

Oberlin Business College

Compendium of

Penmanship

by

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The authorities of the Oberlin Business College dedicate this product of the pens of three of its instructors to all young people who desire to secure that invaluable possession, a good handwriting.

PREFACE.

This COMPENDIUM OF PENMANSHIP is published with the hope that it may prove of great help and inspiration to many ambitious young people. It has been the aim of its authors to give a series of practical copies rather than to make any great display of what is termed "ornamental penmanship." The originals of these photo-engraved copies came from the pens of three busy teachers of this College. We trust the compilation may not be found wanting in merit.

A good handwriting may be attained by almost every individual; the lack of it indicates a degree of carelessness which bars one from the employ of many business men, and thus often causes a serious financial loss to the poor writer. On the other hand, a good handwriting often proves to be the key which opens the way to a successful career. One of our own graduates, owing to his excellent penmanship, was chosen to be the private secretary of a New York banker, and was soon earning several thousand dollars per year. Without his penmanship he would probably never have attained any such success. The one who has a good handwriting is always given the preference by business men, other things being equal. It may at some time turn the scale in your favor. *You may succeed if you have strong enough desire to do so. Do not be afraid of intelligent, persistent work!*

Oberlin, Ohio, July, 1901.

THE OBERLIN BUSINESS COLLEGE COMPANY.

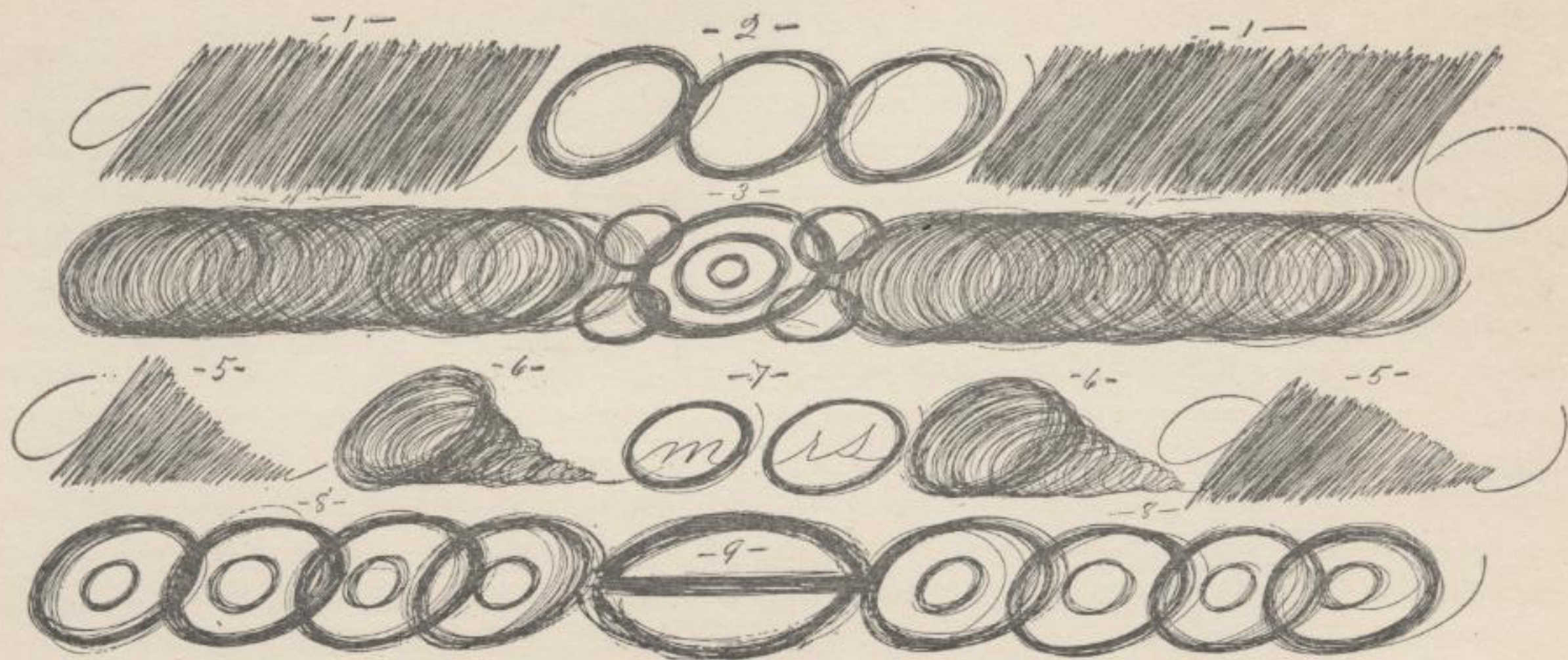
POSITION AND MOVEMENT.

