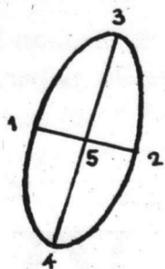
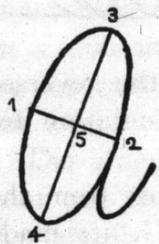


to the right, the curve to the left, and the straight line, are all taken from the ellipse and its diameters. The curves are often modified, as we shall see when we make the letters.



3. Draw an oval on the board, and number its parts. Let the children point out the curves on the drawing, and spend some time in practising them, and along with this, practise the upper turn and lower turn both separately and combined. By looking over the small letters, it is readily seen, that they are nearly all made by attaching curves of some sort to straight lines. It is well to remember that all curves are joined to the straight lines of short letters, one-fourth of the length of line from top or bottom.

I shall not attempt to go through the whole alphabet, but shall mention only a few points that I have found helpful in teaching the form of some of the letters. Look at the oval on



the board. Draw a straight line from 2 parallel to 5-4, attach a curve to the right, similar to 4-2; place a dot above and we have an "i." Now to make this letter again, draw a straight line on the board about six inches long, divide into quarters and add the curves. The dot, above the "i," should lie in the straight line produced. Have the children write this letter several times on their practice paper, and then go on, to the other short letters made from the straight line and the curves. The u, v, w, n, m, r, s, x, all follow naturally. The o, a, c, e, are made from the small oval. The stem letters are easily taught here. Build them up from the i, a, and v, or x; notice the length of each letter and the curves; make each one separately; reduce them to short letters, and see how they compare with the ones already taught. To make the loop letters take the i; produce the straight line upward (our writing system requires three times its original length); attach a modified curve to the right, and you have an l. By producing the straight line of the i, either up or down and then adding curves, you can easily make all the loop letters. If these are made in ruled spaces, the class can see at once, that the straight line

and curved line always cross on the space lines which enclose the short letters.

Practise writing short words of various combinations, as soon as sufficient letters have been formed correctly. Call attention to the fact that all turns on the base-line should be alike, and teach the children to train the eye to write without guide lines.

LESSON PLANS.—My school is usually made up of children from ten to twelve years of age. When I get a new class, I have each pupil write three or four lines on the first page of the writing book. While they are doing this, I look out for position of body and pen, movement, form, and other details. This shows me where to begin, and on what part of the work to spend the most time.

We start with the position of body, and the pen holding, and spend a few minutes in muscular movement exercises, making the oval, slanting lines, and loops, as these all come into use on page one of the copy book. Each child keeps a sheet of tablet paper in the writing book for practise work. In this part of the lesson, I sometimes allow the pupils to count aloud with me. It adds to the interest and takes nothing from the results. Before leaving these exercises we make the capital O from the oval, the required stem letters from the slanting lines, and the required loop letters from the loop exercise.

Then we talk about the short letters in the copy; illustrate on the board, and practise on paper. We compare the height of the capitals, stem, and loop letters, and by this time I usually find two-thirds, or more, of the class anxious to write another line in their books. When it is written the improvement is made evident by the satisfaction expressed on the faces.

As I walk about the room looking at these lines, I get the different pupils to point out where the last line is better than the others, and where they can yet see mistakes. I show the class again, on the board, how to correct them, and another line is written in the books.

During the writing lesson, I ask, say five pupils to write on the board in spaces already prepared, while the others practise on their paper. This work is done with the understanding that it is to be criticised by the class (with no mention of names but always by the numbers above the lines). It is surprising to see just how much they can find wrong with this writing. Then we have a few lines written