

purposes. Its general adoption would save much time and expense, and give us a calligraphy at once readable and elegant.

1. Vertical writing is without doubt more legible than sloping writing of the same quality and size. For this reason our literature is printed in the upright characters instead of in italics.

2. The unique conciseness of the upright calligraphy both in ordinary work and tabular forms economises in a wonderful manner time, space and material. It has been accurately computed—the computations being repeatedly verified by practical tests—that vertical writing occupies about three-fifths to seven-tenths of the space required by oblique writing of the same size.

3. Vertical writing was the only kind in use until about the middle of the sixteenth century and it is now rapidly coming into general use.

4. The vertical writer sits naturally and erect at his task whilst the sloping writer assumes all sorts of abnormal postures, twists and contortions of head, neck, spine, etc., in a more or less cramped and unnatural attitude that will necessarily handicap him very much in the contest. The highest possible rate of speed is impossible with the writer in such a painful position, and thus the superiority of the vertical system is at once apparent.

And besides this, the sloping writer will feel the effects of long continued writing much sooner and much more severely than his fellow clerk who has no such attitudes to sustain in the upright method.

Time will determine the amount of educative virtue there is in the system of upright penmanship and the extent to which these observations or arguments apply, but it is notorious as a fact of past history—which every student can verify—that the introduction of slope and the origin of scribbling were coincident, and it is no less an historical fact of the present that on the continent all sloping writing has been prohibited in many districts, whilst in Belgium and Germany the slope or slant has been limited to 10° and 20° from the vertical respectively, so deeply are the evils of oblique writing felt in these countries.

5. Some remarks in the *Lancet* a little time ago were very interesting inasmuch as they referred to another *unique* advantage of the vertical system and that is its capability of being written with either hand equally well.

Just recently I have received some beautiful specimens of left hand upright writing, and it is well known that whilst the great Admiral Nelson wrote a very scrawly and sloping style with his right hand—the result of years of teaching at school—he afterwards wrote a beautifully bold, legible and superior vertical style with his left hand shortly after the accident which deprived him of his right arm—and this he it remarked without a teacher, thus confirming our oft repeated dogma that vertical writing is the only *natural* writing.

The advantage of being able to write with both hands is incalculable, as the *Lancet* points out, and vertical writing is the only method that renders this practicable.

6. Medical experts of the highest reputation in their respective departments, have given this subject their closest attention for years and after conducting many series of exhaustive experiments—requiring the examination of many thousands of school children—they assure us that sloping writing is most pernicious in its effects upon the physical frame. tell us that sloping writing is one of the chief causes of

spinal curvature; that myopia or short sight is induced and encouraged by it in thousands of cases; that pulmonary or chest diseases are also produced or developed to an alarming degree by sloping writing, and that it gives rise in many cases to writer's cramp. All these diseases have been clearly traced to the postures taught in and required by sloping writing. The results here epitomized are duly and scientifically set forth in long and learned essays and lectures still in print. For a fairly full discussion of this vital point the reader is referred to a manual "The Theory and Practice of Handwriting" now being published by Sampson Low & Co., S. Dunstons, 110 Fetter Lane, E. C.

It is healthier for the writer, it is easier and quicker to write, it is easier or plainer to read, and it is far more economical than any system of slope hand writing whatever.

This subject has been studied very carefully and discussed fully by the Halifax teachers and their conclusions agree substantially with those given above. They are now introducing the system.

GRADING EXAMINATIONS.

To those who think that examinations are a *sine qua non* for promotion, we recommend the following extract from the *N. Y. School Journal*:

A number of years ago New Bedford, Mass., abolished written examinations for promotion in the primary and grammar schools. The plan worked so well that it was extended last fall to include the high school. It is interesting to hear the testimony of Supt. William E. Hatch, regarding the working of the system. In a letter to the Boston *Commonwealth*, he says: "The condition of things that those who insist on examinations for promotion have always predicted in case the examinations were abolished has not occurred in our schools. The pupils work as well without examinations and the schools are as efficient as in other cities where examinations exist."

Going further into details, Mr. Hatch says: "The teachers have no excuse for rote teaching when examinations for promotion do not exist, neither do they have any excuse for cramming their pupils with stereotyped questions. They are free to study the children themselves and to develop their thinking powers, being required only to cover each in her own way (provided her thinking is based on sound educational principles) the required course of study. Examinations for promotion were abolished in the lower schools seven or eight years ago at least, so we have had time to judge of the merits or defects of the plan. The plan was introduced in the high school at the beginning of this school year. I learn from talks with several of the teachers there that there is no visible loss of interest or effort on the part of the pupils so far, nor do I think there will be. To sum up: After a number of years of trial of the plan of basing promotions on the recommendations of the teachers, rather than on examinations, we consider it an unqualified success. There is no desire on the part of any to return to the old plan, and we consider that to do so would be a decided step backward."

The handsome two story wooden grammar school-house at Sussex, N. B., erected in 1875 at a cost of \$8,000, was recently burned to the ground.