POSITION. The best position is that in which the pupil sits directly facing the table, leaning slightly forward without touching it,—the arms resting freely and evenly on the desk, the left hand being used to adjust the paper; the feet resting squarely on the floor, the left foot a little in advance of the right. This position will give necessary firmness as well as ease. The pen should be held lightly between the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand, the first finger resting on the top of the holder about one inch from the point of the pen. The second finger should rest against the side of holder at the root of the finger nail. The pupil should rest his hand upon the nails of the third and fourth fingers. The wrist should not touch the desk.

MOVEMENT. As all good writing is based on muscular movement, the first thing to do is to learn how to use these writing muscles. Take position at desk according to previous instruction. Let the arm rest on the large muscle just in front of the elbow, the hand resting on the last two fingers, the finger nails forming a gliding rest. Let the arm roll back and forth on the large muscle, the sleeve adhering to desk and the arm moving in and out of the sleeve. Do not move the fingers. The large muscles about the shoulder should do the propelling.

INSTRUCTIONS. The exercises on this plate should be practiced daily. You will find exercises in this plate to give you practice of the hand and arm in every direction needed in the execution of rapid writing. It would be well to take up exercises as numbered on the plate.

MOVEMENT EXERCISES. Plate 2.



ONE SPACE LETTERS.

In making small letters it is well to remember that all up strokes are curving and all downward strokes, with few exceptions, are straight lines. Let every downward stroke of the pen be toward the center of the body, and the writing will have the correct slant. Never practice carelessly. Always practice with a free and quick stroke. Let the movement be bold, free, resting the pen so lightly that the arm, hand and fingers can move freely together. To make the greatest improvement in the shortest time, practice upon the letters separately until you can make them all correctly; then take up the letter exercises after the forms given in this plate. Next take up the short words which we have selected for practice. Do not make heavy strokes in business writing. Try to make a light smooth line.

If you will follow instructions given above you can soon make light, smooth lines, and make beautiful forms. You should use the exercises in this plate as daily movement drills. Compare your work often with the copy. You must criticise your own work. Do not try to practice too many things in one lesson. Take up some word or exercise and stick to it until you can see some improvement.

ONE SPACE LETTERS. Plate 3.

u u u m m m n n n u n u m u n
min min mu m mu m o o o o
moon moon w w w v v v v w
own own v o w v o w v i m v i m
e e e e a a a a a a a a e e
mine mine ai m a m m a n a a
r r r r r r r s s s s s s s s r
run ruin ruin su m i s s u e s s s

SEMI-EXTENDED LETTERS.

A variety of styles are used in this plate. Choose the style that seems most practical to you, and practice it until you can make it easily, rapidly, and accurately. You will find that placing four or five letters together in an exercise makes a splendid drill. It gives practice in forming letters, and serves as a movement exercise at the same time. Before taking the long words of this copy you should turn back to Plate 2 and practice various drills given on that plate for a few minutes. Then take up these words and try to write the whole word without lifting the pen. This may seem difficult at first, but good results will quickly follow careful practice. Take up one of the long words and write a whole page, using just the one word, and see if the page presents a uniform appearance. If you can make the words all the same size you are certainly progressing. Try to devote at least one-half hour daily to the practice of penmanship. It will pay you well.

