportion to the size. A pen with a long slit will not only write freely and with ease, but will give a decided distinction between the up and down strokes.

The mode of holding and using the knife is important. It should be confined by the balls of the three last fingers, and, by closing and opening the hand, be drawn towards the palm.

To mend a pen, sharpen the point, and nib it anew, without making a new slit, as long as the old one is of sufficient length.

Those who know how to make a pen, may think the foregoing directions needlessly minute; but it should be recollected that they are designed for learners. With this view, it has been deemed important to give them a precision and particularity necessary for a person who never saw a pen, and that will enable him, with proper materials and a little practice, to make a good one. And it is considered of the greater importance, because, without good pens, no person can attain to any degree of perfection in the art of writing: and even should a learner become a finished writer, with pens made by his teacher, unless he can afterwards supply himself with this essential implement, properly made, he will inevitably and speedily lose his hand-writing.

USE OF THE DIFFERENT PENS.

7. Pen for despatch, before being nibbed.

7A. The same pen finished.

8A, Pen to copy plate 5.

9A, Pen for plates 6 and 7.

10. Pen for writing fine hand.

11. Pen for writing a very fine hand, or tracing light outlines in designing.

8 & 9. Operation for thinning the nib; the oblique line shewing the gentle slope which must form this cut. This operation, which precedes the final nibbing, must also be performed, but with more care, on the pens marked 7A, 10 and 11.

Section III.

POSITION OF THE BODY, HAND AND PEN.—TYING THE FINGERS.

The position of the body, hand and pen, and the various movements, are of great importance in the art of Writing, and require the utmost attention.—For, if these be not thoroughly acquired, ease, expedition, uniformity and elegance can never be attained.

It is of the greatest consequence to be conveniently seated. However well versed the pupil may be in the various movements, these movements will still be imperfect, unless the true position of the body be preserved: and they will be more easy or more difficult, as the body approaches or recedes from that position. Since there can be but one true position of the body, in every species of oblique Writing, the pupil should thoroughly habituate himself to that position, and never deviate from it.

No less important is the true position of the hand and pen: it requires the strictest and most pointed attention. But, as in all oblique Writing, there can be but one true position of the hand, the pupil should render that position habitual, and on no occasion depart from it.

POSITION OF THE BODY.

The following rules must be strictly observed:

1. Keep the body nearly erect. To bend much forward is not only ungraceful, but very pernicious to health. This cannot be too much insisted on by parents and teachers of penmanship. I have been informed by medical gentlemen, that many pulmonary affections have their origin in the position which young persons adopt when engaged in writing. The head is thrown forward, and the chest contracted; and when this becomes habitual, the most serious results ensue.

2. Do not rest the body on the right arm, but support it on the left, extended on the desk four or five inches from the edge, across the body, with the hand on the paper: extend the right arm forward, parallel with the sides of the paper, about four inches from the body, and at full liberty, so as to move in any direction, at pleasure; the hand gliding lightly over the paper, on the nails of the third and fourth fingers, as on a *moveable rest.* Keep the under fingers firm, and let them sensibly feel the paper; so as always to afford the hand a steady support.

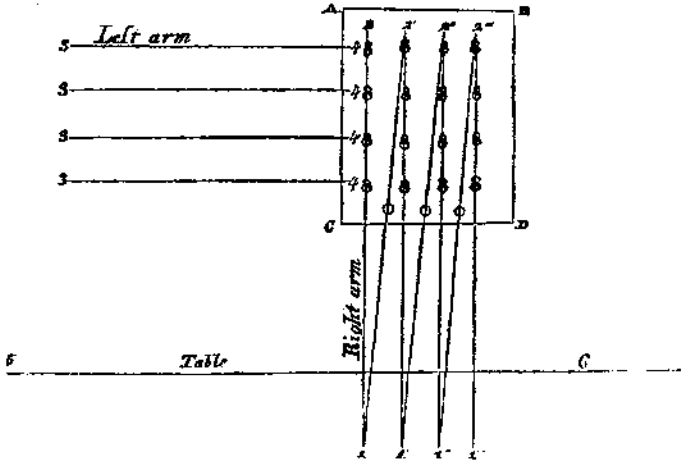
3. Place the paper directly in front of the right arm, and parallel with the edge of the desk.

4. Bring the left side of the body near the desk, and place the feet obliquely, so that they will be in the same direction with the slant of the writing.

The above position gives the body a firm attitude, affords the right arm an easy play, and allows it to move with entire liberty.

In general, persons who have learned by the old system, sit in front of the desk, keeping the right and left sides of the body equally distant from it. Hence they lean too heavily on the right arm; which renders it impossible for the hand to glide freely over the paper; because the hand and pen are forced to act in a direction contrary to the slope of the Writing. On the contrary, if the left side of the body approach the table, as has been recommended, the pupil will sit in an easy, convenient posture, and be able to write with the greatest possible expedition. Besides, by leaning on the left arm, all the movements will acquire greater precision.

POSITION OF THE ARMS, &c.



A, B, C and D, represent the paper.

The lines 3 and 4 represent the position of the left arm.

The lines 1 and 2 the position of the right arm.

3, The elbow, and 4, the extremity of the left hand.

1, The elbow, and 2, the extremity of the right hand.

5 And 6, the edge of the table.

The line O represents the oblique position of the fore-arm, when the pen, by the second movement, has reached the end of a long word, or of several small words.

1 And 2 represent the first movement; i. e. the movement of the whole arm.

8, The extremity of the right hand, the nib of the pen, and the lines for writing.

The elbow placed at 1, glides along the table from 1 to 1', from 1' to 1", from 1" to 1"', and so on continually to the end of the line. The hand, by a similar, though not simultaneous movement, must glide from 2 to 2', from 2' to 2" from 2" to 2"'.

POSITION OF THE HAND, AND HOLDING THE PEN.

Plates 3 *and* 4.

The hand and pen ought to preserve the same elevation, and the same position, at the beginning, middle, and end of the same word, and the same line. But among those who have learned by the old method, hardly one in ten, in *free writing*, retain the same position of the hand and pen in different parts of a single word; and without this, the writing cannot be regular or uniform. This variation in the position of the hand, is the inevitable result of the old practice

of using the little finger as a fixed prop instead of a *moveable support*, and forming the letters by the movement of the two first fingers, without following them by a corresponding, uninterrupted movement of the under fingers. Hence, the hand and pen perform a succession of irregular curves and jerks, and in their progressive motion, gradually turn over towards the right. Thus being continually used at varying angles of inclination, the pen gives irregular characters to the letters, and the writing appears unequal in style, and deviates from a right line. The pen should be held *loosely* between the thumb and first and second fingers, nearly an inch from the point; the thumb placed about three quarters of an inch higher than the end of the middle finger, and bent outwards.—The third and fourth fingers inclined inwards toward the palm of the hand, about an inch distant from the end of the second finger. *The wrist* ought always to be raised nearly an inch from the paper;* the hand supported on the ends of the nails of the third and fourth fingers, the top of the pen pointing exactly to the right shoulder. The right arm should rest *lightly* on the table, near the elbow, and be kept three or four inches from the body.

The teacher, as well as the learner, must be extremely careful about the elevation of the wrist; because almost every advancement in the art of writing will greatly depend on having the wrist at a pro-

* "Since I have written my former observations on the position of the hand and holding of the pen," says Carstairs, "I have found it more convenient to keep the wrist lying flat with the table or desk, and to move on the surface of the nails of the third and fourth fingers; this will assist the movement, more than by leaning on the end of the fingers, from the smoothness of the nails. This position of the hand, may be used or not, according to fancy or inclination. I now, however, always teach it to my pupils, as it gives a wonderful steadiness to the hand and arm."—(See plates 3 and 4.)

per height. And a habit of running on the nails will be sooner acquired by a strict adherence to this rule.

The above, is the only position of the hand and pen that ought to be taught:

1. Because all other elevations of the hand and arm are uncertain and unsteady.

2. If the position of the hand be varied, in writing, the nib of the pen must evidently change its position, and the letters cannot have either uniformity, or the same slant.

3. If a certain position be not acquired by the pupil in the beginning, it frequently happens that, when he commences writing fast, his hand leans to the right, comes in contact with the paper, and the pen is thrown so much over as to make it impossible to write otherwise than with the side of the nib.

4. Inattention to the true position of the hand and pen retards the progress of the pupil and gives him bad habits in writing, which are frequently retained through life.

5. If the slit of the pen be not kept even in making the down strokes, they cannot have a uniformity in thickness.

The arm ought to rest lightly on the table; and the pen should not be pressed heavily on the paper; that it may not be forced to form the down and up strokes stronger than it will naturally form them without any pressure. The same method (*that of keeping the pen light,*) must be pursued in large hand. If the pen does not make the down strokes bold enough, it is the fault of the pen, and not of the writer.

TYING THE FINGERS.

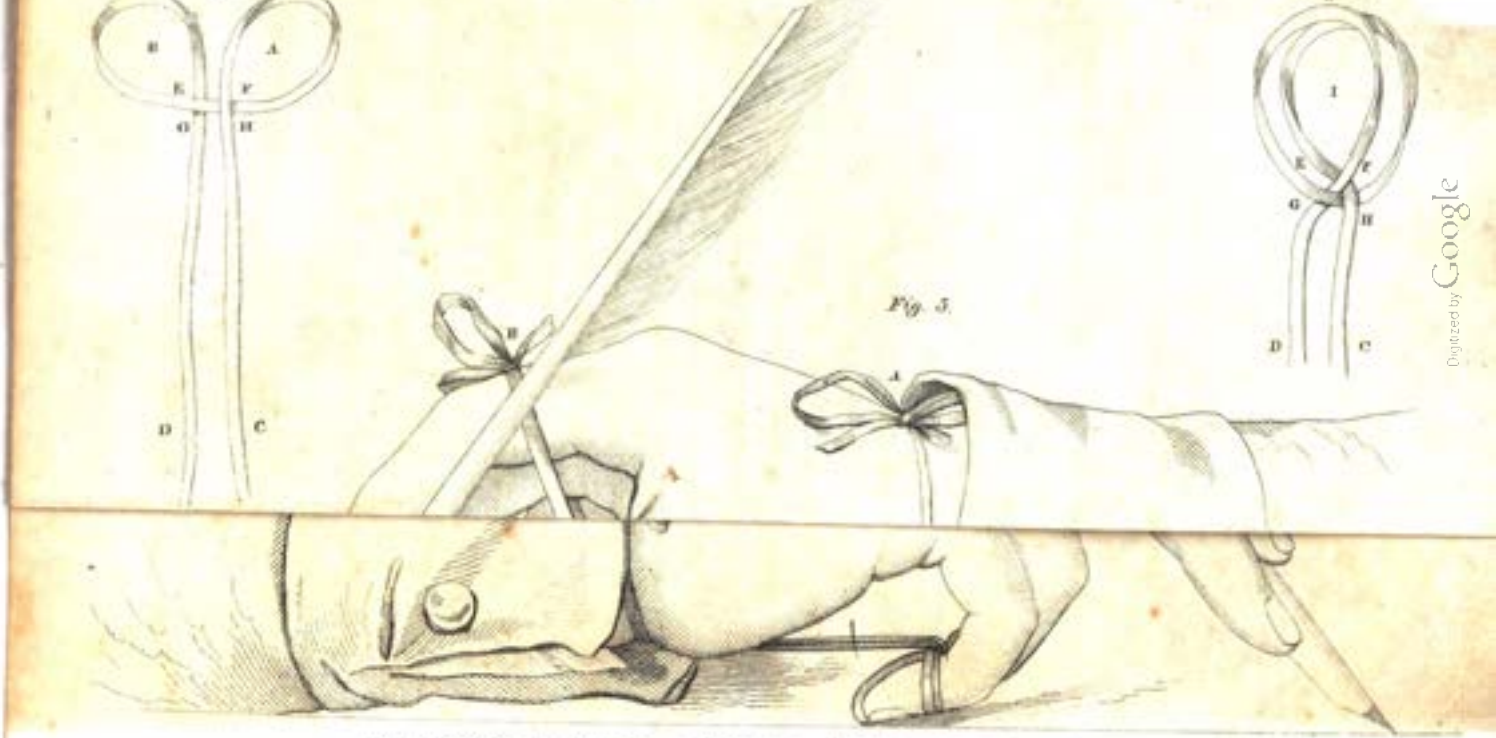
Plates 3 *and* 4.

Make the loops A, B, (fig. 1.) holding the parts E, F, G, H, between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. Then place the strand A under the strand B, which will form the loop I, (fig. 2.) Place the loop I over the scholar's third and fourth fingers; turn the parts E, F, G, H, on the inside, so as to bring the opposite parts of the loop exactly between the nails and the first joints: then draw the strands C, D, in opposite directions, as they will slip most freely; carry D round to the palm of the pupils hand, and C between the fingers, passing it over the loop on the back side, and draw it between them below, bringing it into the palm of the hand with C, (fig. 3,) which shews the knot finished, supposing A and B to represent the two fingers inserted in the loop.

Take the ends C, D, and make a cross knot (fig. 3, K,) at the wrist, and an inch a half from the extremity of the tied fingers (fig. 4.): then carry the ends round the wrist, and tie them in a bow-knot at A (fig. 6.)

The tying of the thumb and two first fingers presents no difficulty. (See fig. 5 and 6.)

Pl. 4.



THE LIGATURE MAY BE REMOVED AFTER A FEW DAYS.

Section IV.

ON THE MECHANICAL MOVEMENTS NECESSARY IN WRITING; THEIR COMBINATIONS AND APPLICATION.

There are three distinct movements, and one correct position of the hand and pen; and if these are not properly taught and acquired, no system of writing can be completely successful.

To these the pupil must pay the greatest attention; because here, throughout the whole course of instruction, lies the secret of elegance and despatch:—the great object to be attained.

MOVEMENTS.*

The first and greatest movement is that of the whole arm.
The second movement is that of the hand and fore-arm.
The third and least movement is that of the fingers.

These three movements are so indispensable, that if the particular use of each be not understood, or if they be confounded in practice, almost invincible difficulties will be experienced.

