

Vertical Writing.

What has been spoken of by many as an educational fad seems likely to become an established fact, and vertical writing to take the place of the old sloping hand to a very large extent in our schools. This sudden demand for books in upright writing has called forth a number of systems hastily prepared, by persons who have had no experience in teaching the new style, even by men who do not themselves believe in it, for publishers who are more eager to catch the market than to supply school-books that will win increasing approval because they secure the best possible training. Messrs. A. F. Newlands and B. K. Row, of Kingston, Ont., who have been experimenting for a long time with thousands of children of all school ages, have prepared a series of books soon to be published by D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, to be known as "*Heath's Vertical Writing Books*." These books have been growing slowly and steadily for several years, and among other excellent features will present a series of copies especially noticeable for simplicity, legibility, strength, harmony, practicability and beauty. The letter forms given are typal; hence admit of slight modifications according to the varying taste and temperament of the writer, thus tending to individuality in writing.

BOOK REVIEWS.

GAGE'S BOOK-KEEPING BLANKS; 142 pages; ruled. Price 35 cents. Published by the W. J. Gage Company (Ltd.), Toronto. This book was prepared in accordance with the regulations of the Education Department for Ontario for the primary examination and commercial certificates. It is a cheap and excellent book for the student for a short course in single and double entry.

SUPPLEMENTARY EXERCISES TO MACMILLAN'S PROGRESSIVE FRENCH COURSE (first year, 1894) The series of "French Course" books, edited by Fasnacht, and published by Macmillan, of London and New York, is arranged for a three years' course of study. This supplementary book has been compiled, says the preface, "at the often-repeated request of experienced teachers," who find that their pupils cannot get over the ground so fast as the successive lessons take them. Of course this book is well printed. More use is made of leaded type. The vocabulary is good. The liaisons are carefully marked. But we should like to remark: (a) That all these books of Macmillan's course should have a more definite looking page; the eye should be caught by beginning and ending, and so let one feel one had begun a definite lesson and ended it. This is even more true of the second course; it looks a vague wilderness to a pupil turning over the leaves. Heavy type should mark off each lesson. And so in the original first year book where the verbs are given; a few more leaves used could make the verb-table much clearer looking — a great thing. The perfect, as formed from the present, should be put opposite it—the old *grammaire des grammaires* was excellent in that. And it is inexcusable, in the original first year book, to put, for beginners, the pluperfect and the past anterior confusedly huddled together. (b) Why must even Macmillan's house have these disjointed sentences in exer-

cises: "It is Tuesday. Where is the cock? The cock is on the rope. The map is useful," etc? To have from the first an exercise on which the teacher can say something, a suggestive exercise, is a help to teacher and taught. We know few things more fatiguing than these aimless, disjointed remarks. The healthy mind resents, and even rejects them. (c) That leads us to say that we hope no teacher will ever use this "first course"—with or without the supplementary exercises—unless at the same time he or she gives dictation; talks to the pupils a little in French; makes them pronounce distinctly and exactly; reads some consecutive passages, and teaches them to use the auxiliary verbs in sentences aloud—all those from the first. As a Harvard professor has lately said: "Sight-reading may be begun the first week. . . . First year students in Harvard, for instance, read through Halevy's 'L'Abbé Constantin,' Erckmann-Châtrian's 'Madame Thérèse,' Labiche's 'La Poudre aux Yeux' and 'Le Voyage de M. Perrichon,' George Sand's 'La Mare au Diable,' besides Mérimée's 'L'Enlèvement de la Redoute,' and extracts from Souvestre and other writers." W. F. S.

METHODS OF TEACHING MODERN LANGUAGES. Papers on the value and on methods of modern language instruction. By various American professors. Boston: Heath & Co. This is the book from which the extract at the close of the last review is taken. It is a book of much immediate interest to teachers of modern languages; all should buy it, as well as Colbeck's, *On the Teaching of Modern Languages in Theory and Practice*. (Cambridge Pitt Press Series). There are many and sometimes conflicting opinions given; but no "teachable" teacher could fail to get useful hints for his work by reading these books. He certainly would be filled with some proper dissatisfaction when he reads of "one of the pleasantest sights—to see some hundred and odd students listening, 'with all their ears,' to a ten or twelve minutes talk in French; students who, three or four months before, had never heard a word of the language." A professor in the same university adds, indeed: "One of the most fatal mistakes that teachers of modern languages in colleges are liable to make is to hurry their classes too much. The time allotted to their work is short and their aims are high; no wonder, they often give their students too difficult work. . . . It would be impossible to use German exclusively in very large first or second year classes. But even in classes of forty or fifty a slight beginning may be made. The least that may be expected from the very beginning is that no sentence shall ever be translated until the German has been read aloud. This reading of the text, so far from delaying rapid progress, as some teachers think, results ultimately in a great gain of time. It is the only way students can ever be taught to comprehend the construction and meaning of a sentence at the first glance without translation into English." But then comes the question about the learners. Professor Marshall Elliott, of Johns Hopkins' University, writes: "Suppose the learner occasionally has a sensation that he is working. What of it? There are worse things in the world than that. . . . It is no part of the teacher's business to make things easy at the expense of thoroughness. It is a mistake if he thinks that the real and lasting regard of his pupil can be won in that way. Healthy boys and girls, and young men and young women in school and college, do not want an easy