SEMI-EXTENDED LETTERS. Plate 4.

tttt dddd dddd dddd tttt tttt td
trust tin trout druid drum dust t
pppp pppp pppp qqqq qqqq qqqq
proud prudent quire quarter queer
trumpet quadruped dangerous dime

UPPER LOOP LETTERS.

Study this plate carefully before trying to make the forms. Unless you have a correct idea of the form of a letter well fixed in your mind, you can never make that letter nicely. Thus we can see that it is important to notice every stroke that is used in a letter if we would improve rapidly.

“Who would become a writer fine,
Must take a deal of pains;
Must criticise his every line,
And mix his ink with brains.”

The thoughtful student in penmanship, as in other studies, will win. Think and write. Practice with perseverance and your success will be certain. Remember about the curving up strokes and downward straight lines, for nowhere can you use this advice to better advantage than on the work given in this plate. Make upward strokes very curving in this group. Many fail to make good loops on account of their upward strokes being almost straight. Do not shade on down strokes. Notice the spacing of the letters in words of this plate. *Wide spacing encourages free movement.* Place the parts of a letter close together and then separate the letters distinctly.

UPPER LOOP LETTERS. Plate 5.

llll bbbb hhhh kkkk kbkk
illum illusion lull hull hill
bloom brisk brush blind bk
hammock hamlet brevity brand
kindness kink know knell kink

LOWER LOOP LETTERS.

Do not forget about the curving strokes and straight lines. They apply to the lower loop letters just the same as to the upper. Now be sure to have your downward strokes straight and you will have little trouble in making this group well. If you have mastered the letters in Plate 2 it will be a great help to you in practicing this group. You will see that the upper part of "j" is just like the "i," and the upper portion of "y" is like "v," while the portion of "q" above the base line is like "a." The fact is thus made prominent again that if you master the form of one letter it will aid you in the execution of another. For these letters have many strokes in common. The "z" is an exception to the rule on down strokes. Make loop very small. Aim to have your practice work about the size of copy. A medium size is desirable for practical work. Make your letters small and accurate. The first object in writing is legibility. You want your work so plain that it may be read at a glance.

LOWER LOOP LETTERS. Plate 6.

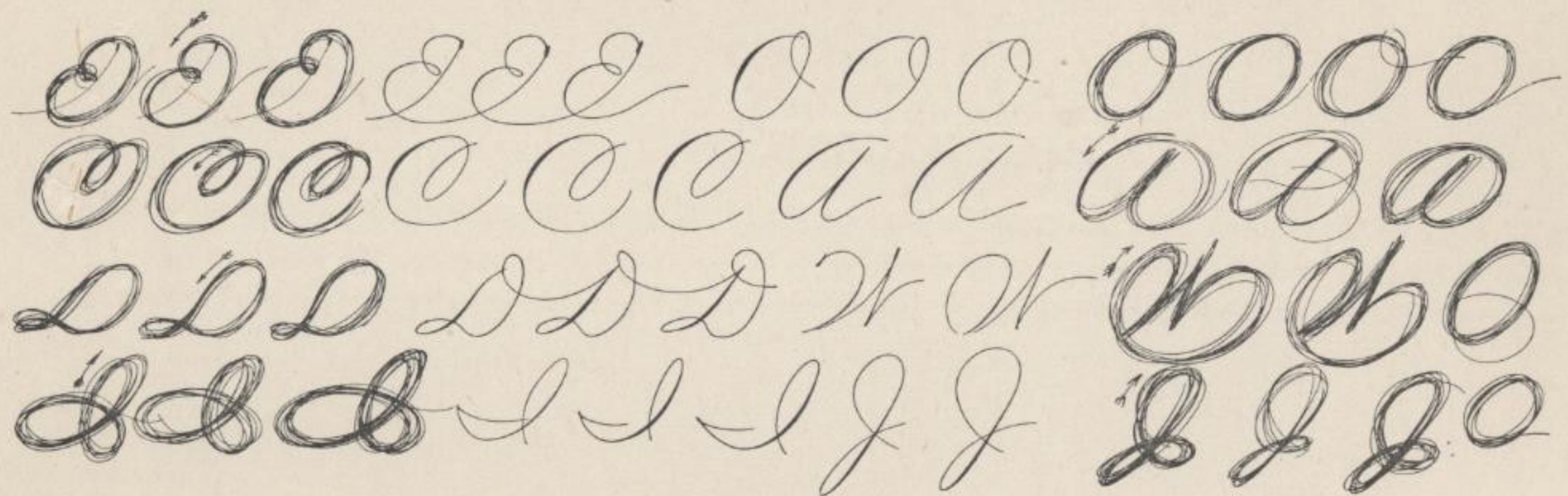
jjjj jjjj yyy yyy y
janitor junior yours year y
gggg gggg zzzz zzzz zz gg
grand granite zero zinnia zone
judge rejoice groove grudge gg

