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CHAPTER 9

SHADING.

When a knowledge of forms, and the power to execute them, are fully acquired, it is proper to enter upon the study of the rules pertaining to shade. When, therefore, anything which is useful, is at the same time made attractive, the mind is then ready to accept it, and apply, it to practice.

The power of appreciating what is beautiful seems inherent in every mind, although tastes, within certain limitations, may differ in their requirements.

If we would have Penmanship both attractive and useful, and its study pleasing, we cannot depend entirely upon correctness of form for imparting to it these qualities.

Light letters, when properly formed, are in themselves beautiful; yet, when combined, as on the written page, they produce a monotonous effect.

To break up this monotony, and produce something which will please the eye, and gratify the taste, light and dark lines should be mingled, so as to present an agreeable contrast.

Shade, however, not being essential to form, may be used, or omitted, at the option of the writer. Many accountants and bookkeepers prefer to write without shade, in order that they may more easily preserve the neat general appearance of their work, and, also, that they may more readily erase errors in words, letters, or figures,

Were all writing executed with heavy downward lines, as in the old-fashioned round hand, it would possess no more beauty than if the lines were uniformly light, since excess of shade as effectually destroys the contrast, as its entire omission.

It is the graceful blending of light and shade which gives life and beauty to the productions of the artist, and renders paintings fountains of delight, from which the eye of the beholder may drink, and never weary. And what is writing but the picture work of thought.

The principles involved in the subject of shading are few, and their application depends mainly upon a right exercise of judgment and taste. For the sake of convenience, we have arranged and numbered the shades according to their appearance upon a straight line or curve.

The first shade on a straight line is made heavy at the top, but gradually diminishes, until it reaches the ruled line.

The second is the reverse of this, being light at the top, and increasing gradually to its base.

The third is upon a straight line, where there is a turn at base. This shade increases gradually two thirds of its length, then tapers to the turn.

The fourth is upon a straight line, where there is a turn both at top and base.

This shade must taper equally toward the turns.

The fifth shade, which occurs only upon curved lines, in every case increases and diminishes gradually, the heaviest part being found in the middle of the curve.

The shade upon different letters in the same line, or upon the same page, should generally be of uniform strength; though, as a matter of taste, a half shade is often made.

The principles of shading above given are applicable to the various styles of letters; but we will here specify where they occur in the standard letters, which we present on the plate of Medium Hand. Page, 39.

Small Letters.-The short letters are usually left unshaded, though the small letter a, in certain combinations, sometimes receives a shade.

The shade upon t and d is heaviest at top, tapering gradually to the lower turn.

The shade of the small letter p is the reverse of t, commencing on the ruled line, and continuing to the base of the letter.

When two p's, d's or t's come together, the first is shaded, while the second receives a half shade only. These letters have the preference in shading, hence, small loop letters, immediately connected with them, are not shaded; for example: th, dl.

In the g and q, the shade is made on the left side of the pointed oval; in A and k, upon the short straight line which occurs in the finish of these letters; in y and z, upon the first short straight line at their top.

The shade of the letters l and b begins at the middle point of the downward line in each, and extends to the lower turn.

When two l's or b's are united, the first only is shaded.

The shade of the f begins at the middle point of the downward line, and continues to the turn at the base.

The j and the long s are never shaded. If they were, the shade would be out of place, when compared with the other small letters.

Capital Letters are usually shaded only upon one curve; but when large capitals are made, in which bold curves are used, the two downward curves in the ovals are sometimes shaded. This, however, is not generally admissible in business writing.

The O is shaded upon the first curve, the E upon the third, and the D upon the curve on the left of the oval.

The C has its shade upon the first downward curve. Its deepest shade is a little below the middle of the curve.

The H is shaded upon the first and third downward curves.

The following letters, X, Z, Q, W, V, U, Y, are all shaded upon the second downward curve, though some other shades may be introduced without detracting from the beauty of the letters. If other shades are used, care must be taken to preserve uniformity and proportion.

The following letters, A, N, M, T, F, I, J, S, L, G, K, P, B and R are all shaded upon the Capital Stem.

The shade begins at one-half the height of the stem, increases gradually half way to the ruled line, then gradually diminishes till it reaches the base of the letter. A slight additional shade is made upon the short straight line in the beginning of T and F. In the J, shade begins at the base of the upper loop, and is made heaviest at the middle point of the lower loop.

PROBABLE FAULTS IN SHADING. Beginning or terminating too abruptly; shading every downward line, causing the writing to look heavy, and impeding rapidity of execution. The tendency in shading is toward a straight line; hence, care must be taken in forming ovals, not to make them too narrow, or the shaded curve less than its opposite. The advantage of giving beginners light forms for models thus becomes apparent.