Equally important is it to understand their combination; and therefore, when the learner has thoroughly

* On the application and combination of the movements of the arm, hand and fingers, Mr. Carstairs has given more extensive information than any previous writer. He has distinguished six varieties, which were never explained before in any satisfactory manner; and even those which have been known, have not been properly taught.

acquired each movement separately, he ought to be taught the combination of the movements of the arm and fingers, and of the fore-arm, hand and fingers.

When the movement of the whole arm is in a perpendicular direction, it is designed to accustom the pupil to preserve the correct position of the hand and pen, and to move his arm lightly on the table.—When used laterally, it gives great expertness and rapidity of execution.

The *second* movement is that of the fore-arm, *without a separate movement of the fingers.* This process is the simultaneous movement of the *hand* and *fore-arm;* the muscles of the under part of the arm playing, but not sliding, on the table; the nails of the two under fingers gliding on the paper, the wrist lying flat with the table, not touching it, but elevated nearly an inch.

Thus, by means of the extending and contracting power of the muscles of the arm, *without changing its place on the table*, an astonishingly free, bold and commanding movement is obtained.

The *third* movement is so simple as to require no particular description.

COMBINATION OF THE MOVEMENTS.

The first combination, is *the addition of the movement of the fingers to that of the whole arm.* It is to be observed, that while the wrist is never, *either in this, or in any of the movements or combinations*, to touch the table, the arm is never, in any of them, to be raised from it. It must, however, always move very *lightly*

upon the table. These directions being observed, the fingers cannot be too freely used.

The mode of using the fingers in this combination, is, in all cases, the same as in the second.

The second combination, is *the addition of the movements of the fingers, and of the hand, to that of the fore-arm.* In this combination, the fore-arm rests on the edge of the table, near the elbow. The distinguishing difference between this combination and the first, is, that in the first, the whole arm moves upon the table, the elbow regularly following, and nearly coinciding with the movement of the hand; but, in the second, the fore-arm, although it moves on the table, remains *stationary* near the elbow.

In writing by the second movement, or by the second combination, the learner must slide his arm along the table, at convenient distances, so that his hand and elbow will always be in a line with the place where the word is to be written. At each remove, he will again rest his fore-arm on the edge of the table, near the elbow, and write the next word or words, as far as convenient, and so on to the end of the line.

In writing large or fine hand with more than ordinary care, only the first and second finger and the thumb should be used. In this case, the pen may be taken off after each letter, or after two or three letters, as most convenient. But this liberty is only to be allowed when great regularity and precision in the form of the letters is required.

The third combination, is the union of the first and second—not simultaneously, but in *succession.* Thus,

in writing the word *Baltimore*, the *B* is formed by the first combination, in the manner usually called "cutting capitals," and, without lifting the pen, the rest of the word is written by the second movement, while the fingers come into use in forming the letters *l* and *t*.

The second movement and its combinations are entirely new discoveries of Mr. Carstairs; and constitute the distinguishing features of his system. It is not pretended that they were never before practised.—An expert penman might sometimes be seen who did use them, but this was rare: and when it occurred, his manner of execution was not perceived. Even the writers themselves were ignorant of the nature of those powers which gave them their superiority over others. Like athletic men, they were conscious of their own strength; but, as it is the eye of the anatomist that discerns the admirable philosophy of their frame, so the acute observation of Carstairs discovered, and brought into systematic use, the peculiar movements which he saw produce such distinguished execution. His reflection convinced him of the evils of the old system; his experience soon satisfied him that the true remedy was to be found in these bold movements.

The following advantages were the result. The practice, in the old system, of frequently lifting the pen, which is utterly incompatible with bold and masterly writing, is avoided. Strength and steadiness of hand are acquired. The great fault of turning the hand over to the right, and jerking it from point to point, to keep pace with the progress of the writing, which may be considered as a concentration

of all the vices of the old system, is entirely eradicated; and in place of it, freedom, uniformity, grace, boldness and rapidity are obtained. The arm moves along insensibly, and without effort, by the very act of forming the letters. The hand is never fatigued. When the fingers are used, they act with much greater scope, steadiness and precision. The facility of movement acquired, greatly assists to give grace to the capital letters.

It is with some difficulty that learners can be brought to acquire these combined movements: and after they have practised them, in the exercises, they are frequently negligent in using them in writing.—Not because of any difficulty in the nature of the thing itself; but because resolute, persevering application is so rare, and because teachers so frequently hold out the idea, that any person may be taught to write well in a short time, and without much application!

Teachers cannot too strongly insist on this matter. The learner must, in the outset, adopt the true position of the *body*, *hand* and *pen*, and the *proper movements*; and rigidly adhere to them, on all occasions, not only in the practice of the exercises, but in ordinary business. Although, from the influence of bad habits, they may be inconvenient at first; yet, if strictly and uniformly persevered in, they will speedily lose all their difficulty, and the sooner become habitual. Indeed, this will otherwise never be effectuly accomplished. The matter is reduced to this simple alternative:—a rigid adherence to these requisites, or a failure of becoming a finished writer.

On the other hand, when these movements are once well acquired, which is only the fruit of much practice upon the prescribed exercises, they will *never* be lost. The ease to the writer which they produce, to say nothing of the numerous other advantages, will itself insure a continuance of the use of them ever after, without any deviation. The effects of always doing the same thing in the same way, may easily be conceived. They are witnessed in all the mechanic arts; indeed, in all the departments of life. This is the great principle of the *division of labour;* the means by which such astonishing results in every thing are produced. And, although great perseverance is necessary to acquire these movements effectually, yet there are powerful encouragements to effort and patience. For success is certain, and the pupil sees it: and, besides, there is almost a bewitching allurement in practising the exercises, growing out of his plain perception, that at every step, he is accomplishing great things, in the acquirement of power, in eradicating viscious habits, and in making steady, certain and permanent advances in becoming an elegant and expert penman.

SUMMARY.

EXPOSITION OF THE MOVEMENTS, THEIR COMBINATIONS AND APPLICATION.

The movements are thus distinguished:

1st. MOVEMENT, Is the movement of the whole arm in all directions.	2nd. MOVEMENT, Is the oblique movement of the hand and fore-arm, while the arm rests lightly near the elbow.	3rd. MOVEMENT, Is the movement of the thumb and fingers alone.
EXERCISES *For this Movement.*	EXERCISES *For this Movement.*	EXERCISES *For this Movement.*
All exercises in perpendicular columns, when single letters are connected by means of the loop Plates 8, 9, 10 and 11.	The oblique and horizontal ovals and plates 12 and 13.	All common size large hand, formal small hand, and all studied writing, where great exactness is required in the forms of the letters. Plates 6 and 7.

COMBINATION OF THE MOVEMENTS.

1st. COMBINATION. *The 1st. & 3d. Movements.*	2nd. COMBINATION. *2nd. and 3rd. Movements.*	3rd. COMBINATION. *The whole of the Movements.*
EXERCISES *For this Combination.*	EXERCISES *For this Combination.*	EXERCISES *For this Combination.*
This may be employed in all sizes of writing, but more particularly in practising. Plates 5, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23.	This combination may be used in all sizes of writing not exceeding two inches in height, free running hand, and all quick writing. Plates 6 and 7.	This combination is applicable to all the sizes which have a curved or straight line leading from one word to another. Plates 14, 15, 16 and 17.

CAPITAL LETTERS.

The capital letters may be made by any of the movements, combined or separately, as the teacher or learner may think proper.

Section V.

FORMS AND PROPORTION OF THE LETTERS.

Agreeably to the plan recommended in the foregoing pages, the first object in teaching the art of writing, is to impress distinctly on the mind of the pupil a just idea of the best forms and proportions of the letters. There are various means by which this object may be speedily and effectually accomplished. Almost every child, long before he is brought to a desk, in order to be taught to write, will be found amusing himself with making pictures, or, more properly, scrawling figures with such materials as he can lay hands on. This natural inclination requires only to be properly directed, and the shapeless figures may be made to assume proportion and symmetry. Let the pupil continue to use the slate and pencil, or paper and led pencil, which he has been accustomed to resort to for childish diversion. Or, if more convenient, as it is certainly less expensive than the latter, let him be provided with a black board and chalk.

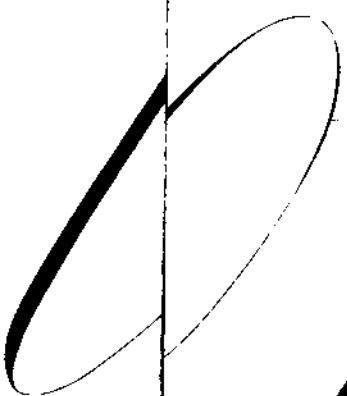
It may naturally be asked, since penmanship is to be taught, why not give the pupil a pen from the first? The answer is ready,—that it is desirable for a child to have its whole attention confined to a single object at a time. If we give a pen to the young pupil at his first lesson, his attention is alternately

Pl. 5

4

4 a

1



3

4

occupied by *two* objects, each of which is new, and consequently difficult to him,—the manner of holding his pen, and the form of the letters. The distraction of mind which follows this constrained attention to two things at once, is apt to produce the ill effect that neither is learned well or easily; and this is entirely prevented by simply teaching one thing at a time.

First, therefore, let the pupil learn the forms of all the letters, by using any of the materials mentioned above, and afterwards when these are perfectly familiar, let him take a pen, and he will then have nothing to do but to learn the use of that new instrument. These observations, it will at once be perceived, apply only to beginners. Those who have been accustomed to the use of the pen, may with propriety continue the use of it in improving the forms of their letters. The manner of holding it they will find described in a preceding page. The pupil being provided with convenient materials, must next have copies placed before him similar to the first line of PLATE 5.

The characters in the first line comprise the common top and bottom turns. From them, singly or combined, a majority of the letters of the alphabet may be formed. Indeed they contain the most important elements of English hand writing. They must, therefore, be practised with the copies before the eyes of the learner, till they become perfectly familiar. When this is done, the pupil must be taught to do *without* copies, by writing each of the several characters in the plate on hearing its num-

ber given out by the teacher. He may next be permitted to join the characters together to form the letters of the alphabet. Thus, on joining the characters numbered 1 and 2, the pupil will have learned to form the letter *a*; 3, 3 and 4, form *m*; 3 and 4, form *n*; 2 and 2, form *u*; 1 and 2, taken singly, form *o* and *i*; 1 and 2, the latter be made twice the height of the former, form *d*; and so on. After these first lessons have been practised for a sufficient time, at the discretion of the teacher, the pupil may be be permitted to join the letters into words, such as *union*, *uncommon*, or any other word not going beyond the limits of the characters contained in PLATE 5.

As to the size of the writing, it is strongly urged that the letters be made very large at first; the height of *four inches*, if the pupil be twelve or fifteen years of age; and of one or two inches, if only five or six years. As this length can only be reached by moving the arm, the smallest children will find no greater difficulty than grown persons in making the characters. The advantage of making the letters of so large a size is two fold. It serves to fix in the mind a just idea of the exact proportions of the several parts of the letters, at the same time the pupil is insensibly obliged to move his arm up and down in forming the letters, as it will be impossible, from their great length, that he should make them by resting the hand and arm, and moving the fingers alone. Thus the arm is gradually habituated to a steady and continued movement, which is perhaps the greatest accomplishment of a penman.

Pl. C. 3d Movement.

Elementary Principles. Irregulars.

1 2 3 4 4a 5 6

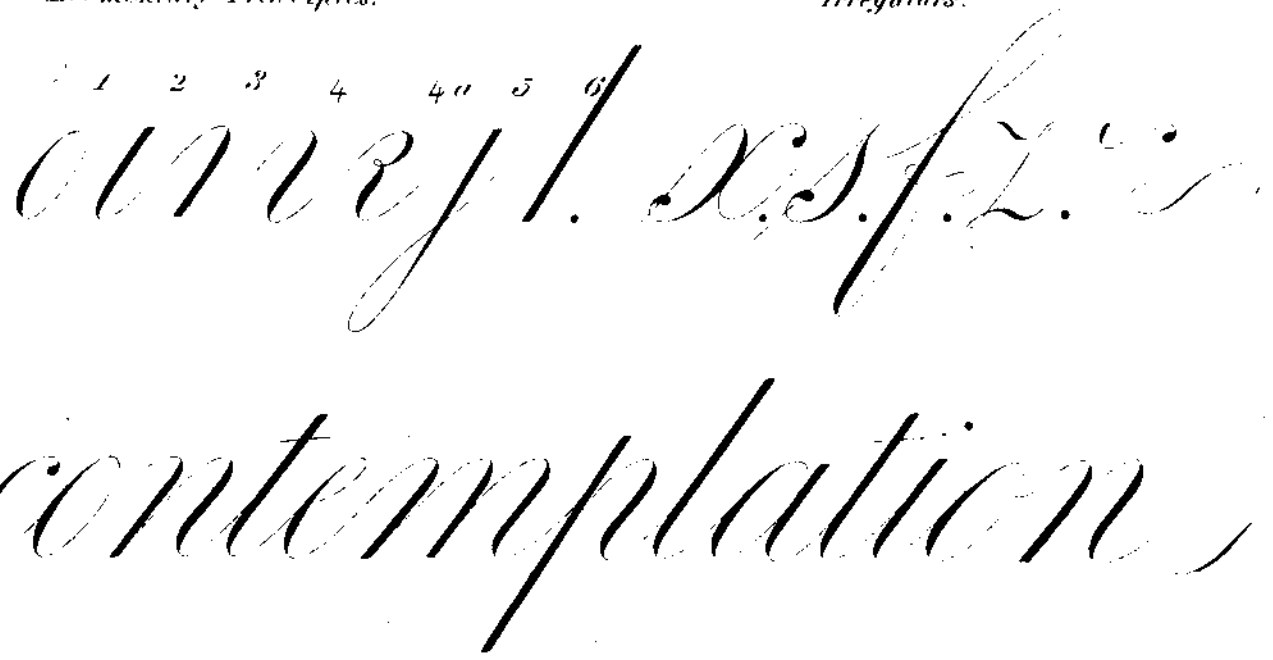


PLATE 6.

