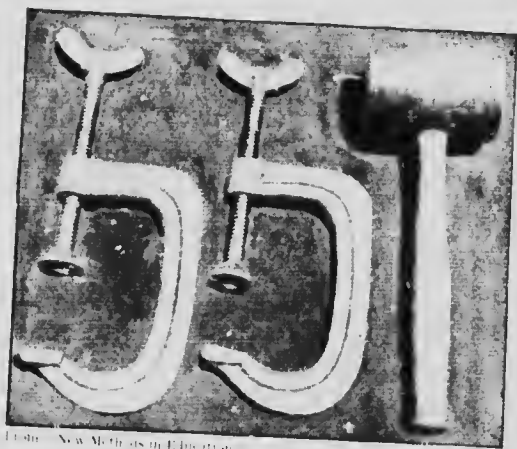


manual training; and these boys were so absorbed in it that they took no notice whatever of the arrival of Mr Tadd and myself. Why should they? They were not to be catechised in the presence of the stranger; they knew they would not have to "show off" to the visitor they did not care who came and went; each one was interested in his own piece of work, which to him was sacred, for it was his very own—the creation of his own brain, without even a suggestion from the teachers.

The whole scene was a revelation to me—not as to juvenile absorption, for I knew that all boys have an affinity for tools and a passion for making things; but what surprised me was the boldness and originality of design which these unkempt urchins displayed. No two designs were alike, yet all were absolutely original.

Let the reader come with me to the wood-carving room. The noise is like that of a boiler-shop. What's all the hammering about? Why this tremendous energy in plying mallet and chisel? These firm-set



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Clamps and Mallet for Wood Carving

lips, the do-or-die expression upon these faces—many of them innocent of soap-and-water—whence come these, and wherefore? Ah! The answer to these questions tells the whole story, which is of intense interest from start to finish. Let us learn the story of a typical case, and follow it in its various stages of development.

Young Tousele there—the boy wearing the green sweater instead of a shirt—used to loaf along the street in evenings and peer in curiously at the "kids" that were working in wood and in clay, and in colors as well as black on paper, and with white chalk on blackboard. He used to wonder what it all was about. The managers of the scheme understood boy nature pretty well, and they arranged a little trap to catch young Tousele. This trap consisted of a small ante-room, warm and well lighted, and furnished with a blackboard and chalk. Tousele stole into this room one cold night, and finding no one about, he sat down to enjoy the warmth and light. Then, finding that the "peeler" did not arrest him, he ventured to pick up the chalk and make some marks. Then he grew bolder, and began to imitate the young black-