

Concerning Penmanship.

The adoption of the important resolutions given below, followed the discussion of a paper, "How to Raise the Standard of Writing throughout the Country," read by J. F. Barnhart, Supervisor of Writing, Akron, Ohio:

DETROIT, MICH., December 20, 1900.

We, the Penmanship Teachers' Association of the National Commercial Teachers' Federation in convention assembled, in order to suggest the proper solution of the Public School Writing Problem, adopted the following preamble and resolutions:

Whereas, No system of writing, whether vertical or slant, will in itself insure good writing, whether taught by copy-book, copy-slip, tablet, blackboard, or by any other method;

Whereas, The best results can only be secured by earnest, faithful, intelligent teaching on the part of well-qualified teachers;

Whereas, It is a well-known fact that a very large per cent of teachers have not prepared themselves to teach this important branch, simply because their Boards of Examiners have not subjected them to as rigid an examination in this as in other branches, but have simply graded them from their manuscripts and have never refused to grant certificates however illegible the writing;

And whereas, It is a great injustice to pupils and to tax-payers to grant a certificate to any candidate who does not sufficiently understand the theory and practice of writing to direct the pupils in the development of the writing muscles of the arm, wrist and fingers, and who is not able to place on the blackboard models worthy of imitation by pupils, and whose manuscripts do not indicate that the character of the teacher's general work would indirectly supplement the good results secured during the regular writing period;

Resolved, That Boards of Examiners should give as rigid examinations in writing as in other branches, and should call to their aid the assistance of specialists.

Resolved, That to secure the better equipment of teachers, experienced instructors of writing should be employed in every City, State and Independent Normal School, and also in Institutes and Summer Schools.

Resolved, That in order to secure uniformity and enthusiasm in the graded schools, Supervisors should be employed in all the cities and in townships with town and village schools.

Resolved, That Educational Journals should emphasize the importance of writing and give more attention to methods of instruction.

Resolved, That less and larger writing be encouraged in the primary grades. The twin evils of good penmanship, excessive finger movement and gripping, are the result of requiring children to write when too young to write properly. No writing except under the supervision of the teacher should be required in the first and second years, but if required the forms should be large enough to allow the children to use the arm instead of the fingers in execution. Such eminent educators as

Dr. Hall of Worcester, Mass., declare that writing in the primary grades does far more injury to the child and the child's future writing than it does good. It is not whether children can be taught to write (draw), but whether they should be allowed, much less required to do so. Children can work in factories, but our laws wisely prohibit the same.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be submitted to the educational press for publication, and that school authorities give this matter their careful consideration.

He Was Master of Himself.

That was a unique way in which Mr. Smith, a merchant of an eastern city in want of a boy, is said to have tested the young applicants who came to him. He put a sign in his window: "Wanted, a Boy; Wages \$4; \$6 to the Right One."

As each applicant appeared the merchant asked, "Can you read?" Then he took the boy into a quiet room, gave him an open book and bade him read without a break until told to stop.

When the reading had been going on for a few minutes, Mr. Smith dropped a book to the floor and then rose and moved certain articles about the room. This was sufficient to pique the curiosity of some of the candidates. They looked up, lost their place on the page, blundered, and the merchant said;

"You may stop. I shall not need you at present. I want a boy who is master of himself."

If the reader was undisturbed by Mr. Smith's movements, a lot of roguish puppies was tumbled out of a basket and encouraged to frolic about the floor. This proved too much for most of the boys. They looked, hesitated and were dismissed.

Boy after boy underwent the same treatment until over 30 had been tried and had failed to control their curiosity. At length, one morning, a boy read steadily on without manifesting any desire to look at the puppies.

"Stop!" said the merchant finally. "Did you see those puppies?"

"No, sir," replied the boy. "I could not see them and read too."

"You knew they were there?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you fond of dogs?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right. I think you will suit me," said the merchant. "Come to-morrow. Your wages will start at \$4, and if you prove master of yourself, as I think you will, you shall have \$6, perhaps more."

It was not many weeks before the wages were \$6, and promotions followed. Now the young man fills a high position in the store.—*Youth's Companion*.