When the pupil has acquired sufficient familiarity with the simplest elements of writing, as contained in PLATE 5, he may then pass to the characters in PLATE 6; which, properly combined, form the whole of the alphabet.* They are given on a smaller scale than the former, but should be written at first from two to three inches in height; and afterwards, at the teacher's discretion, may be gradually reduced in size, till they are of the same dimensions with those in this plate. As soon as the characters can all be well formed separately, they must be combined to form such letters as consist of more than a single character. When the pupil has, by sufficient practice, with the copy before him, become quite familiar with the characters in the plate, he may be advantageously exercised in writing them all on hearing their several numbers called by the teacher. This will be found to make him better acquainted with the true proportions of the letters than by the adoption of any other mode.

"The elegance of writing depends much upon the natural and easy slope of the letters, and the beauty and uniformity of the turns, both at top and bottom, as well as on the proper distance of the letters from each other. Children, when first beginning to write, are very apt to set their letters too upright. This practice habituates them to an unnatural and awkward motion of the fingers, and consequently prevents them from making handsome oval

* The teacher should render these principles *familiar* by *oral* instruction, and practical exemplification.

turns; and while this habit continues, it will be impossible to write an easy and elegant hand.

To remedy the forementioned inconvenience of contracting an awkward habit of forming the letters, and enable children to give a proper slant to the letters, and acquire a natural motion of the fingers, I have made use of parallel or slanting lines to great advantage. By the help of these lines the mind is wholly at liberty, and the pupil can attend to a careful movement of the pen, which is absolutely necessary, in order to form a proper oval turn, either at the top or bottom of his letters.

By invariably practising on these lines at first, the learner, by the strong force of habit, will, of necessity, much sooner acquire a natural and easy motion of the pen, as well as the proper slope of the letters.—In sculpture, painting, &c., learners have been much assisted by the help of certain points, characters and rules. But the art of writing has been exceedingly deficient in this particular; and children have been put to forming letters, and to writing joining hand, before they have acquired distinct ideas of the component parts of which letters are formed, and before they have been instructed in the mechanical use and slow movement of the pen, when gradually pressing or rising to form the oval turns at the top and bottom. It is almost, if not quite impossible, merely by verbal injunctions, to prevent children from a hasty and rapid motion of the pen, especially at the turns of the letters, where it should be moved very slowly; that the mind may have time to perceive the gradual rise of the pen from a full to

a fine stroke—as well as the pressure of the pen from a fine to a full stroke.

This hasty movement of the pen, which is certainly a very great obstacle to improvement, is, doubtless, owing to the uneasiness and pain which arise in the mind of the pupil, while held in suspense. The pupil, being naturally desirous to imitate his copy, but having no rule to direct him, is necessitated to follow the dictates of his own mind, whether right or wrong.

Thus, for want of a knowledge of the first principles of writing, as well as a want of proper rules to guide the mind, this hasty motion of the pen, and the wrong motion of the fingers, daily become more and more habitual, the bad effects of which the greater part feel through life.

It may not be amiss to mention the most essential faults to which children are subject in drawing the leading strokes, that they may be more effectually guarded against them.

1. Instead of pressing the pen sufficiently hard at the beginning of every letter which ought to be square and full at the top, they are very apt to do the contrary, viz: to strike the pen light, and consequently to leave the top sharp.

2. They are likewise very apt to press hardest upon the pen where it should rise, viz: at the bottom turn of all the letters.

3. They are likewise very apt, in drawing the body of the *l*, as well as all the down strokes, and in carrying up all the hair strokes, to move the pen much quicker than it ought to be moved by a learner.

4. More especially are they apt to move the pen the quickest where it should be carried as slowly as it possibly can be moved, viz: at the bottom turn of all the letters; as there is a twofold motion of the pen required in this turn, viz: the pen must gradually rise from a full to a fine hair stroke, and at the same time move to the right in a circular direction. At the top turn they are apt, not only to move the pen much too quick, but also to come to a full pressure at once, before the turn is completed."

The exact proportions which some minute parts of letters should bear to the rest, has been a subject of great, and, it is conceived, unprofitable dispute.

It is sufficient, for all practical purposes, to consider the height of an *o* to be twice its width, and the width of an *o* to be a good measure of the distance between any two principal strokes of the same letter; as, for instance, between the two principal strokes of the *n* or the *a*. The other proportions of the letters may most easily be learned by an examination of the plates.

It will be found that the proportions of the letters will be fixed, with greater exactness, by the use of *five* parallel horizontal lines, dividing the height of an *o* into four equal parts. Thus the swell of the *o* will be seen to fall on the fourth line; but without the use of these parallels, its place would not be at once perceived with precision.

From the nature of the case, the proportions that should exist between the minute parts of every letter can never be fixed with mathematical certainty. These proportions have their origin in the taste of

individuals, which is perpetually subject to variation. The forms which one generation admire seem antiquated in the eyes of the next, and barbarous to a third. All that can be done in this particular, is carefully to use the most improved models, and where these differ among themselves, each individual must call his own good taste into exercise, to judge between them. It is not pretended that the forms and proportions adopted in the present work, are perfect, but it is believed that they will be found, in general, to accord with the principles of a correct taste.

Section VI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE COMMON METHOD OF PRACTISING IN HORIZONTAL LINES.—EVILS RESULTING FROM THIS METHOD.—INTRODUCTORY LESSONS IN RUNNING HAND.—EXERCISES FOR THE EASY ATTAINMENT OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE ARM, FORE-ARM AND FINGERS.—EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

In the acquisition of a current hand, the pupil has hitherto been taught to write in horizontal lines. It is not pretended that this practice should be abandoned when the hand-writing is perfected, nor even long before, but experience proves, that this mode of instruction is productive of many evils. One obvious defect resulting from it is, that it leads to an incorrect position of the hand and pen. The learner, by the old method, is taught to form the letters with the fingers and thumb—without a simultaneous movement of the arm or fore-arm—resting on the under fingers as a fixed prop. Whilst this is done, although he may be directed to keep the pen pointing to the right shoulder, how is it possible this position should be retained, when, by the very first movement, it takes another direction? This variation will necessarily be more or less, in proportion to the distance the pen is moved on the paper: because the under fingers remain fixed, and consequently the hand inclines continually to turn over to the right, in order to allow for the action of the pen upon the paper.—

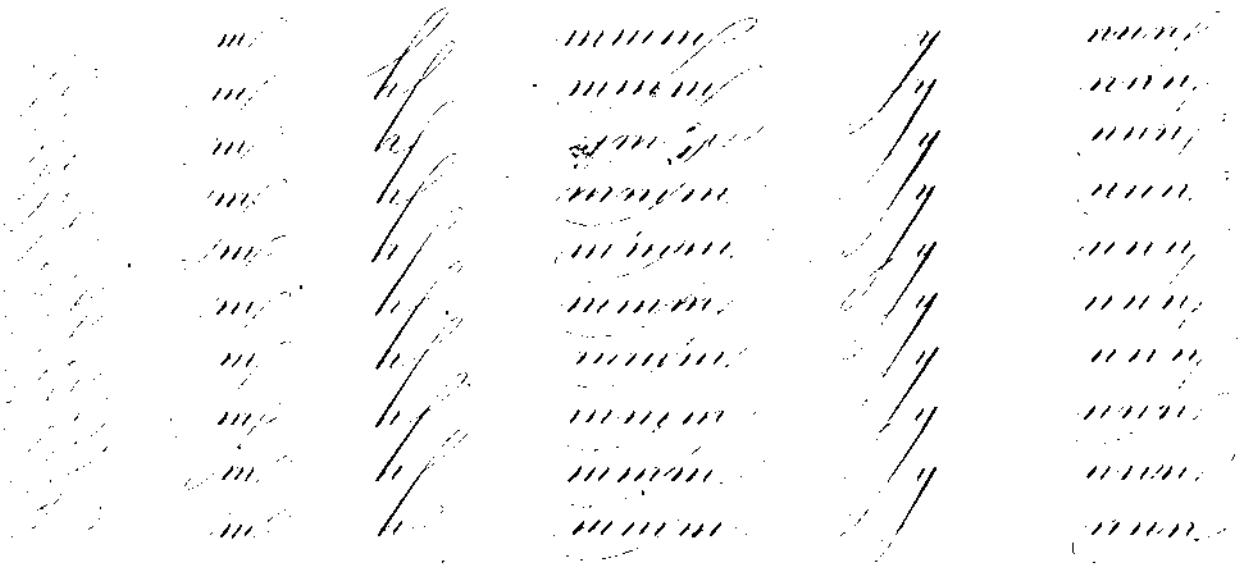
To avoid this evil, the pupil is sometimes taught to raise the pen at every half letter. This has a tendency to make the writing uneven and crooked, and the letters cannot be equally slanted, in consequence of the varying radius from the point where the under fingers rest to the point of the pen.

To enable the pupil to keep the hand in one and the same position, and to acquire a habit of holding the pen correctly, he should be taught to write in perpendicular columns, from the top to the bottom of the page, without once lifting the pen. By this process the hand will be uniformly kept in one and the same position, and the pupil will acquire a habit of holding the pen correctly, which is seldom, if ever attained, by any other plan hitherto devised. Let the method here recommended be attempted in good faith—be strictly persevered in, and the result will be perfectly satisfactory. When the true position of the hand and pen is in some degree acquired, the pupil may begin to write in *horizontal* lines; but he must not persist in this practice, until his hand is *confirmed* in the correct position.

To produce that freedom and command of hand so indispensably necessary to free writing, it is found expedient at first to tie the fingers. I tie a piece of tape about eight inches long, round the first and second fingers, and the first joint of the thumb, with the pen held betwixt them; the pupil, in consequence, is compelled to move his arm to form the letters.—The third and fourth fingers are tied also, that they may be kept in their proper position: this is done by taking a piece of tape, and tying the middle of it be-

tween the nails and the first joints of the third and fourth fingers; then with the two ends of the tape, bring the fingers under the hand, and fasten the tape round the wrist. (See page 52.)

The third and fourth fingers, serving as a support to the hand, must move lightly upon the surface of the paper, and let the hand be inclined a *little* to the right, that the pen may be well applied. The elbow should be five or six inches from the body. The chief intention in tying the upper fingers and thumb, is to prevent their too flexible motion when the pupil is learning the larger movements. Each movement ought to be acquired *separately* and thoroughly. But if the fingers were allowed to move when acquiring the movements of the arm and fore-arm, the consequence would be, that the pupil would seldom attain any one of the movements completely; from the natural tendency every one has (particularly those who have learnt the old methods of writing,) of using the thumb and first and second fingers.



LESSON I.

Plate 8.

Begin with the first column in *plate* 8. Make the loops uniform with each other. Observe, that in every part of the process, the arm must move easily on the nails of the third and fourth fingers. The pen must not be taken off from beginning to end. Both the up and down strokes must be made fine in this column. The next thing to be attended to, in order to gain the right command of the pen, is to have the free motion of the arm; taking special care, at the same time, to sit in the right posture. When a free and easy movement is in some measure acquired, in the practice of the characters in the form of the long *s*, proceed to the column of *m's*. In this column, as in the former, the pen must not be taken off until finished; and each succeeding *m* must be continued by means of the loops. In the column of *h's*, it will be observed, that they loop each other without recourse to an additional loop. The whole arm must move in a back direction, by the flexible movements of the *elbow* and *shoulder joints*. A greater number of each letter may be continued in each column than is given in the plate; the more the better, as it will conduce to still greater freedom.

Three *m's* are given in the next column, for the practice of the pupil. The loop is rather different, but will join with equal ease. Proceed with the *y's* and *n's*, in the same manner as in the other columns.

The pupil ought to practise from *twenty* to a *hundred*

pages of *each* lesson :* *one* or *two* pages can never answer the purpose. The learner must have sufficient practice in the system to render it familiar to him. The more extensive the practice, the more rapid will be the improvement. The amount of practice I have recommended in this lesson, equally applies to every subsequent one.

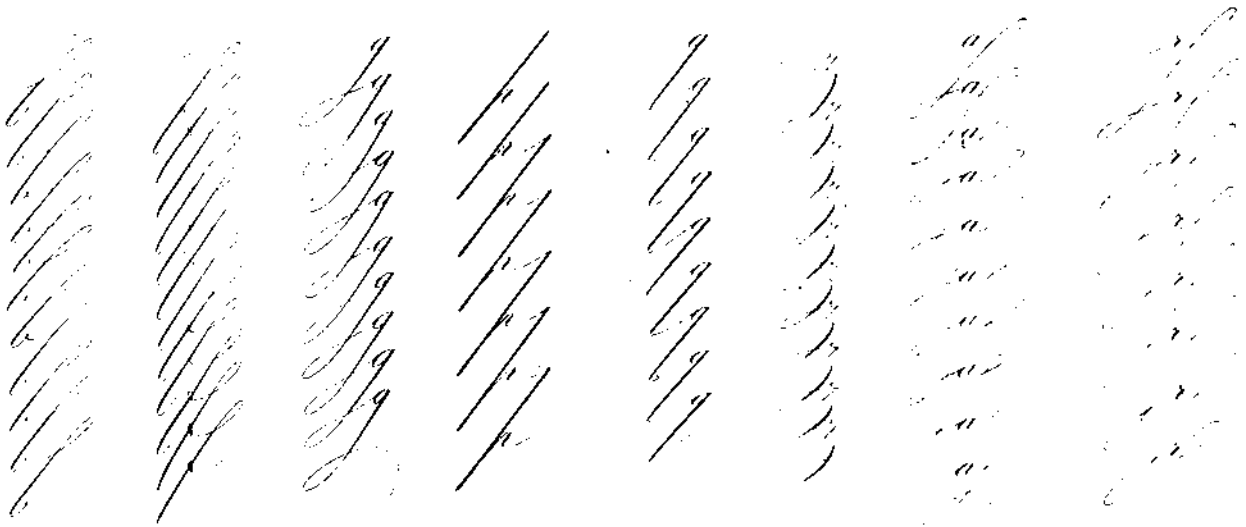
The *teacher* must be extremely careful to make the learner move on the nails of the two under fingers, throughout all these exercises; and to this end, those fingers must be continually tied, until the habit of holding the hand *correctly* is confirmed. Without this no person can acquire the true mode of writing.