DIRECT OVAL CAPITALS.

"It is not all movement, it is not all practice, and it is not all study that makes a penman, but it is by properly combining all these three that we reach skill with the pen."—A. N. Palmer, editor *Western Penman*.

Before beginning work on this plate it will be well to turn to the plate of movement exercises and practice the compact oval drill, No. 4, for ten minutes, then take up capital letter exercises. The arrows show the direction the pen is to take. These letter exercises are excellent to use after you have mastered simple exercises. They require more control of writing muscles than the oval drills, from the fact that we trace so nearly the form of the letter. If you will master the exercises in this plate you will have little difficulty with the letters. You can devise exercises with other capitals if you choose. Take up one capital at a time, making a whole page of the same. Do not shade. The down stroke, however, may be a firm stroke.

CAPITALS—DIRECT AND INDIRECT OVALS. Plate 7.



PAGE WRITING.

We would suggest that much time be spent in page writing. It requires one kind of skill to write a word beautifully, but it requires another and greater degree of skill to make a page look neat and beautiful. Your writing will be judged by others mainly by its appearance as a whole,—hence practice on page work.

Plate 8.

Command your hand to guide the pen.
One example will outweigh ten precepts.
Discretion of speech is superior to eloquence.
Endeavor to be true, just and kind always.
A friend without faults cannot be found.

INSTRUCTIONS.

The exercises on Plate 9 will be difficult at first, but do not despair if you cannot secure the desired results the first time. Come back to the exercises often, and we believe you will see marked improvement from time to time. Do not try to shade, for it is not necessary in business writing. Practice the exercises before taking up the single letters. If you can secure good form of letters in the movement exercises, all the better; but do not discard movement for the sake of correct form of letter.

INDIRECT OVALS—CONTINUED. Plate 9.

M M M M M M N N N N N N
V V V V V V U U U U U U
Z Z Z Z Z Z X X X X X X
Y Y Y Y Y Y Z Z Z Z Z Z

COMMERCIAL VALUE OF GOOD WRITING.

"The head of a large firm in the West recently advertised for a bookkeeper who must be a good penman. Stress was put on the penmanship. It was necessary to be not only a fair penman, but a good penman. He was disappointed in the number of replies that came in response to his advertisement. A second advertisement was inserted, naming the salary, and this time he received 150 replies. Many of the applicants gave evidence of ability in every way except in penmanship, and, strange to say, not one of the 150 could pass muster in handwriting. The story is authentic, and we give it for what it is worth. We hear much complaint nowadays about how difficult it is for young people to secure paying positions, but this is only another example of how difficult it is for the man with the position to find one to fill it."—*The Penman's Art Journal.*

Plate 10.

Where you find bees there you find honey
Kindness conquers where force cannot win
Learning tends to refine and humanize
Misfortunes do not always come to injure.
Hear both sides before making a decision!

INSTRUCTIONS.

Read again the instructions for Plate 9. The practice of these movement exercises will probably be the most delightful part of your work and will, undoubtedly, result in great profit to you, for they are intended to help you work up your movement and form at the same time. If you have movement and form, little is lacking to make you a good writer.

STEM CAPITALS. Plate 11.

