

where Messrs. Tinsley and Morgan occupy a suite of rooms fitted up with conveniences for the holding of references, arbitrations, etc. Parties to references are allowed the free use of the large room furnished with tables, chairs, and pedestals "whereon doth sit the dread and power" of the arbitrator. Here sat, during the afternoon, the genial President, S. C. Rodgers, of Troy, supported on the left by the whole-souled, energetic Secretary, Theo. C. Rose, of Ithaca. After a few hours spent in fraternal intercourse, and an intermission for lunch, the assembly was called to order between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, and about twenty members responded to the roll-call. Many members were unable to be present, professional engagements detaining some; while a host of letters were read from stenographers residing in various States, expressing regret at enforced absence, and conveying fraternal greetings.

Having written this much of introductory information concerning the Association in which the reader has, by this time, begun to feel a lively interest, I suppose I shall not be pardoned if I do not give a full report of the proceedings. Yet, notwithstanding all consequential possibilities, I do not propose to do anything of the kind. The Association, with commendable enterprise, publishes a full report in book form each year; and every phonographer who can command fifty cents, and who possesses fifty cents' worth of enthusiasm, should purchase that valuable compendium in addition to the WRITER. Moreover, if an attempt were made to publish the proceedings in this magazine, everything else must be crowded out, and the reader must wait a whole year before he would reach the end. Neither do I propose to give a summary of the papers read, and the discussions which they excited. Practical stenographers are also practical writers and speakers, and are not in the habit of using that excess of verbiage which they know from actual experience is, above all things, to be dreaded. I did not receive any incivility or ill-usage at the hands of any of the members which calls for revenge; and any attempt to "boil them down" would be most ungenerous on the part of one who, meeting with them as the representative of another nationality, was treated with all the kindness, and was made the recipient of all the thoughtful attention, which whole-hearted American cousins could bestow.

The Association will meet next year at Buffalo, and additional interest will attach to the Convention when it is announced that members will be accompanied by their wives—those, we mean, who are so blest; those who are not, will be expected—the Secretary says—to take some one else's wife—or daughter.

Before leaving Syracuse, I was enabled, by the courtesy of the members of the Association, to secure the autographs of about twenty of them. These I hope to give in the next number of the WRITER, accompanied by brief biographical notices.

T. B.

## LEGIBILITY OF SHORTHAND NOTES.

By Bez.

**T**HE *verbatim* writer must possess two great qualifications—speed and legibility. Upon the possession of the latter depends, to a very great extent, the success of the reporter. Ease in deciphering one's notes compensates for many sins against "style" and "the book." The most sure method by which the young aspirant to phonographic fame may secure a perfectly legible style is to search out by diligent study, practice and comparison the best form for a word, and then always, without exception, write that word in the same manner. This done, a "hand" will be formed, which will be as legible to the writer as his longhand manuscript. In the majority of instances illegibility arises either from carelessly written, or varied forms—sometimes both causes combined. Standing on the head, turning the page of the note book in all directions, even calling in the aid of Prof. — who is noted as a decipherer of ancient (and modern) hieroglyphics, will occasionally fail to bring out the "vast treasures of deep thought," which lie hidden in the close embrace of a carelessly written word or phrase.

Young and inexperienced writers should strive for even mathematical accuracy in their writing during the early stages of their practice. As they progress, experience will teach the modifications which are allowable and necessary; and the eye will become accustomed to the rounding of angles, the flattening of curves, and the doing away with heavy strokes; and notes that look more like "chicken tracks" or a map of the streets of old London, will be as easily read as are the carefully written exercises of the text-books. In nine cases out of ten the writer, not the system written, should receive the blame for illegibility. I have been moved to inflict this screech upon the readers of this journal by the fear that some of my young friends, noticing the "free and easy" style of some of the pages from reporters' note books given in previous issues of the WRITER, would conclude that they also might "indulge." It should be remembered that experience in many departments of the profession is the only guide one has in writing and reading such notes.

## FREDERICK PITMAN.

**I**N a narrow street near St. Paul's Cathedral stands a small bookseller's shop, over the window of which may be seen the name of "Pitman." We say small, because it looks small from the outside. It is rather narrow, as are all the other shops in Paternoster Row, and almost every shop is a bookseller's shop; but inside, a great deal of work is done, and there is more room therein than most people imagine. Such is the place which is regarded as the centre from which the phonographic instruction books, magazines and material of all kinds