To enable the pupil to keep the columns straight, let perpendicular lines be ruled at proper distances down the paper. The pupil should write each letter or word exactly in the middle, the extremity of the loops touching the ruled lines on each side.

* It must not be supposed that each lesson requires only an hour's study. The lessons should be practised for a longer or shorter time, until they can be written nearly equal to the columns in the plates.

It is recommended to the learner to practise three hours upon each column in plates 8, 9, 10 and 11. Young learners should write the exercises upon slates, until they can form the letters with tolerable freedom and accuracy. This will not only save paper, but give the pupils confidence, and enable them to make much greater improvement when they are permitted to practice with pen and ink.

1st Movement



LESSON II.

Plate 9.

This lesson consists of the long letters. They will generally be found rather difficult at first; but a little practice with *proper attention* to the *movement*, will render them uncommonly easy. *Before the learner commences this lesson, he ought to be thoroughly master of the former.* The same must be observed in every succeeding lesson. Every *letter* must be accurately imitated, as *in the Plate.* Inattention, in this particular, might give the learner a careless habit in forming his letters in his general writing. Each column of this plate must also be written without lifting the pen from the paper

Clear and open loops are indispensably necessary, on two accounts; *first*, because the letters join more readily; *secondly*, it is more agreeable to a correct taste. Great attention is necessary in making the letters *a*, *d*, *g*, and *q*; and the chief difficulty is in forming the *o* part.

1. In *joining the fine stroke* of the *i* to the *o*, care must be taken to give it a *slight curve* at the *top*, and to *come exactly back upon it*, in forming the *o*.

2. Carry *up the fine stroke* of the *o*, so as to *strike the extremity of the curved top* above described; which will make the *o* part a little more slanting than in *o* proper.

3. In forming *the final down stroke*, come back *exactly on the fine stroke*, as far as the middle of the *o*, where the pen will naturally leave it in giving the regular slant to this stroke. Unless the 1st and 2d

of these directions be observed, one of two defects will occur: either the left side of the *o* will be too little curved, or be looped. If the 3d be neglected, though the 1st and 2d should not, the result will be a very imperfectly formed letter, or *ei*, *ol*, *oj*, *&c.* Let the injunctions (page 72) relative to the *amount of practice*, and making the nails of the under fingers a *moveable rest*, be strictly observed in this and every subsequent lesson.

LESSON III.

Plate 10.

It will first be requisite to consider the difference between the formation of the *x*, in the first column, and the common mode of making it. The common practice is to give it the shape of two *c's*, the one inverted and the other in its right position. As this manner of forming the *x* is always found difficult, without taking off the pen, the form of it given in Plate 10, will generally answer the purpose in running hand, and can be made with great ease, without lifting the pen from the paper. Let it be noticed here that the first part of the *x* resembles very nearly the first part of a small *m*, slightly turned to the left at the bottom; the second part is like a small *i*, a little turned towards the right at the top. The pupil should commence with the first part, as if he intended to form the first part of an *m*, observing to return upwards on the stroke he came down with, then return down again on the stroke he went up with, forming the second part something like the shape of an *i*, without taking off the pen, and so continue keeping on the pen from *x* to *x*, by means of the loops, till the column is completed. The *e* is so simple that a long direction is not necessary. Only be particular to make a clear open loop in the *e* itself. The *o* has been already sufficiently explained in the second lesson. Learners often find the *s* rather difficult when the pen is kept on. It is nearly as easy as any other letter, if we attend properly to bringing the pen back, round the turn at the bot-

tom. When the *s* is formed, return steadily round the bottom from the dot of the *s*, so as to keep on the line. A little practice will soon confirm this habit. In making the *t*, follow up the down stroke, and form a small loop like an *o*, in the middle of it, continue the fine stroke, which serves for a crossing to the *t*, and readily joins it to any letter that may follow. In the *u*, which is in the form of two *i*'s, the down strokes return half way upon the up strokes. The *u* and *w*, are made nearly on the same principle.

1.re Mouvement

LESSON IV.

Plate 11.

In the classification of the letters of this lesson, recourse is had to the long letters, instead of loops to join with the small ones. Any letter in the alphabet may be connected, in the same manner as in this or the preceding plates, according to the fancy or inclination of the learner. The first line in this lesson is the same, either from the top or bottom of the column. Writing is always said to be most correct, when the letters appear well shaped, even and uniform, when viewed upside down. In performing this line, the bottom of the *h* must come nearly opposite, or rather below that part of the *y* where the fine stroke crosses it; otherwise the perpendicular position of the line of movement cannot be preserved, nor will the letters stand under each other. A single trial will convince the pupil of this. The directions already given in relation to the position, movement, holding the pen, not taking it off till each column is finished, must *invariably* be observed. I am the more strenuous on these points, on account of the freedom and expedition which is thereby acquired. *If the learner neglect them, he need not expect much success;* but on the contrary, by strictly adhering to the directions given, he may reasonably hope to gain all possible perfection. The pliable motion of the fingers may be used throughout the whole of the lessons, but not without *the free movement of the arm at the same time.*

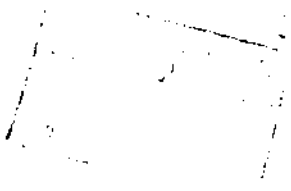
In the second column, great care must be taken to form the *a* directly opposite to the middle looping of

the *f*. The *a*'s are to be placed perpendicularly under each other, and the *f*'s to run parallel. In the third column, containing the *hc*, some difficulty may arise in giving the *c* its proper shape, by having to return back on the fine stroke, round the top, after the dot is made.

The *c* is made on the same principle of the *o*, except in making the dot, which a little practice will soon perfect. In the line *hd*, be very careful to join the long stroke of the *d*, in the manner prescribed in *Lesson II.* When the *d* is made in the form it has in the plate, some are apt, in coming down with the back stroke, to go to the right side of the fine stroke that is taken up from the *o* part; and in this case the *d* has the form of two letters, in the shape of *o l*. This must be avoided as much as possible. The *k* is made every way like the *h*, except in the middle of the last part. If there should be any difficulty in making the last part of the *k*, that *part* should be practised by itself, until it can be written uniformly.

The following Monosyllables may be joined together by the assistance of the loop given in the first Lesson, viz:

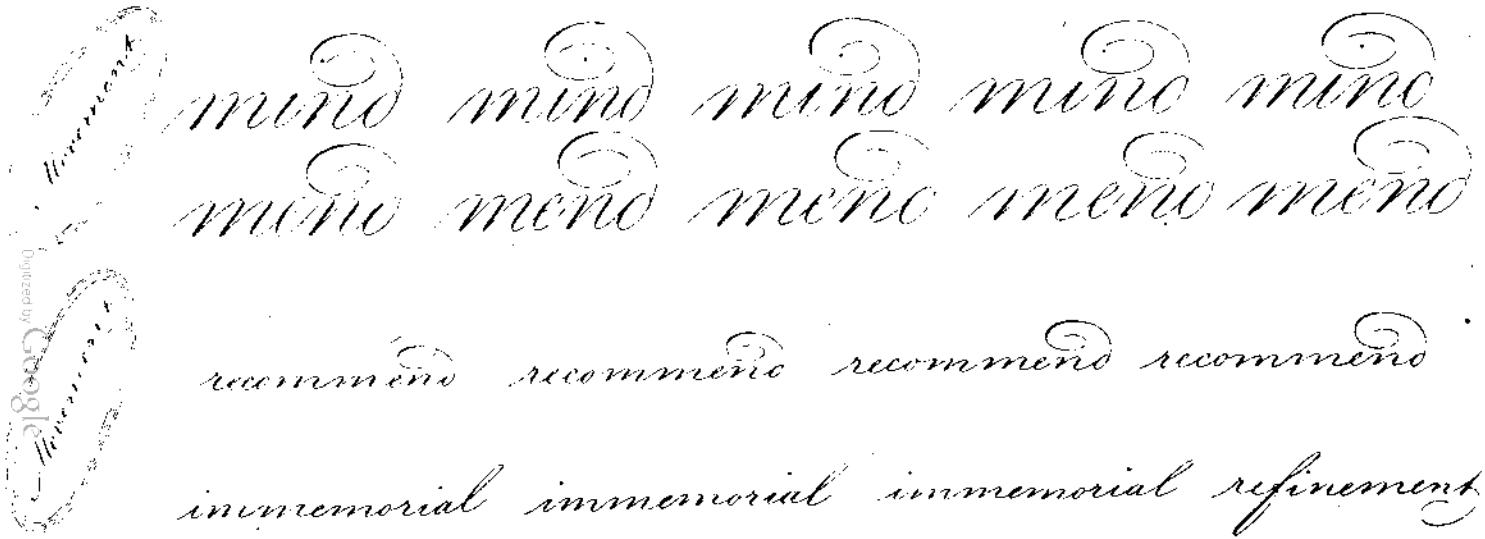
Ak, ek, ik, ok, al, el, il, ol, am, em, im, om, an, en, in, on, ap, ep, ip, op, up, ar, er, or, ur, as, es, os, us, at, et, it, ot, ut, av, ev, iv, ov, uv, aw, ew, ow, ax, ex, ix, ox, ux, ay, ey, oy, az, ez, iz, oz; bla, ble, bli, blu, bra, bre, bri, bro, bru; cha, che, chi, cho, chu, cla, cle, cli, clo, clu, cra, cre, cri, cro, cru; dra, dre, dri, dro, dru, dwa, dwe, dwi; fla, fle, fli, flo, flu, fra, fre, fri, fro, fru; gla, gle, gli, glo, glu, gra, gre, gri, gro,



The following to be performed by the perpendicular movement of the Hand running on the surface of the nails of the third and fourth fingers

Pl. 12

2nd Movement



gru; kna, kne, kni, kno, knu; pha, phe, phi, pho, phu, pla, ple, pli, plo, plu, pra, pre, pri, pro, pru; qua, que, qui, quo; sca, sce, sci, sco, scu, sha, she, shi, sho, shu, ska, ske, ski, sko, sku, sli, slo, slu, sma, sme, smi, smo, smu, sna, sne, sni, sno, snu, spa, spe, spi, spo, spu, sta, ste, sti, sto, stu, swa, swe, swi, swo, swu; tha, the, thi, tho, thu, tra, tre, tri, tro, tru, twa, twe, twi, two; wha, whe, whi, who, wra, wre, wri, wro, wru.

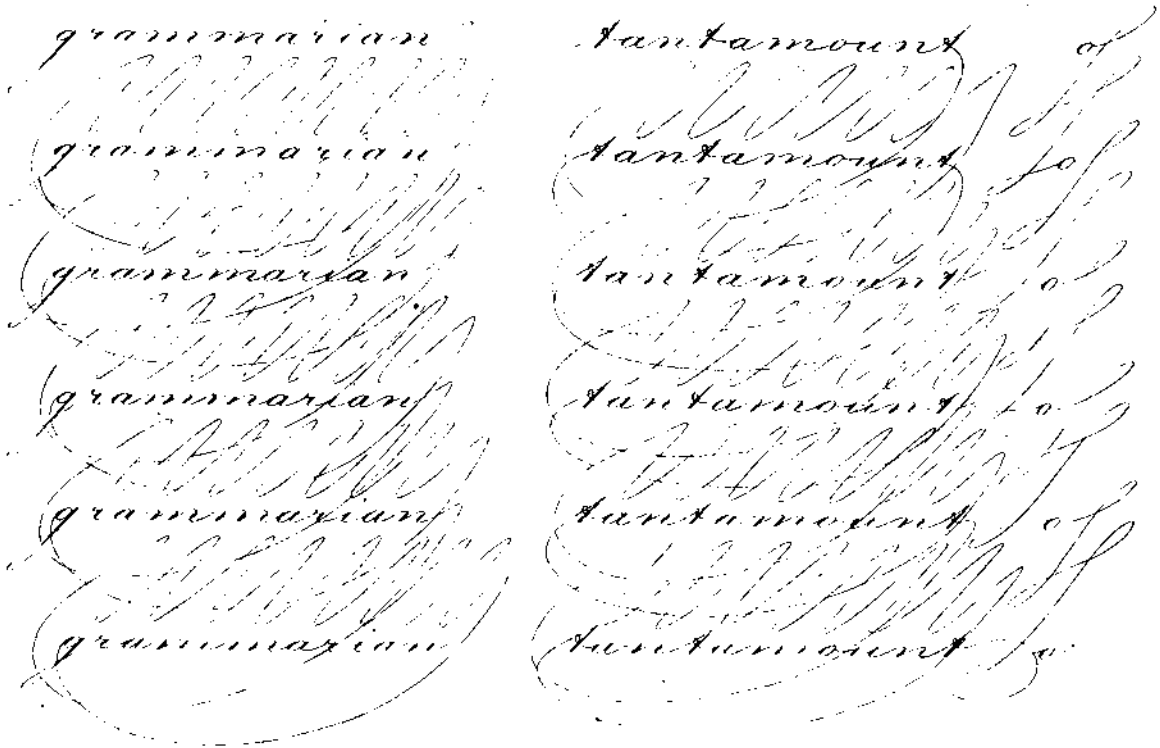
From the foregoing classification and combination, every letter of the alphabet is kept in continual practice, while a continuation of a letter separately is always in command. Freedom, regularity and quickness are the sure result; for, by writing the letters perpendicularly under each other, without lifting the pen, the learner is compelled to keep the arm easy and light, and the hand is not drawn out of its proper position, as it frequently is in the common mode of writing in a horizontal direction, where its true position has not been inculcated, trained and confirmed by habit. When the learner has completely acquired the movements of the hand and arm *separately*, and then *conjointly*, he may return to this Lesson, and practice it with the free use of the fingers, combining the action of the fingers and that of the hand while writing each word, and move the whole arm while forming each line, which connects one word to another.