S S S S S L L L L L L L L L
T T T T T F F F F F F F F F
G G G G G O P P P P P P P P P
B B B B B N N N N N N N N N

VALUE OF GOOD WRITING.

"No accomplishment can be of greater worth in business than good penmanship. It is an invaluable introduction to a business place, and often the cause of promotion. While time is required to make one's accomplishments in other lines known, his good penmanship speaks for itself at sight. The penmanship should be neat and plain, and as rapid as is consistent with these qualities. Avoid flourishes, and write with little or no shade. No one can become a good penman without an effort on his own part, and good handwriting is almost sure to be acquired by those who are willing, persistent, careful, and earnest in their endeavor to attain it. Careful practice will constantly improve one's handwriting, while carelessness may spoil a good style already acquired. A carelessly written letter is not only prejudicial to the writer and disrespectful to the correspondent, but needlessly consumes time of the latter in deciphering it. Write no more letters than you can write well. Write plainly, neatly, slowly if you must, but write as well as you can; you cannot afford to write otherwise."

Plate 12.

Yield always to reason, but not to passion!
The business of all is the business of none.
Silence often can speak more than words!
Justice should characterize all our actions
Good examples are convincing preachers.

"When I decided to become a penman there was another boy in the same village about my own age who was also practicing writing. At that time he was a better writer than I. My friends told me that he was a natural writer, but I was not, and in their opinions,—which they gave free of charge—would never become a penman. I practiced ever spare moment possible, while my talented young friend rested a great deal on his natural ability, and spent his evenings in a grocery store, listening to stories. The result was, in a short time, I was a better writer than he. I now pleasantly recall those days and I think how hard I tried to beat that boy writing."—*E. L. Glick in Western Penman.*

Do not imagine that it requires natural ability to become a good business writer.

Plate 13.

Better to slip with foot than with tongue.
Painful experience makes even fools wise.
Rivers that journey to join the joyous sea.
Indolence is a grave for the living man.
Friendship is a bond stronger than blood.

"Remember that carelessness and too much haste not only fail to improve your penmanship, but actually ruin what progress is already attained. When persons contemplate having a photograph taken they often bestow much care upon their personal appearance, in order to heighten the effect of the artist in the presentation of their physical likeness. These same persons, however, will often sit down and write hurriedly an important letter that from undue haste abounds in blots, illegible writing, erasures, and bad spelling, without once thinking they are transmitting to their correspondent a kind of mental photograph of themselves, and one, too, which better indicates their fitness for business or for society, than the others."

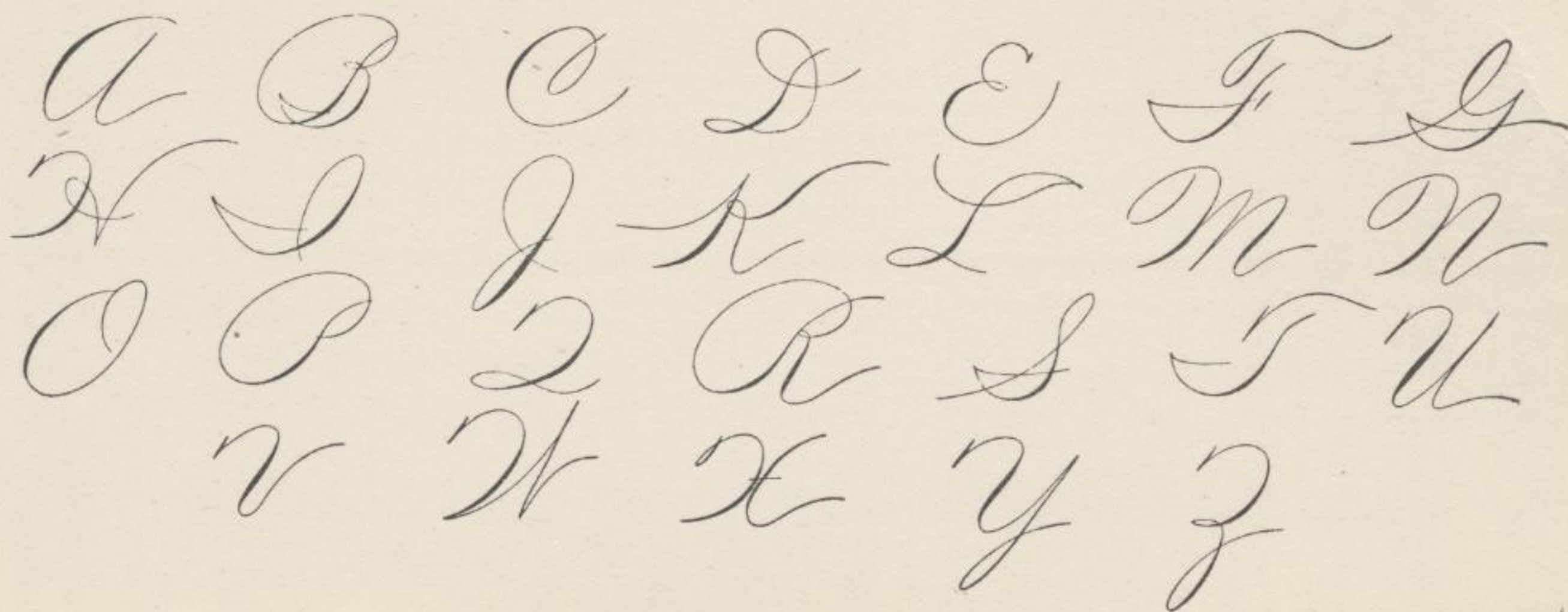
Plate 14.

