

ing, furnish a basis sufficient to enable a skilful examiner of writing to demonstrate the identity of any handwriting with a great degree of certainty.

In extreme cases, and especially skilfully forged signatures, the aid of the microscope will be necessary for a proper examination, but for the greater proportion of cases of questioned handwriting a common glass, magnifying from ten to twenty diameters, will serve much the better purpose, as it is ample to reveal the characteristics of the writing, while its greater convenience of use and broader field of view are greatly in its favor.

In the writing of every adult are habits of form, movement, and shade, so multitudinous as in the main to be unnoted by the writer, and impossible of perception by any imitator. Hence, in cases of forged or imitated writing, the forger labors under two insuperable difficulties, viz.: the incorporation of all the habitual characteristics of the writing he would simulate, and the avoidance of all his own unconscious writing habit, to do which in any extended writing we believe to be utterly impossible.

How far this inevitable failure may be discovered and demonstrated depends upon the skill of the forger, and the acuteness of the expert.—*Penman's Art Journal*.

FLOURISHED WRITING.

Of all things in business writing that annoy and disgust practical men of affairs superfluous and flourished lines are the chief. Unskilful and bad writing may be excusable for many reasons—such as extreme haste, unfavorable circumstances, or physical inability; but for useless unmeaning flourishes there can be, to a practical business-man, no satisfactory reason or excuse. To him they are not only a sheer waste of time and energy, but are ugly excrescences upon the writing which he can neither tolerate or excuse. The Quaker yea and nay idea of speech is applicable to business writing—plain, simple, legible forms, easily combined—most fully meet the demands of business. So-called authors of so-called systems of practical writing abounding in multifarious complex and difficult forms, for letters with superabundant flourishes are simply plagues and hindrances in the way—of learners—to good, practical writing.

In ornamental or artistic penmanship, which is practised only by professional writers, a certain amount of variety and flourishing, when executed with taste and skill, is not only admissible but desirable, but the great mass of our school-children have not the requisite time or taste to acquire such professional skill; good practical writing is all they seek or desire, and are under the necessity of acquiring that in the most certain and expeditious manner. To place before such, copies of complex, flourished and unsystematic writing, is a wrong which can be accounted for only on the ground of ignorance or knavery on the part of the authors or teachers.

There should be a clear and sharp distinction between practical writing for the masses and professional writing for the few.—*Penman's Art Journal*.

BRILLIANT NEWSPAPER FEAT.

ONE OF THE THINGS REPORTERS HAVE TO DO TO KEEP UP.

One of the most brilliant feats of French reporting is the following. It happened at the time when the great Troppmann murder case was agitating Paris and France, and when everybody was eager for details. A reporter who had the matter in hand left Paris for Cernay, where the father of Troppmann resided. He arrived, called upon the Justice of the Peace and the Commissaire de Police, invited them to follow him to the Mairie, took his seat in the Judge's chair, and there, with unparalleled audacity, ordered the garde champetre to go and bring before him the assassin's father. The officers did not say a word; the reporter had conquered them by his air and demeanor. When the father of Troppmann was brought before him, the reporter interrogated him as though officially commissioned to do so. The result of the cross-questioning was that the son had written to his father on the eve and on the day of the crime. "Monsieur le Commissaire," said the reporter, "please go the witness's house and seize these letters."

The functionary obeyed; the letters were brought, the reporter read them, found them full of evidence of Troppmann's guilt, copied them carefully and with a solemn air. Then, with respect, he handed over the originals to the Justice of the Peace, asked him to seal them carefully and keep them for the future use of the court. The reporter put the copies into his pocket, saluted the gentlemen and left. It was 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and the train that was to bear his letter to Paris would not leave before evening. If he sent his precious report by that train it would be too late for the morning edition of the paper.

Besides, he met two other Paris reporters, who had just arrived, and who would soon learn the news at Cernay and send it on to Paris at the same time he did his report. What does he do! He goes up to his brother reporters and says: "I am dying of hunger, my friends. Let us breakfast together. You go to the tavern there and order a good déjeuner, with plenty of wine, you know, and I'll come presently." The two reporters did as he bade them, while our friend jumped into a waggon, had himself driven to the station, after hard begging and giving money, was allowed to leave on a luggage train, then about to start, caught a passenger train for Paris at a junction further on, and arrived at the office of his paper late at night. He communicated his information, and the first page, which was already "closed up," was completely reset. The next morning 80,000 copies of the paper were sold.—*From The Parisian*.