When the movement of the whole arm is well acquired, and the *position of the hand completely confirmed*, the next step will be to learn the movement of the *fore-arm*. The learner must commence this

movement by making *ovals*, continuing the pen on the paper, and going round repeatedly on the same outline, as quickly as practicable; not however in a scrawling manner, but with an *uniform equable movement.* (See plate 12.) When the pen has gone round one of these ovals twenty or thirty times, the learner must apply the same bold movement to easy letters and short words; and then return to practising ovals as before, until he has so confirmed this movement, as to be able to write with expedition and ease.—The movement of the fingers, in combination with that of the fore-arm may now be used. This will very much assist him in giving the true shape to the letters. But this must never be allowed until after a confirmed habit of the movement of the fore-arm is acquired. After having practised on the ovals until he can make them with facility, the learner should proceed to write; first, single letters; and next, short and easy words, nearly the size of the ovals.—Every word must be written without lifting the pen. Long words may be next introduced: but in all cases, each word must be written without lifting the pen. Care must be taken, in writing the words, to preserve the same movement that produces the ovals; that is, as the pen moves on the paper, the under fingers must be kept in full play, and follow the same movement: so that if another pen were fixed to them, both pens would produce the same word at the same time. The *horizontal ovals*, with the words *improvement* and *monumental* included, are intended to give a free action of the *hand* from left to right. The learner should fill several sheets of these *ovals* pre-

Pl. 65

2.nd Movement



vious to commencing the words. The movement of the *fore-arm*, says Carstairs, ought of all others to receive the special attention of the learner. I conceive it to be of such vital importance, that I would not undertake to teach a free running hand without it.

This movement is to be performed chiefly with the *hand* and *fore-arm* moving conjointly at the same instant; and the learner must be particularly careful to rest the arm, during this exercise, *firmly at the elbow.*

LESSON V.

Plate 15.

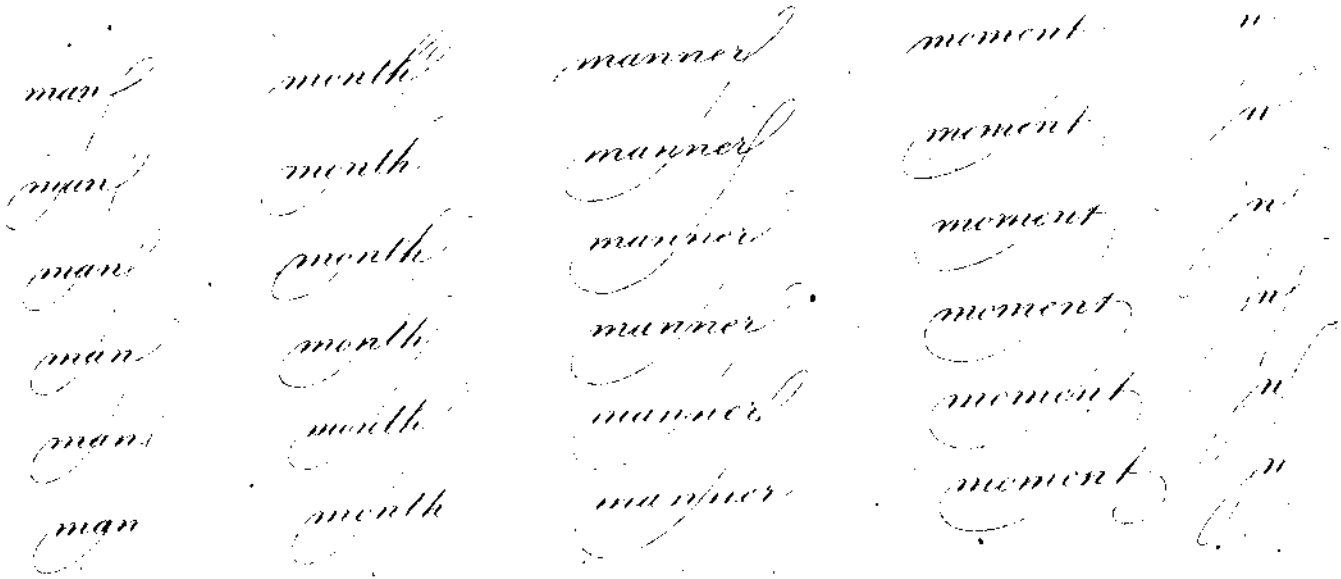
When the pupil has gone through the different combinations of the letters in plates 8, 9, 10 and 11, and can execute them with facility, he may proceed to the words in plate 15. In those parts of the letters which have no up turns, care must be taken to carry the hair strokes from the bottom of the full strokes. This will give the writing a free and open appearance. But equal care must be taken not to round them; which would destroy all distinction between the letters; as, turning *n* into *u*, *m* into *ui*, *h* into *li*, &c.

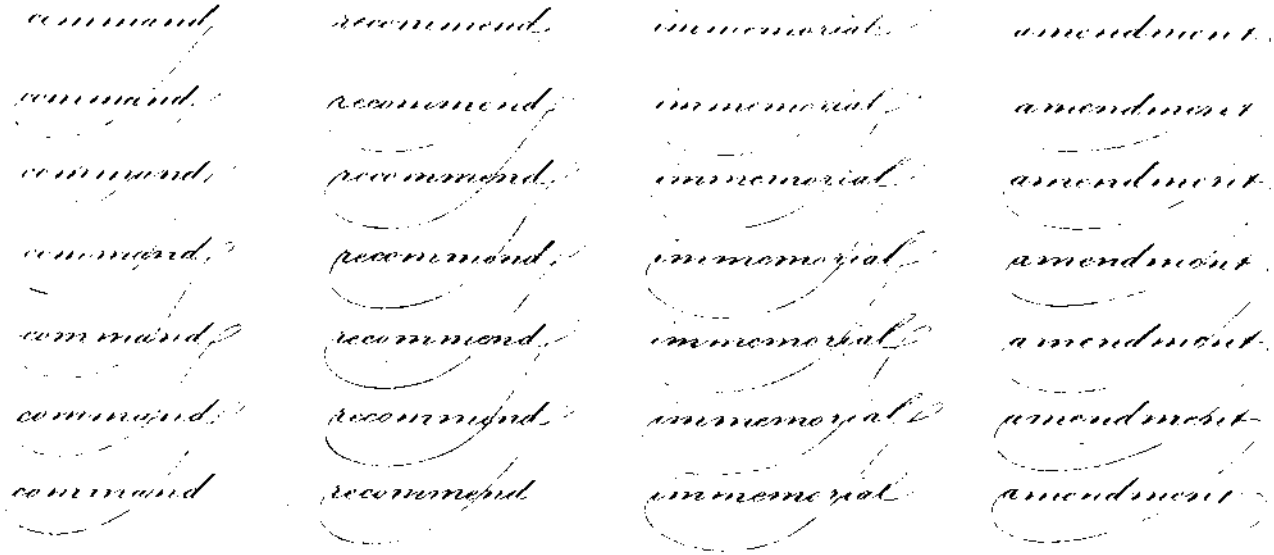
The pupil should write a great many more words than are given in the plate, not less than twenty, without taking off the pen This will very much assist him in attaining a free use of the arm.

In coming round with the strokes that join the words together, be sure to move the whole arm, and bear the pen quite lightly, so as to make the joining strokes as fine as they are in the plate.

When the words in the plate have been *written repeatedly*, the following words may be written in columns in the same manner:—amend, mind, many, men, mine, wind, come, then, whom, want, wine, land, time, tame, fame, home, lame, poem, mend, mild minim, mint, mound, money, mourn, morn, main, mental, rind, roman, grand, game, form, found, frame, member, move, mount, warm, commend, moment.

3d Combination





LESSON VI.

Plate 16.

The words of this exercise (*plate* 16,) must be executed precisely in the same manner as those of lesson V. The only difference between them is, that longer words are given here to combine with the up and down movement of the hand, and the side movement from left to right.

The following words are to be practised in the same manner as those given in the plate.

Improvement, comprehend, grammarian, commissioner, commonwealth, innumerable, inconvenience, leamington, bombardment, triumphant, commendation, remuneration, importance, monumental, decampment, countryman, countermand, tantamount, symmetrical, countenance, wellington, commandment, compliment, contemperament, contemplation, communication, necromancer, remember, misemployment, immoveable, immortalize, &c.

Likewise all, or any of the following, viz.

Acceptable, accessary, accuracy, accurately, admirable, admiralty, adversary, alabaster, amiable, amicable, annually, answerable, apoplexy, applicable; caterpiller, ceremony, charitable, comfortable, commentary, commonalty, competency, conquer-

able, controversy, cordiality, courteously, cowardliness, creditable, critically, customary; damageable, difficulty, disputable; efficacy, elegancy, eminency, exemplary, exquisitely; formidable; gentlewoman, giliflower, governable, graciously; habitable, honourable; literature, luminary; malefactor, matrimony, measurable, melancholy, memorable, mercenary, miserable, momentary, multiplicand, multiplier; navigator, necessary, numerable; ordinary; palatable, pardonable, parliament, passionate, penetrable, pensioner, perishable, persecutor, personable, pin cushion, practicable, preferable, profitable, promissory, prosecutor; reasonable, reputable; sanctuary, seasonable, secretary, separable, serviceable, solitary, sovereignty, speculative, stationer, statuary, sublunary; temporary, territory, testimony, transitory; valuable, variable, variously, violable, virtually, voluntary; utterable; warrantable, weather-beaten; abstemious, absurdity, acceptation, accompany, accountable, addition, adventure, adversity, affection, affinity, affirmative, affliction, agreeable, allowable, ambitious, anatomist, annuity, antagonist, antiquity, apology, apostolic, apprenticeship, arithmetic, ascension, asparagus, assertion, astonishment, astrologer, astronomer, attraction, reversion, audacious, authority; barbarity, benevolence: calamity, captivity, carnation, chronology, collection, combustion, commendable, commisserate, commission, commodious, commodity, communicate, communion, companion, compassion, conclusion, condition, confession, confusion, continual, contributor, convenient, conversion, conviction, convulsion, correction, corruption, courage-

ous, creation; declension, deduction, deformity, deliberate, delicious, deliverance, deplorable, desirable, destruction, devotion, digestion, discernable, discovery, distinction, distraction, divinity, division, dominion, doxology, duration; edition, effectual, enumerate, erroneous, executor, executrix, experiment, experience, expostulate, expression, extortion, extravagant; felicity, felonious, forgetfulness, formality, foundation, fraternity, frugality, futurity; geography, geometry, gratuity; habitual, harmonious, historian, historical, humanity, hypocrisy; idolater, idolatry, illustrious, immediate, immensity, immoderate, immovable, impatience, impenitent, impiety, impression, impurity, incessantly, inclinable; encouragement, incredible, industrious, infraction, infirmity, ingenuous, ingredient, inheritance, iniquity, instruction, interpreter, invention, invincible, invisible, irregular; luxuriant, magician, majority, malicious, melodious, memorial, methodical, minority, miraculous, morality, mortality, mysterious; nativity, necessity, nobility, notorious; obedient, objection, obscurity, observable, obstruction, occasion, omission, opinion, oppression, original, outrageous; particular, peculiar, perfection, permission, perpetual, persuasion, petition, philosophy, physician, plantation, possession, posterity, precarious, preservative, presumptuous, prevaricate, prodigious, production, profession, promiscuous, prophetical, proportion, rebellion, reception, recovery, redemption, reduction, reflection, relation, religious, remarkable, ridiculous; salvation, satirical, security, severity, significant, sincerity, society, sobriety, subjection, submission, superfluous.

OBSERVATIONS ON PLATE 17.

This plate is a specimen of the style in which the pupil may be enabled to write, if he pursues, with industry, attention and perseverance, the instructions laid down in the foregoing pages. Should he, from negligence or any other cause, find that his writing is not sufficiently improved, after he has gone once regularly through the lessons, he must begin again, and practice them *repeatedly* from beginning to end, until he can, with certainty, write equal to the style of this plate.

