

RECORD. We trust that its appearance will lead our correspondent to put in "black and white" her own opinion about the matter.]

*To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL RECORD :*

SIR,—Will you please insert the following article taken from the *Educational Journal*, and oblige, yours, &c.,  
D. M. A.

There is perhaps some ground for the complaint that the art of penmanship is neglected or badly taught in many of the schools of the day. Not infrequently we hear newspaper growls from parents and business men who cling to the old-fashioned notion that one of the uses of the art is to enable the writer to convey ideas on paper to the party addressed, and that to this end it is desirable that in addition to any other excellencies it may have it is well that one's handwriting should be legible. Editors and printers may perhaps be excusable if they share largely in the prejudice in favor of legibility. We live in a busy and practical age, and no doubt speed and a business-like look are very desirable qualities in a written communication; but there is, nevertheless, some ground for the opinion that unless the communication can be deciphered without too great an expenditure of time and effort, its usefulness is a good deal impaired.

In the field of penmanship, as in every other department of human activity, the iconoclast and the innovator are at work. A determined assault is just now being made on the old-time and most sacred dogma, that the true and only artistic penmanship is that which slants gracefully to the left at a certain uniform angle. Who that has left his school-days behind by a score or half-score of years can recall without a tremor the scoldings and sarcasms and perhaps flagellations which used to be the penalty of a failure to give his letters the orthodox slant? No matter how much easier and more natural it might seem to be to make his down strokes and the axes of his curves at right angles to the lines which formed their bases, he was taught that no one but a dunce or an idiot would ever form his letters in that way.

And now, lo, and behold! a race of innovators has sprung up, who declare that the old slant is all a mistake, and an unnecessary weariness to the eye and the muscles of the wrist and arm, and that the upright or vertical method is the only natural and easy way in which to combine speed with legibility in writing. In our own columns, some months ago, Mr. Newlands demonstrated to his own satisfaction, and we dare say to that of a good many of our readers, that the vertical system effects a real saving in space, time, and effort; that it is almost a guarantee of legibility; in a word, that it is, *par excellence*, the natural, easy, and speedy mode of writing. In the current number of the *Popular Science Monthly* the same view is boldly endorsed and advocated by a clever writer, from whom we learn that this system is already in use in many places, and that in particular the reform is meeting with great favor in England. We are even told that, in view of its superior legibility, the examiners in all