Quiet deportment shows good breeding
Xylography, art of engraving on wood.
Never try to appear what you are not.
Venture not upon the threshold of wrong
Use your leisure hours for improvement

INSTRUCTIONS.

These capitals are intended to be practical forms such as should be used in plain writing. They should not be accompanied with unnecessary flourish, but should be made with a free movement. Watch your own work and compare it with the copy. Try to determine where your weak points are, and then try to improve those points. The exercises you have already had, if practiced faithfully, should enable you to make a good set of capitals.

Plate 15.



No part of a business education so quickly commands attention as good penmanship. It is a recommendation in itself, and a passport to the best positions in the business community.—A. D. Skeels.

Plate 16.

"If you can cultivate to perfection some art by which you can gain an independent livelihood, do it, whether there is a necessity for it or not, do it quietly if you will, but do it. There is no telling when or under what circumstances you may need it."

INSTRUCTIONS.

The figures can not be made with so free a movement as the letters. In other words more finger movement is permissible. Study the form closely. Practice each figure until it can be made well, and then take up combinations. Lastly, practice the squares as shown on the plate. This will give you needed practice in placing figures in straight columns. Do not make your figures too large.

Plate 17.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0	
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1	¢
3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2	
4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3	%
5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4	5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4	
6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5	6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5	%
7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6	7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6	§
8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	¢

Plates 18-21 are samples of ornamental writing. They are not given to serve as copies for beginners, but rather to show what may be accomplished later by faithful practice. It would be much better for beginners to practice a plain business hand such as has been exemplified in the preceding plates. After acquiring that, time may be spent profitably on ornamental styles.

The free ornamental styles may, however, serve to impress upon one the necessity of a free movement. If you want graceful writing be sure to cultivate that movement which has been described and insisted upon in the preceding instructions.

Plate 18.

Eminence is the fruit of labor.
Coming events cast their shadows before.
The best mirror is a true friend.
Beautiful streamlet running zigzag along
Good teachers are the best examples.

"When a young man goes in search of employment the first thing he is asked to do is to give a sample of his handwriting. If he can give satisfaction in this his success is comparatively certain. Read the advertisements of business men for clerks, bookkeepers, etc., and you will notice that they require the applicant to apply in his own handwriting. We have before said that a good handwriting goes far toward making up for other deficiencies, and we might add that when the other qualifications are possessed their value is greatly enhanced by the possession of this. The elegant and rapid writer will always command a high salary."—*New York Tribune*.

Plate 19.