Manners commonly shew the Gentleman

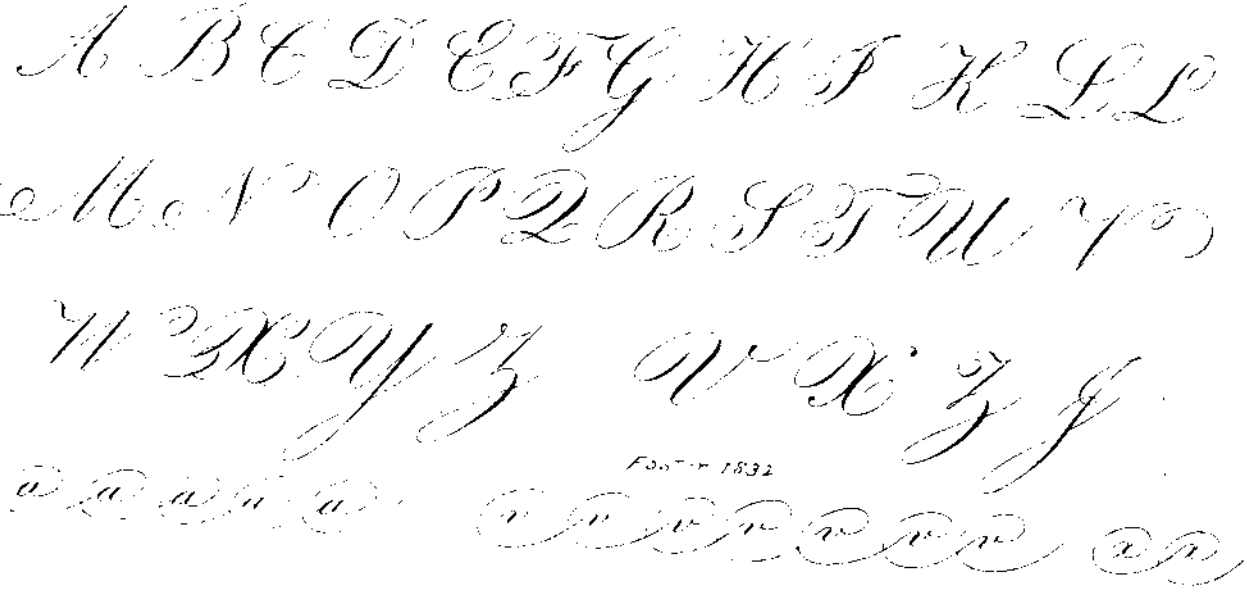
Recommend good and virtuous men R

Received December the 3^d 1813 of M^r James

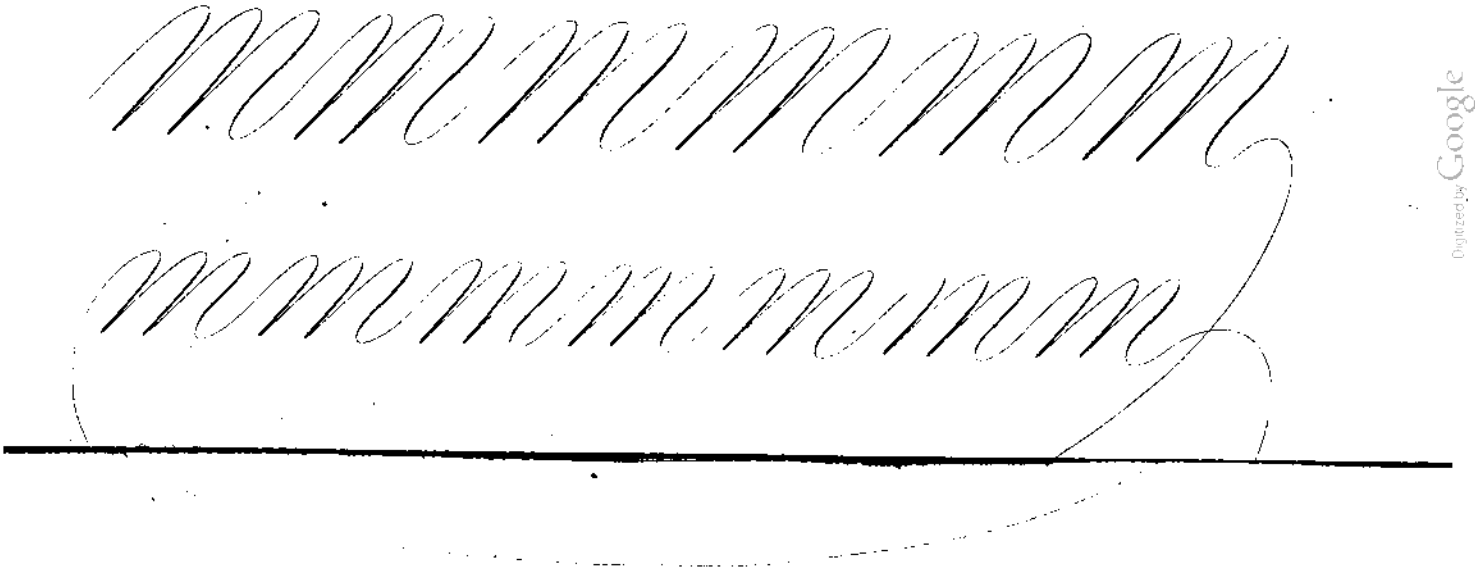
Moneylender the sum of One thousand pounds

fifteen Shillings and sixpence.

2nd Combination



1st Combination.



Section VII.

SUPPLEMENTARY EXERCISES.

Instructions for Plate 19.

In writing the *m*'s in this plate, the learner must move the whole arm up and down the paper on the nails of the third and fourth fingers in a perpendicular direction. Take a pen without ink, and trace the *m*'s on the plate several times over as quick as possible. By this means the perpendicular movement which this method of writing requires, will be sooner attained than by imitation with ink. Observe, at the same time, that the pen is not to be taken off in the whole page. In imitating with ink, be particular to make every turn at the bottom sharp, and the top round. When the pupil can write this plate correctly, with ease, and with great speed, words may be written in the same manner, beginning large and writing them less every line, until they become as small as the last line of the *m*'s in this plate.

I would strenuously urge this method upon the pupil, as it gives great command to the hand, and wonderful freedom and expedition.

Instructions for Plate 20.

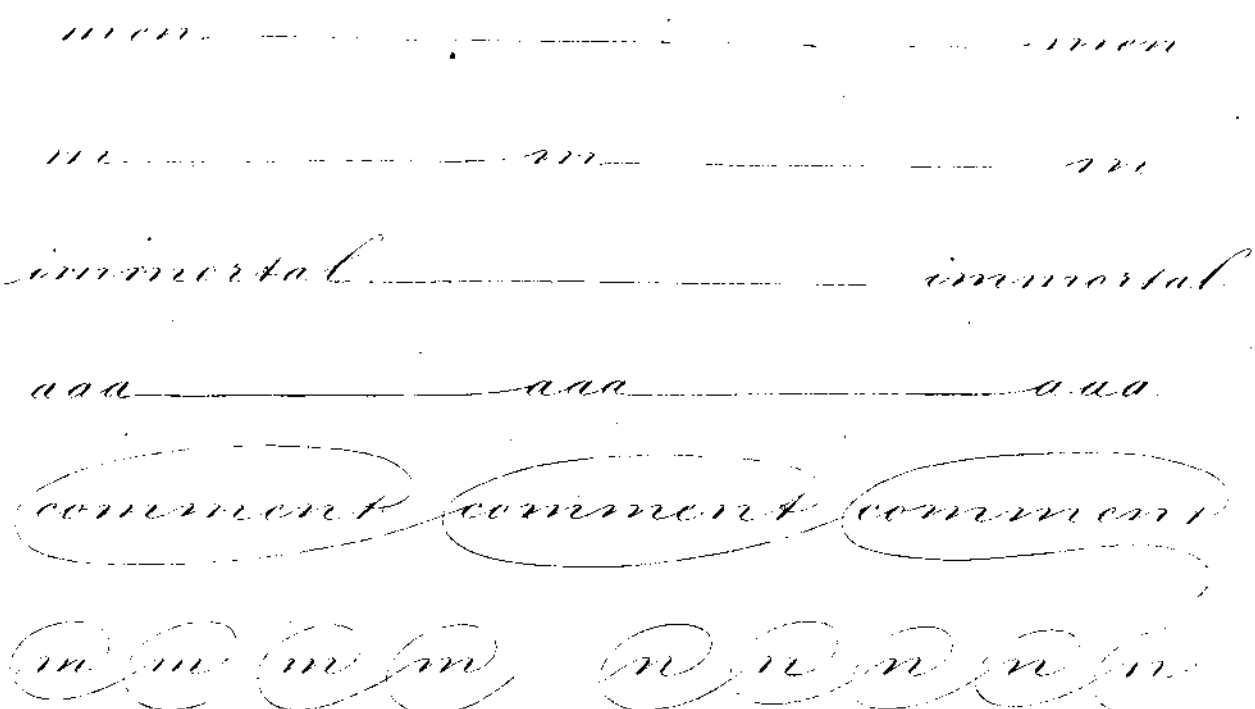
It will be noticed in plate 20 that the words are first written large, and gradually diminished by means of a diagonal line drawn from one corner of the page

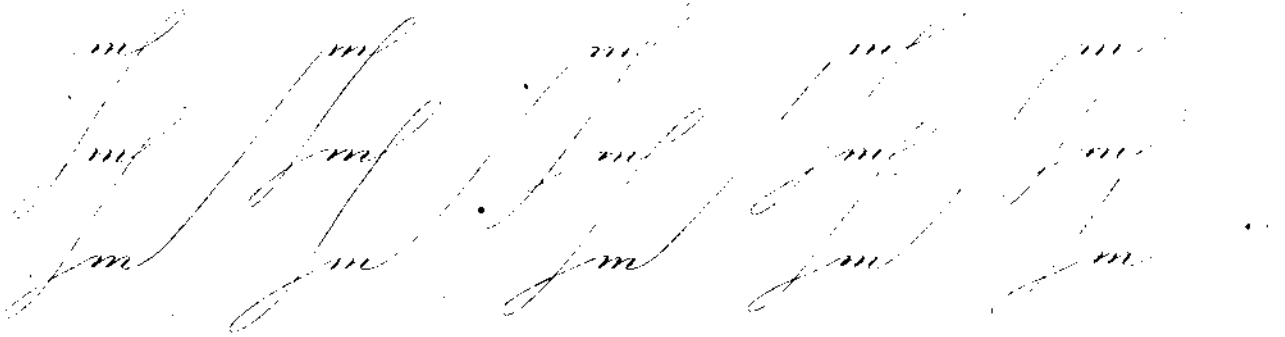
to the other. I have found this method of great use to pupils, as it is a kind of scale to enable them to write words of any size and width, from very large hands to the smallest possible, by almost insensible gradations. This simple yet useful contrivance, is of great use to all who write a straggling and effeminate running hand, because, from this scale they can accommodate their writing to any size they please.

Instructions for Plate 21.

The method of running from one letter to another, or from one word to another, by a continuation of curved or straight lines, must evidently give a free and easy movement to the arm, and will, if persevered in, give great command in writing. The lines that connect each letter or word, should be made quite light, and to this end the arm ought to move freely on the desk, and the pen must be pressed lightly on the paper, otherwise it will form an unnatural down stroke, and produce a rough and uncertain fine stroke.

The letters *o*, *a*, *e*, *c*, *n*, *s*, *u*, *v*, *w*, and *x*, should be practised in a similar manner to the second line of this plate.—It is to be observed, however, that this horizontal practice should not be attempted until the learner has acquired and confirmed the correct position of the hand and pen.





multhum multhum multhum multh

them them them them them them

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Instructions for Plate 22.

The lines in this plate, are given to show how letter and words may be joined together without lifting the pen from the paper in each; and may be continued even to the extent of a whole page. Thus any word or letter may be practised in the same manner. In like manner the whole alphabet may be written from beginning to end, without lifting the pen.

Instructions for Plate 23.

The effect produced by writing large and small alternately by the same movement, will give additional freedom to the small hand. Large letters require a large movement, and consequently if the pen is continued on the paper, the learner will acquire more power to make the small letters. By combining the capitals with small letters, it will be found to give great facility to writing. The teacher may make his pupils practice on slates all the capitals (except F, N, P, S, T, and W,) connected in the same manner as those in the last line of plate 23, previous to writing them on paper. Joining words together with the assistance of the long *s*, is extremely useful, and for occasional practice, the alphabet of small letters joined together alternately with the long *s*, in the whole line, without lifting the pen, will be found to have great efficacy.

Section VIII.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS.

As has been already remarked, to write well, two things are requisite, viz: to acquire a just idea of the correct shape of the letters, and that mechanical use of the fingers, hand, and arm, necessary to execute them with facility.

Inattention to the *shape*, *proportion*, *slanting position* of the letters, method of *sitting*, *movements*, and *holding* of the *pen*, not unfrequently retard the *progress* of learners and give such bad habits in writing, as are often retained through life. Every teacher, of penmanship, should be particularly careful when the learner first commences not to permit the least inaccuracy, however trifling, to escape his notice and correction.

For although it must be confessed, that it is very laborious and needs great patience to regulate the position, paper, pen, &c. as frequently as is necessary, which for some weeks, may be as often as every two or three minutes; yet, the correct method must be acquired before the pupil can ever write with freedom and ease, and it is much easier to avoid bad habits, than to correct them when they are once confirmed. Not only so, but the proficiency of the learner will abundantly compensate for the pains necessary to produce the desired effect. Many sit, lie forward, and lean on the desk as if they were short sighted. Some lay their hand down so much to the right as to come completely in contact with

the paper and in that case the pen is thrown over so as to make it impossible to write any otherwise than with the side of it.

The pen ought to point exactly to the right shoulder and be elevated so as to come between the second and third joints of the forefinger; the extremity of the thumb should be kept directly opposite the first joint of the forefinger. The teacher should make such general observations on the practice of the art as will enable the pupil to form a right judgment on the subject and point out his errors as well as show him how to correct them; for *example*, in this case is far more effectual than *precept;* and it is much better to delineate with a pencil, or otherwise, how a letter should have been formed, than merely to tell him of it. This practice I have found particularly beneficial, even in teaching large classes, where the trouble is proportionably much greater than in teaching a single pupil. The young learner should write the exercises in plates 5 and 6, first upon a slate or black board, and then on paper, continuing to practise the elements separately, until he can form them with facility and correctness; he may then be taught to join them into letters and words; making himself, in some degree, master of one letter, before he attempts a second, or thinks of joining them.* Before

* There is an obvious analogy between the acquisition of an art, or science, and the erection of a building. If the edifice is designed to be solid and durable, no disadvantage beyond a trivial delay, can arise from excavating more deeply or more extensively than the foundation absolutely demands; while any deficiency at the basement, might prove fatal to the stability of the superstructure. Thus whatsoever kind of knowledge we are studious to obtain, it can be of little consequence that our progress should be slightly retarded by devoting too much attention to *first* principles; but if before we are adequately grounded in the rudiments of an art or science, we ascend precipitately to its higher and more difficult parts, then is the foundation of our knowledge defective, and the fabric which we have reared upon it will be proportionably insecure.

the learner proceeds to the small hand lessons,—after the instructions relative to plates 5 and 6, have been strictly attended to,—he should be provided with a complete set of large hand copies, and should fill several pages of his copy book, at each lesson he takes, by writing each word without lifting the pen, just in the same manner as *free running hand* is written. The letters should be at least an inch in height. The arm must be kept free and easy while practising in this manner, and rest lightly on the desk. This practice should be followed by the pupil for about a month previous to his commencing the small hand exercises. When he is *confirmed* in writing a good *large hand*, he may proceed to the acquirement of a running hand, but even then he ought to keep up the practice of *large hand* in all *the movements* as it will always have a tendency to give boldness, command, and freedom.

After the learner has acquired a thorough knowledge of the several movements, their combinations and application, and has attended to the instructions relative to Lessons I, II, III IV, V, and VI, and can execute the various exercises *in the plates* with freedom and accuracy, he should write, first on a slate and then on paper, an alphabetical set of words, each word beginning with a capital, which he must attempt "striking" as he goes along, always rubbing out such as are incorrect, and writing the rest of the word as well as he can, taking the hair strokes of the *m*'s and *n*'s from the *bottom* of the full stroke, and joining all the letters that consist of bottom turns exactly in the middle.

To attain the greatest degree of freedom and to acquire, speedily, that mechanical use of the hand, arm, and fingers so absolutely indispensable to free writing, it is recommended to the learner to write frequently whole pages of the words *Philadelphia, Philosophy, Philosophical,* &c. without lifting the pen.

Practice in writing words composed of letters that go above and below the line alternately. gives most freedom to the hand and makes almost every other word composed of short letters perfectly easy. But should the learner indulge himself in *lifting and mending his pen often, he not only loses time, but renders his hand unfit for business.* When practising as above recommended, the learner should write as rapidly as he can and keep the letters tolerably correct, but not quicker, lest he run his hand into a scrawl. He should avoid *flourishes,* and be particular not to make his capitals too large or the stems and tails of the letters so long as to interfere with the line, above or below. If he err in any of these respects he not only discovers a bad taste but makes his writing difficult to be read; the worst fault that can attend it. For nothing is more evident, than, that *the hand which can be most easily read,—looks neatest,—and can be written with the greatest expedition,* is best adapted to the business of the counting house and the every day purposes of life. The plainer and more simple the letters are formed, the better they are adapted to expedition. All complicated forms should therefore be avoided, as they destroy regularity and impede the speedy attainment of the art. It is a great error to affect the formation of the same letter two or three

different ways as writing is thereby rendered irregular and ungraceful.

An elegant and masterly use of the pen cannot be attained under the direction of the most skilful teacher without a reasonable time for practice and attentive application on the part of the scholar. Whoever pretends to the contrary is guilty of a base imposition upon the weakness and credulity of his employers.*

The learner, who is ambitious to excel is this art, should attentively view the performances of others and observe both their beauties and defects. He should endeavour to fix in his mind an exact idea of of the shape and fulness of the letters, and of the proportions and beauties of all their parts. This will give him true and just conceptions of penmanship and enable him to make much quicker and greater improvement in it, than he otherwise could have done.

"Writing, in point of real utility, is a *sublime art*, and ranks in the highest class; nor will it be disputed, that it is also susceptible of being cultivated so as to produce a pleasing effect upon the eye. But as plainness is the great object to be obtained, in order to avoid any danger of mistaking the meaning of

* Nothing has a greater tendency to bring the art of writing into contempt, than the pretensions which are every day displayed by puffing advertisers. Is it to be expected that "persons from the ages of 12 to 50" can be made accomplished penmen in the course of "TWELVE EASY LESSONS."! Advertisements which appear daily in our papers promise not much less—and to fill up the measure of imposition, *lessons* are as blacking bottles, sold warranted!!! It is absurd to talk of making a child learn an art, or science, in a few hours! Persons who pretend to this, generally produce wonderful stories of "*rapid improvement*," but those who tell or receive these stories, says Dr. Johnson, should consider that no one can be taught faster than he can learn. The speed of the best horseman is limited by the power of his horse. Every person who has undertaken to instruct others can tell what slow advances he has been able to make, and how much patience it requires to recall vagrant inattention, to stimulate sluggish indifference, or to rectify absurd misapprehension.

Perfect writing cannot be attained in *six or twelve hours;* we rather recommend three or six months.

what may be written, any attempt to point out some of the causes which lead to this danger, and how it may be guarded against, it is hoped will not be considered as officious. There is no doubt, carelessness in the writer, and bad teaching in the instructer, contribute towards it in a material degree; but there are others, which it is presumed, have not occurred to every one, but which, when explained, must apper very evident. I allude particularly to the plan of teaching in academies, and seminaries, where children receive one part of their education from one teacher, and another part from a different one—all of whom generally prescribe exercises of one kind or another to be written by the pupils. Should the pupils, therefore, write the exercises in a careless manner, and the teacher who prescribed them examine them only for the purpose of correcting whatever he may perceive to be wrong in the grammar or the sense, without adverting to the imperfections of the writing, the pupils, taking advantage of this remissness on the part of the teacher, are encouraged to go on in a scribbling style, by which they contract such habits of bad writing, as generally remain with them through life. But were all the teachers in such institutions to set their face against bad writing, and to reprimand the pupil who produced to them badly-written versions or exercises of any kind, in such a manner as to oblige them to write them afterwards in their best style, there can be no doubt but it would have such an effect, that fewer bad hands would be seen, and, what is also equally obvious, less time and money would be spent in learning to write than what

is done at present. Moreover, were teachers to go on in this way, the pupil's practice in the writing school might be turned to a good account, as, under such a vigilant superintendance, they would feel necessitated to exert themselves much more than they do, and, instead of continually copying lines, after they can write tolerably well, they might be made to write, instead of them, some of their other lessons.

"Supposing that most of young people left school with good hands, it would be well if the head men in mercantile houses, and other public offices, would watch those who may be placed under their notice, and follow up the system pursued by their teachers, by exercising the same salutary vigilance and control over them, in such a way as to give them confirmed habits of distinct and elegant writing. To show the actual advantages resulting from such checks, we need only compare the writing of any person in business, whose hand has been fairly formed, and who has been reared under their operation, with the writing of another who has never felt them at all, but who has been allowed to scribble away, quite regardless of distinctness and beauty.

"Some academies are remarkable, too, for the fine specimens of penmanship, produced by the pupils, and for the skill and diligence of the master under whom they studied; but still much of the merit, it is apprehended, is due to the other teachers, who will be found to have acted in concert with him, by making it a particular condition in their connection, that no badly written exercise of any kind should be allowed to pass uncensured by them, on any account whatever.

"As some palliation of this indifference on the part of teachers and parents, &c., it may be urged by the former, that it is out of their way—that it is interfering with the business of others, and by the latter, that it is painful to be chiding young people, &c. &c.: all this is well enough, and may please those who do not see the real motive, or are heedless about the consequences; but to any person of discernment, or to him who sets a proper value on the importance of the time, or expense of children at school, it will appear in quite a different light; so much is he convinced of the fact, that he will not hesitate to blame, and with severity too, such inattention, wherever it is perceptible, whether in parent or in teacher, especially when it is clear that they could have prevented much of what is blamed, and promoted much of what is desired. Besides this, when all interested act their part faithfully, a relish for a good hand is cultivated by the pupils themselves, in proportion, too, to their improvement;—habits of attention are likewise acquired, which, to every experienced teacher, are, in many respects, most important considerations. Yet, notwithstanding all this care, were it even exerted as it ought to be, to insure fine hands, some evil genius, it is to be feared, has such a control over matters of taste, that many parents and even some teachers particularly those in the classical departments, are led to say, that to write finely is an accomplishment of very little value; and although they cannot but admire elegant penmanship, and some of them can write well when they choose, yet they will neither encourage it as they might do, nor be at the trouble of writ-

ing finely themselves. In fact, their indifference and practice would lead us to infer, that it implies vulgarity in any one who shows an anxiety to render their hands even legible! Such is one of those anomalies which exist, over which philosophy has as yet exercised but little or no successful control, and which will continue to exist, till the fashion alters, and a fine hand comes to be as much sought after, and as much valued by the public, as fine typography is by its admires. But suppose all were agreed that a fine hand should really be studied and practised, it may be asked, what is the particular style of writing that should be recommended as such? To which it might be answered, that one style does not seem to be suitable for all ranks and conditions of people in the world; and to decide upon what should be the most appropriate for general purposes would be presumptuous. Whatever may be the style desired, much depends upon the habits which the pupils acquire at first, and upon the care with which they are superintended afterwards, together with the attention they themselves bestow in preserving a good hand when once they have acquired it. Like every other art, if a bad habit be contracted at first, it will be difficult to conquer it; and it will also tend greatly to retard the learners' progress, and prevent them ever afterwards from arriving at that excellence to which they should aspire. For instance, if a person beginning to play upon the flute hold it in such a manner as to injure its tones, he will never become a fine performer till he hold the instrument in a more favourable position. The same

thing may be said of any other art; and in proportion to the importance of that art, so should the care bestowed be in trying to come at those methods which are best calculated for accelerating the pupil's progress.

"The great secret in teaching writing, as well as other arts, is to know how to execute *what is really excellent* in any of them, and at the same time be able to *make others attain to that excellence.*"*

* Observations on schools, and teaching some of the common branches of Education, 1824. Edinburg: *Oliver and Boyd.*

APPENDIX.

Circular addressed to the Rectors of the French Academies, Reports of the Commissioners of the Royal University of France, and the Society for Elementary Instruction, charged with an examination of Carstairs' System of writing. Resolutions passed at a meeting held in London, in which this System was examined. Extracts from foreign Reviews, &c.

(*Translation.*)

His Excellency, The Minister of Public Education, has addressed to the Rectors of all the Academies of France, the following circular:

Office of Public Education,
University of France.
November 22, 1828.

Mr. Rector,—I have the honour to communicate to you a resolution which the Council Royal adopted at its session of the 30th August last.

Council Royal, &c.

"On seeing the Report presented by the Commission which was charged by His Excellency to examine Mr. Carstairs' System of Writing, as it has been exhibited in his work translated by M. Julien, Sub-Librarian of the Institute:

Resolved, That one hundred and twenty copies of this work be taken on account of the University, and that these copies be sent to the Rectors, with a request to transmit them to the primary Instructors who shall appear most in condition to employ this system with advantage."

According to this resolution, Mr. Rector, I solicit you to favour the publicity of this work in the whole purlieu of your Academy, and I have, in consequence, the honour to transmit to you copies.

Receive, Mr. Rector, the assurance of my distinguished regard.

(signed) DE VATISMESNIL.
Minister of Public Education.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF FRANCE.

REPORT addressed to His Excellency, the Minister of Public Education, by a special commission charged with the examination of Carstairs' System of Writing.

(*EXTRACT.*)

M. Julien, Sub-Librarian of the Institute, has already published two editions of the method of teaching elegant and expeditious writing in a very short time, invented by Mr. J Carstairs. As he solicits for this work the approbation of the Council Royal, and its adoption in the establishments of the University, his demand has been sent to the Commission previously charged, by letter of his Excellency, to examine Messieurs Maille and Bernardet's methods of writing and reading.

The Commission began by communicating with M. Julien; and learned from him how he had been led to undertake this work, of which he is far from making an object of speculation, and which seemed so foreign to his functions, and to pursuits of a much higher order to which he is devoted.

The Commission thought it necessary first to form an exact idea of the method itself, before attempting to judge of it by its results: and upon the second edition, already exhausted, of the translation, it conducted its examination. If it has fully comprehended the meaning of the work, Carstairs' System consists in making the action of the *arm*, *hand* and *fingers*, concur equally in writing. He commences by habituating his pupil to the movements of the arm by a great number of exercises, which are at first executed without any participation of the hand or fingers; and which accustom him to run the pen over the paper, and to give, at the same time, uniform and graceful shapes to the letters.

During the execution of these exercises, the arm must not rest on the table at any point; and has no other support than the two last fingers of the hand which glides lightly upon the surface of the nails.

He soon adds those which must be executed with the hand and fore-arm, and then only does he begin to suffer the arm to rest lightly at the elbow which becomes a centre of motion. But he still forbids the bending of the fingers. It is not until the habit of this double movement appears sufficiently acquired, that Mr. Carstairs accustoms his pupil to

the play of the joints combined with the movement of the hand and fore-arm; at first by writing large hand, and afterwards by a diminution of the size of the characters; the diminution graduated in an ingenious manner.

The Commission will not here enter into the details of the mechanical process which concerns either the form of each letter in particular, or the mode of junction between them. It will be content with saying that Mr. Carstairs has never lost sight of the principal object which he proposed to himself, that is, to lead the pupil in the shortest possible time, to the swiftest running hand.

In reflecting on the course which he has adopted, and in spite of his constant opposition to the notions we have all imbibed from infancy, one cannot dissemble that it is founded on reason and experience. As is judiciously remarked by the translator.

"If one observes those persons who write with most rapidity, he will see that the hand and fore-arm concur, as well as the fingers, in the formation of the letters; and that the more swiftly they write, the more the movement of the fore-arm appears to predominate. They follow, consequently, Carstairs' System, without suspecting it. Necessity has taught them."

However, reasonable this method appeared, it seemed most proper to judge of it definitively in practice. It is here, in fact, that the most specious plans ordinarily fail; and before making up our opinion, it was incumbent on us carefully to observe the results of Mr. Carstairs' System.

At a recent period, the Principal of the College of Alancon thought it his duty to try this method. He procured from Paris M. Julien's translation, and the Inspector General who visited that establishment had an opportunity of ascertaining its effects. Children who scarcely knew how to form their letters, came in less than two months to write with much neatness and equal facility.

It appeared then impossible, without refusing to yield to conviction, to contest the advantages of this system. M. Julien, moreover, has made real sacrifices in order to diffuse it. The fourth edition, which he is preparing to publish, and which will appear as soon as the council shall have given its decision, will contain new processes, and additions which have been communicated to him by Mr. Carstairs, and which he has submitted to our view.

Consequently, the Commission is of opinion that his work is worthy, in all respects, to obtain the approbation of the

Council Royal; and that, the Carstairian System may be adopted, with advantage, for the teaching of writing in the Colleges of the University.

Adopted in session the 30th August, 1828.

Signed, DELVINCOURT, President.
POULLET DE LISLE, Inspector General of Studies.
BLANQUET DU CHAYLA, Inspector General of Studies, Commissioner-Associate.

SOCIETY FOR ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION.

SESSION OF THE 25TH JUNE, 1828.

THE DUKE OF DOUDEAUVILLE, PRESIDENT.

REPORT *upon the system of Writing, invented by Mr. Carstairs, made in the name of the Commission of Methods, to which were associated Messieurs Mérimée, Lebœuf and Francœur.*

GENTLEMEN,—M. Julien, Sub-Librarian of the Institute has presented you the first and second editions of a work he has published entitled, "*Carstairian System, falsely called American System, or the art of learning to write in a few lessons, translated from the English under the direction of the Author,*" &c.