Birmingham, O.
August 24, 1924.
Nine months from date I promise to
pay Hammond, Beaumont Co, or order,
Nine Hundred Dollars.
(Value received)
M. J. Wineman.

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

Plate 20.

Ornamental Capitals
A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z &

BUSINESS WRITING.

Of all the manifold uses of the pen, that in which it is made subservient to the wants of everyday life should unquestionably hold the highest rank. While beautiful and elegant penmanship gives evidence of taste and skill, business writing may be said to sway the world. Easy and graceful in its proportions, it is as attractive as it is useful. Plain to the eye, conveying thought with electric speed to the reader's mind, its perusal gives genuine satisfaction to all to whom it is addressed. Men in the world of commerce who transact business daily with those who are known to them only through the medium of letters, involuntarily form opinions based upon the character of the writing of their correspondents. If it is firm, free, and legible, it inspires a well grounded confidence in the general ability of the writer and gives an assurance that he will do well whatever his hands find to do.—*Platt R. Spencer.*

Plate 21.

C. A. Beaumont

D. M. Farrington.

C. M. Fowells.

C. M. Manning

James Hamlin

Plain, practical writing is the only thing for business, but this does not impair the beauty that is to be found in ornamental pen work. There is probably not a skilled ornamental penman in the land to-day who is not also a most practical writer—indeed, it is impossible to reach the high skill that is required for flourishing and fancy writing without completely covering the field of practical writing. Some give up at the foot of the mountain upon which man never stood and say there is no use in climbing it. There is no reason why the young penman who may be only an amateur to-day cannot some time be one of the very best writers to be found anywhere.—*H. B. Lehman in Penman's Art Journal.*

Plate 22.

Count that day lost
Whose low descending sun.
Views at thy hand.
No worthy action done.

In making this alphabet use an ordinary pen and hold it in the usual position. The paper, however, instead of being held with the sides parallel to the arm as in writing, should be held with the sides at right angles to the edge of the desk. This will enable you to get the correct slant. Try to get the lines regular; do not allow them to bulge too much in the middle. The most difficult part in making this alphabet is to keep the slant uniform. Practice each letter until it can be made well. Then take groups of letters, then words and sentences. One style of ornamentation is given on the plate. It will pay you to practice this style of lettreing until you master it.

MARKING ALPHABET. Plate 23.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q
R S T U V W X Y Z Cincinnati, Ohio.
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
George Manning Wellington



For this alphabet hold the paper with the ruled lines parallel with the arm. The shades should be exactly on the tops and bottoms of the letters. It will be noticed that the small letters may be made with the shade on the bottom only or on both top and bottom. The student can use his own taste in the ornamentation of letters. This is a beautiful style of lettering.

ORNAMENTAL LETTERING. Plate 24.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z a b c
d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z a b c d e f g h i j k
Minnabaha Charleston

Plate 25 shows the preceding alphabet in body work. The sentiment of the quotation will undoubtedly appeal strongly to many young people.

Plate 25.



There are two most valuable possessions
which no search-warrant can get at, which
no execution can take away, and which no
reverse of fortune can destroy. They are what a
man puts into his head, knowledge, and into his hand,
skill.



INSTRUCTIONS.

This alphabet requires broad-pointed pens, of which many sizes are made. The Sønnecker pen is perhaps the most popular for this kind of work. Hold the paper square with the desk, and the pen firmly on the paper and at the same angle for all strokes. Do not allow the beginnings or ends of strokes to be ragged. Do not have too much ink on the pen when the stroke is first made, but retouch with more ink while the letter is still wet. This alphabet will require considerable practice.

ENGROSSING ALPHABET. Plate 26.

A B C D E F G H I J K L
M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z Z Æ

AN INVITATION.

We desire this Compendium of Penmanship to be the most help possible to the young people who may practice its copies. To this end we invite all to send us specimens of work for free criticism. We will gladly offer any suggestions in our power, and will, whenever possible, send copies to assist you in your weak points.

With best wishes for your improvement,

THE OBERLIN BUSINESS COLLEGE COMPANY,

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