The system which this work is intended to develope has already been known some years in Paris, where it has been put in practice, with success, by able masters. It has been explained in detail in two reports, made to the Society of Encouragement, which you have had before you. Its happy results have been confirmed by numerous experiments which many among you have directed or followed; and every day they may still be verified in Paris, in the public schools in which writing is taught after the Carstairian System.

You know, gentlemen, that this method, of which the means are so efficacious that professors have considered it as one which must produce a revolution in the teaching of writing,

consists in a reform in the position of the hand, and the manner of guiding the pen.

The masters from whom we all received lessons in writing, taught us and recommended us to place the fore-arm and hand upon the paper, to move the fingers alone, to execute thus a portion of the writing, to transport the arm, resume the prescribed position, then after a new portion of writing, to transport the arm again, to the end of the line.

Thence according to the partisans of the reform, results fatigue in the fingers, a long and difficult execution, want of parallelism in the letters, and in the disposition of the words; and what is above all troublesome, the necessity of practising with care many years to arrive at a satisfactory proficiency.

In Mr. Carstairs method, the arm and hand, instead of resting upon the paper, rest as if suspended, and glide lightly on the extremity of the nails of the two last fingers; the writing is executed by the movement of the fingers, the hand, and the arm, or fore-arm: so that the arm follows incessantly the progress of the writing.

Such, gentlemen, is the explanation of a process which forms the essential principle of the system invented by Carstairs. In this process are found all the means of an easy and swift handwriting, the habit of which may be acquired with ease, because the exercises have nothing painful in them.

Mr. Carstairs, to habituate his pupils to the movement which he has adopted, and above all, to combat the effects of the long use of a different movement, subjects the fingers to a ligature which is so contrived that the pupil is compelled to execute the writing by following the prescribed movement and correcting thus the defect of his own old habit.

Such an innovation could not have been understood or appreciated if Mr. Carstairs had not adapted his system to a course of lessons in writing. In this view his work presents developements which deserve to be studied even independently of his method. In it is found, particularly, an analysis of the characters used in writing, which may be all reduced to an inconsiderable number of elementary forms. The author has invented exercises graduated with skill, adapted to give the hand a great swiftness of execution. The copies which he places before his pupil, present a character uniform and elegant. We observe, however, that these particular copies are not absolutely required by Mr. Carstairs process, who can avail himself equally, in writing, of an entirely different character. So that the tastes and prejudices which exist in this art are quite at peace with Mr. Carstairs' system.

We do not hesitate, gentlemen, to express to you the opinion that Mr. Castairs has rendered a great service to the art of writing by his invention, and by the publication of his work.

We have received in communication several manuscripts of Mr. Carstairs, which prove to us that he is as commendable for his own expertness in the art which he teaches, as for his disinterestedness and perseverance in labour. Justly appreciating the importance of his discovery, he aspires to no other honour than that of being recognized as its author. His desires must be fully satisfied by the honourable suffrage which he received in London, in 1816, in an assembly composed of distinguished personages, and in which His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent presided. Nothing, in our mind, should trouble him in the possession of the title of Inventor; of which such a suffrage is equal to an express concession.

After having given our thanks to Mr. Carstairs, we have to speak to you of those we owe to M. Julien, who, by his translation, has discovered to us a method the whole of which eluded our researches. Devoted to labours which promise him new success in science and literature, he has voluntarily deferred publications of a higher order to become modestly useful in elementary instruction. This disinterestedness, which does honour to his character, is a new motive to recommend the work which he has published.

This Commission propose to you to declare that Mr. Carstairs and M. Julien have deserved the thanks of the society which you represent.

Adopted in Session 28th June, 1828.

Signed LEBOEUF, *Reporter.*
MERIMEE, }
WILHEM, } *Commissioners.*
PERRIER, }

A true Copy,

JOMBARD, *Secretary.*

The following Letter, is a report of the plan of teaching "WRITING," *as developed and improved by* Mr. CARSTAIRS, *addressed to His Royal Highness, the* DUKE OF KENT, &c. &c. &c.

By JOSEPH HUME, *Esq.* M. P.

To His Royal Highness,
the Duke of Kent, &c. &c.

23 GLOUCESTER PLACE,
Jan. 16, 1816.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th inst. inclosing the letter of Mr. Carstairs to your Royal Highness, upon which you are pleased to desire my opinion and report.

I have perused with attention Mr. Carstairs book on the art of Penmanship, and have also had a long conversation with that gentleman explanatory of his method of teaching; and now beg leave in obedience to your Royal Highness' commands, to submit the following observations for your information.

I have much pleasure in stating that this method of teaching Penmanship appears to be very superior to those now in use, and such as would be highly worthy of patronage and support.

The free use of the fingers, hand, and arm, as taught by Mr. Carstairs, affords so great a facility to the art of writing, that I venture to offer to your Royal Highness an opinion that if it were generally introduced in schools, it will be productive of almost equal utility in the practice of writing which the introduction of Lancaster's method is likely to effect in reading.

Your Royal Highness has incurred considerable expense, and taken a great deal of time and trouble to encourage education amongst the lower and middle classes of society, by patronizing those plans which have been found conducive to that purpose, and in furtherance of that general object, I think your Royal Highness may soon be convinced that Mr. Carstairs' method of teaching the art of writing is equally deserving of your favour and attention, as any branch of general education which you have patronized.

I would, therefore, anxiously recommend to your Royal Highness to direct a public trial of Mr. Carstairs' method to be made by selecting six individuals, with whom Mr. Carstairs shall be required to try the effects of his method of teaching, as I hope by that trial he will prove and bring into notice the superior quickness, facility, and perfection of his system.

I shall be happy to aid your Royal Highness to effect these very desirable objects, and have the honor to remain, &c.

(Signed) JOSEPH HUME.

Resolutions passed at a Meeting held at the Free-masons' Tavern, London, in which the system of Mr. Carstairs was examined.

On the 9th of July 1816, a numerous meeting of ladies and gentlemen took place at the Free-mason's tavern, at which Mr. Carstairs explained the principles of his *new method of teaching writing*, and demonstrated the advantages which it possessed over every other now in use. His Royal Highness, the DUKE OF KENT, who presided on that occasion, informed the company that he had been induced to give his attention to the subject in such a manner as to be able to bear witness to its utility, convinced that any improvement in the methods of education was a benefit to society; and that whatever tended to abridge the process of acquiring instruction, was equivalent to a considerable pecuniary gift. Upon this principle, when the system of Mr. Carstairs was explained to him, he became anxious to judge of its merits himself, and with this view he had directed several boys, who had made but little progress in writing, to be placed under the superintendence of that gentleman. Of their rapid and extraordinary progress he could speak in the most confident manner. Indeed, the company themselves might judge by inspecting their books, by which it would be seen how very cramped their writing was when they commenced with Mr. Carstairs, compared with the *freedom, quickness, and beauty*, which they attained in the course of only *six weeks* under his care.

Several gentlemen were present, who having received lessons, also bore testimony to the same effect; and Mr. Hume informed the company that the great object of making the pupils exhibit their proficiency, was to remove a prejudice which prevailed against the practicability of what Mr. Carstairs held out; and, therefore, if the company were satisfied with what they had heard, and convinced by what they saw, they would not refuse their testimony of approbation, in endeavouring, by every means in their power, to recommend the system to the adoption of schools and other public seminaries.

Mr. Hume then proposed that the meeting should come to some resolutions expressive of the satisfaction which was felt at witnessing the self-evident advantages of Mr. Carstairs' system; and it was accordingly

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED,

That Mr. Carstairs' method of teaching Penmanship appears to this Meeting very superior to any now in use, and therefore highly worthy of public attention.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

That the free use of the fingers, hand, and arm, as taught by Mr. Carstairs' method, affords such facility to the Art of Writing, that if generally introduced into schools, will be a saving both of time and expense; and this Meeting do therefore strongly recommend it to the favourable attention of the public in general, and in particular to all persons interested in teaching that branch of Education.

(Signed) *EDWARD* (*Duke of Kent.*)

J. COLLIER, D. D.	M. GIBBS,
J. RUDGE, M. A.	T. BENSON,
W. CORSTON,	J. CAMPBELL,
J. MILLAR,	J. BOND, D. D.
R. LLOYD,	J. GALT,
J, HUME, M. P.	J. HUDSON,
C. DOWNIE, K. C.	J. W. TAPLIN,

From the European Magazine.

Among the improvements in all that conduces to the convenience of life, and the extension and perfection of art, which have distinguished the present age, we strongly recommend the new principle of movement adopted by Mr. Carstairs, in his system of writing, as being really useful and ingenious.

From the New Monthly Magazine.

Mr. Carstairs has the merit of having supplied an interesting desideratum in literature, and of having invented an admirable system, by which not only excellence in writing may be acquired with ease, but a wretched hand be corrected, and bad habits be reformed by those who from long practice may be considered as incapable of deriving any benefit from rules, or improvement from examples.

From the Monthly Review.

Grown persons who are not fortunate in the use of the pen, and who have still to acquire the grace of legibility in their hand writing, will do well to purchase this book and exercise themselves after the manner suggested. The old associations between vicious contours of letter, and habitual movement of the fingers, will be much disturbed and broken by practising repeatedly on Mr. Carstairs' elementary flourishes.

From the New Monthly Magazine.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we again advert to this ingenious production, the merits of which, on a perusal of the last edition, appear to us, if possible, yet more obvious; and to our former unequivocal praise we can now merely add the assurance, that subsequent reflection and observation have convinced us that we did the author no more than justice. The actuating principle throughout is the looping of letters and words together; and those who have not perused the work can form little idea how its excellence is exemplified in *six lessons*. Even those who have long contracted the most vicious habits, may, in a short time, attain purity and elegance; this, in fact, appears to us his greatest triumph. Upon the whole, we feel that in recommending this production, we perform a duty to all classes.

From the European Magazine.

Among the multiplicity of improvements that are continually introduced into our mechanic arts, the improvement in the art of penmanship by Mr. Carstairs, ought to be mentioned with unqualified approbation. By the assistance of his method, any person, however bad his writing, will acquire purity, precision, and celerity, in a very few lessons. We should like to see this book introduced into all respectable academies, being assured that the principle of writing inculcated by Mr. Carstairs could not fail to be beneficial to the rising generation, as well as to the *majority of adults*. We are glad to hear that this new system has been found successful *wherever it has been tried*. Mr. Carstairs has evidently bestowed much labour, and exhibited great ingenuity in maturing a system which *teaches pupils of all ages, and both sexes, to write well in one twentieth part of the time they usually consume in learning to write ill*. We recommend our readers to examine the work, for we are persuaded they will be amply gratified, the process of instruction is so peculiarly simple, novel, and curious.

Instead of writing from left to right, the mode constantly pursued in schools from the commencement to the end of instruction, Mr. Carstairs' plan is to make the learner begin at the top of the page and write in a perpendicular direction down the whole length of the page without lifting the pen, in columns of single letters, gradually increasing the number of letters from left to right until the pupil becomes a proficient in the art, which

mode must counteract the natural tendency which beginners have of leaning too heavily on the right arm.

Mr. Carstairs' method of *holding the hand and pen, is surely a desideratum in the art, and will tend to lessen the labour of teachers in making their pupils hold their hand and pen correctly.* From our own observations, we feel no hesitation in recommending this valuable system to the notice of all, especially those who are employed in teaching penmanship in our scholastic establishments.

From the Imperial Magazine.

The art of penmanship has, without doubt, been much neglected in modern times. Some few individuals can plead an exemption from this general charge; but so mechanical is their employment, that it is rarely to such characters that science is indebted for its improvements, or invention for the enlargement of its empire; and even among those few that may be said to excel in the formation and combination of letters, scarcely one is to be found, the productions of whose pen can be said to rival the manuscripts which have been transmitted from distant centuries. To the decline of this pristine beauty, the invention of printing has no doubt much contributed, most voluminous compositions being handed to posterity through the medium of the press. This, however, can furnish no just reason why an art that can never cease to be valuable, should be suffered to degenerate; nor be urged as an argument, when its declining state is discovered, why every method that promises to lead to its primitive perfection should not be duly encouraged.

Among those who are most deficient in the art of penmanship, nearly the whole tribe of authors have the dishonour of occupying the foremost rank. With writing in itself perfectly legible, their interlineations and amendments would render their copies sufficiently perplexing; but when this complication is embodied in characters which scarcely bear any resemblance to the letters which they were designed to imitate, clouds thick as doomsday hang upon their pages. It is from manuscripts such as these, that the compositor has to set up his type, and from the illegible state of his copy, he is left, from his own judgment, to guess the meaning of what he cannot read. Through this cause, errors frequently find their way into the printed page, and not being discovered until the *rubicon* is passed, the volume is graced with a catalogue of errata, generally

presumed to proceed from the printer's carelessness or blunders, when in reality it originates in the *bad writing* of the author, whose infallibility is too sacred to be brought into contact with reproach or blame.

The obvious tendency of Mr. Carstairs' work is to point out the inconveniences of bad writing, and the advantages of that which is good. On these topics he expatiates at large, without neglecting to show how the former may be avoided or remedied, and the latter acquired and preserved. On each of these points his observations are plain and judicious, carrying with them indisputable evidence of their own propriety; and if adopted with *resolution, and pursued with perseverance,* there can be little doubt that the grand result at which he aims, will be attained.

Throughout this volume, plates are distributed, delineating either the letters in their proper forms, their elementary principles, or their combinations. These are designed to illustrate the theory which his pages contain, and it can scarcely be questioned, that the pupil will find them beneficial. The editions through which this work has already passed, prove that it is not a literary abortion, and that it has not "dropped still-born from the press." In its aspect it looks healthful and promising. Experiment is the test of utility, and to this the author fairly appeals for the decision of its fate.

ERRATA.

Page xvii, 13th line from the bottom, for "principal" read *principle.* Page 38, 9th line from the top, for "combing" read *combining.* Page 60, 11th line from the bottom, for "led" read *lead.* Page 62, 7th line from the top, for "be" read *bring,* —same page, 11th line from the top, omit "be."